

# Rules Philosophy and Principles



**1** Our first priority is always safety.

**2** Everything not allowed is forbidden

Rules (or laws) are created following one of two approaches: "everything not forbidden is allowed" or "everything not allowed is forbidden". In Western Law, the first one is a constitutional principle that ensures the freedom of citizens, while the other is typically used to describe the powers of public servants.

In sports, the second approach is preferred since the objective is to define a framework of actions for athletes to follow. The first approach is prone to loopholes and requires the constant creation of constraints and restrictions for every possible situation.

**3** Rules should be accessible.

Easy for players to execute, easy for officials to call, easy for commentators to explain and easy for fans to follow. Accessible means easy to consume for all audiences. Rules should be created with all audiences in mind.

**4** Rules should have a purpose and a reason to exist.

Avoid pettiness and triviality in the rules. For example, adding a rule that prevents a player from communicating while in the penalty box is unnecessary. The punishment is being in the penalty box, and other rules will prevent the player from insulting an official or another player.

**5** Rules are different than interpretations.

It's not necessary to add every situation as a rule, pages and pages would be needed. Rules are general, interpretations are situational.

Consider this example from soccer: Law 4 dictates that the required equipment is comprised by a jersey, shorts, socks, shinguards and shoes. That is the rule. One of the interpretations of the rule defines that: "If a player accidentally loses a shoe and scores a goal, there is no infringement and the goal is awarded."