



International Institute of Cricket Umpiring & Scoring

Unit 2 – Role of Umpire



An umpire should enjoy his role as a decision maker
Sound preparation paves the way for sound decision-making

CODE OF ETHICS

Safety and welfare

You should place the safety and welfare of all the participants in the match above all else, particularly the safety of young players. Your national Governing Body may have guidelines for the wearing of helmets and for the protection of young fast bowlers

Responsibility

You and your colleague must be prepared to accept responsibility for all actions taken during a match. Some of your decisions may be unpopular but do not waver under pressure from the players

Impartiality

You must never favour one side or one particular player. You must never even appear to do that. This may be difficult when you umpire a match in which the players of one side all know you and those of the other side have never seen you before

Conflict of interest

Try to avoid any situation where you are put under pressure whether real or perceived. In league cricket, some governing bodies will not appoint umpires who have a connection with one of the sides in a match. If your club is in a relegation or promotion situation near the end of the season, you should not umpire any match involving their rivals. Remember to declare your allegiance when you join an umpiring association



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Courtesy

You should be courteous and respectful to all the players and be ready to have a discussion and interact during match situations. However, you must not hold long discussions about a decision you have made. Never talk to players whilst the ball is in play; it will upset your concentration

Value the individual

Remember that the match that you are umpiring is important to every player on the field. Some players will not be as good as others but you must never comment about the ability of any player in front of your colleague or other players. Similarly, never talk to players about the decisions made by your colleague.

Self improvement

You must seek continual self improvement through study, performance appraisal and regular updating of competencies - you never stop learning. Without it you are likely to develop bad habits and will not advance up the rankings

Role model

You must strive to be positive in your behaviour towards the players on the field and make every effort with your personal appearance

Personal abuse

If you are subjected to personal abuse from players, never respond in the same manner. The abusers can be admonished by you and your colleague and then reported to the Governing Body for the match who can decide any punishment. Your case will be weakened if you are abusive to players and you will lose respect

Harassment

You should never harass players or officials in a sexual or homophobic way. Any thoughts you may have about a player or official should be kept to yourself; harassment has no place within the game of cricket

Show concern

When a player or your colleague is injured or becomes ill, you should show concern and stop the game and attempt to assist them by arranging for medical help if required

UMPIRE'S ROLE

Umpires should perform their role in a manner that earns the respect of players and fosters the development of a healthy and positive attitude towards umpires (Sir Donald Bradman)

The Preamble to the Laws makes it clear that the players must respect the role of the umpire. This means they must accept your decisions; it does not mean that they must agree with them. They must also accept your behavior, though they might not like it. **Respect for your role** is mandatory, but only you can **earn** the respect of the players for **yourself and for your umpiring ability**. Although it is essential to make good decisions, that alone will not earn you the respect of players and colleagues; you must also follow the Code of Ethics given above



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Your role as an umpire on match day

Apply the Laws and their interpretations with commonsense and in accordance with the spirit and traditions of the game

Attend to the administrative requirements necessary for the successful management of the match, controlling the timing of the match and completing any documentation at the conclusion of the match

Manage the match in a manner that safeguards the welfare, health and safety of players. Do not attempt to play in dangerous conditions just because the match is poised for a close finish. It is likely that, when you and your colleague are considering suspending play, one team will be in a better position than the other. Their captain may attempt to get you to change your mind. The duty of you and your colleague is to make your decision without interference from anyone

Display a high standard of communication skills with players, scorers and your colleague, performing your duties as a team

You and your colleague can look like a team by wearing similar attire, white shoes, dark trousers, colour of shirts, similar style of coats and going onto and coming off the field TOGETHER

You should be friendly, positive and supportive to all players and officials

FAIR PLAY

You and your colleague are the sole judges of fair and unfair play; the captains are responsible for the players conducting themselves within the Spirit of Cricket as well as within the Laws

If either of you considers an action to be unfair, you must intervene without appeal

Discrimination and Vilification

You and your colleague must be alert and prepared to take appropriate action in the event that players discriminate against, vilify or harass opponents in any way

Discrimination, vilification or harassment on the grounds of race, religion, sex or disability is intolerable and unacceptable and you must discourage it in the strongest manner

In many countries, legislation is in place to protect citizens against all forms of discrimination

As umpires you have a duty to be aware that all citizens have certain rights and that these rights should not be infringed



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This type of behaviour breaches the Spirit of the Game, therefore you must:

Report the matter to the offending player's captain, instructing the captain to take immediate appropriate action

Warn him of the gravity of the offence and advise him that the matter will be reported to a higher authority

Report the matter to an official of the offending player's team as soon as possible

Also report the matter to the Governing Body responsible for the match

COMMON SENSE

There are currently 42 Laws of Cricket but umpires are often reminded that some situations during a match require a common sense approach to be made by the umpires - Law 43

Nigel Plews the former Test Match umpire believed that "*common sense is the best guide in interpreting the Laws*". "*Law 43*", he said, "*is the commonsense application of Laws 1 to 42*"
You should let the players play the game

Don't look for minor technical violations or any other circumstances just to show players how clever you are. You will lose respect.

With the new 2000 Code of Laws and recent revisions are firmly in place, you should look to use certain Laws as a deterrent rather than a solution

Always try to anticipate problems before they occur

The powers that have been given to us by the strengthening of the unfair play Laws and awarding of penalty runs must be treated with care. Like all deterrents, however, you must be prepared to use them if your attempts at persuasion should fail.

The ultimate sanction of awarding penalty runs in some situations could be a poor reflection on your competence and capability

Example

A batsman running on the pitch may not be considered as unfair play the first time it occurs

You will probably take many things into account and issue the quiet "unofficial" warning also adding a gentle reminder that penalty runs could be a consequence of further breaches



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Remember, the spirit and intent of Law 42 is not to penalise an accidental or unintentional incident caused by a batsman or bowler changing direction to avoid injury/collision

Any **pitch damage** must be **avoidable** to be considered an offence

Ask yourself these questions:

“Did the player really **need** to be on the pitch?”

“Did he do it deliberately or was it lack of thought?”

“Was it because the player wanted to gain an unfair advantage?”

Your actions will be guided by your answers to the questions

Good umpires know how to interact with players.

There are many opportunities to do this during the course of the match:

If the wicket-keeper removes the bails and then immediately replaces them, say “Thank you”

If you have cause to speak to the captain about player behaviour, always finish your request with “please”

After he has spoken to the player, always say “Thank you”

Remember, you are not trying to be everybody’s friend, just showing simple courtesy

Whether this courtesy is returned or not is irrelevant and should not affect your future behaviour

PREPARATION

Optimum performance can be achieved only if you arrive at the ground refreshed, prepared and able to give yourself the best chance of umpiring a full day

Leave in plenty of time to allow for contingencies (traffic, etc) and arrive at least one hour prior to scheduled start time

Meet colleague, establish rapport and together check pitch area

Seek out the groundsman to discover if there is any over-riding authority over the use of the ground and discuss details about ground maintenance, such as rollers available, crease re-marking, etc



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Ask questions about the prevailing weather conditions and as to whether the ground absorbs water quickly

Is sawdust available for bowlers' run-ups and batsmen's stance position?

What options are available for using the covers effectively and who will be responsible for laying them?

How can the ground best be dried out after a sudden storm?

This information could prove vital

Make sure the stump holes are moistened to allow easy re-making of the wickets during the day. This may sound a minor matter but a great deal of time can be saved if the wickets can be quickly and easily remade

Ask the ground staff to mark an extension of the popping crease about 15 to 20 yards or metres out to cater for the possibility of having a runner for an injured striker

Check all other markings, set up wickets and choose or decide on ends

Check outfield for any obstructions or hazards, boundaries and local customs

If your partner arrives late, it is OK to check out the ground alone – but don't make any decisions until he arrives – umpires need to be seen acting together – this sets the tone for the match

Together, meet and speak to the captains Make sure team lists are exchanged and collected

Establish signals to be used with your partner, their timing and the co-ordination of your work together — after 4th or 5th ball of an over, catch carrying, Leg byes, issue of warnings, fast short pitched bowling, high full pitches, etc

Meet with scorers, note their position, check on established signals to be used

Check clock or watch and back-up timepiece

Obtain match ball(s) and inform teams you are going on to the field 5 minutes prior to start, wish them well and tell them to enjoy the game

Walk out together