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Law 4 – Players' Equipment



**U.S. Soccer Federation Referee Program
Entry Level Referee Course
Competitive Youth Training
Small Sided and Recreational Youth Training**

Requirements

There are five (5) required pieces of equipment that each player must wear.





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Requirements

- **Shoes** ... must be worn and must be considered safe.
- **Shin Guards** ... must be made of a suitable material and provide a reasonable amount of protection.
Socks ... must completely cover the shin guards
- **Shorts** ... which is the same color as their teammates.
- **Shirt** ... which is the same color as their teammates.





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Requirements

Goalkeepers are required to have the same equipment, but their jersey must be a different color from that of their teammates.

Referees should check the local rules of competition for any other specific uniform requirements.

If small-sided and recreational youth players are wearing additional clothing or equipment, referees should make sure it's safe for play and be lenient if the colors don't match the rest of the uniform.



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Safety



SAFETY must be the top priority for referees at all levels, so players can not use equipment or wear anything that is considered dangerous to that player or any other player.



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Safety

This includes any kind of jewelry or any other item the referee deems unsafe.

The only potential jewelry exception would for items that are of medical or religious nature, but even they must be deemed safe for play by the referee.

An example would be a medical alert bracelet, which could be taped to the player's wrist, or a medical alert necklace taped to the inside of the player's uniform.



Safety

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The referee makes the final decision on players' equipment, but they may delegate the inspection of the players to the ARs or fourth official.

It is common to inspect equipment while checking player passes against a team's roster.

Referees should also check the local rules of competition regarding player equipment and safety. When such rules exist, they must be enforced by the referee.

Casts

There is nothing in the Laws of the Game that specifically prevents a player from playing with a cast, so long as it is deemed safe by the referee and it is not prohibited by the local rules of competition.



Typically, casts are wrapped with a soft material to be made safe and players are informed not to use the cast in an dangerous manner.

Other Items

Under the Laws of the Game, jewelry is not permitted and this is typically reinforced by the local rules of competition.

- Rings
- Necklaces
- Earrings
- Hair clips



Covering jewelry with tape does not mean that it is safe for play.



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Colors

The two teams must wear colors that distinguish them from each other, and the match officials.



Typically the home team changes its uniforms in the event of a color conflict, but this may not always be possible.

Each goalkeeper must wear colors that are distinguishable from all other players and match officials.



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Colors

If an undershirt is worn, the color of the sleeve should be the same main color as the jersey.



Likewise, if undershorts or tights are worn, they should be of the same main color as the shorts.

If tape or similar material is applied externally it should be the same color as that part of the sock it is applied to.



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Infringements

If a player has equipment that is not allowed during the game, the referee should ask the player to correct the equipment problem even if play is going on.

If, at the next stoppage, the player has not corrected the equipment issue, the referee must ask the player to leave the field to correct the issue.



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Infringements

After the issue has been corrected the player can only return with the referee's permission at a stoppage in play, as the referee must ensure the correction did occur.

A player who has been required to leave the field of play because of an infringement of this Law and then re-enters the field of play without the referee's permission must be cautioned.



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Review Question

13. Which of the following are required pieces of equipment that all players must wear?

- A. Shoes
- B. Shin guards and socks
- C. Shorts and shirt
- D. All of the above



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Review Question

14. Are goalkeepers required to wear the same equipment as other players?

A. Yes

B. No



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Review Question

15. Are goalkeepers required to have a different color jersey from the rest of their teammates?

A. Yes

B. No



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Review Question

16. Players are allowed to wear earrings as long as they are completely taped over.

- A. True
- B. False



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Review Question

17. Who is responsible for ensuring the players' equipment is safe for play?

- A. Referee
- B. Team captain
- C. Head coach