

## Introduction

One of the powers and duties of the referee in **LAW 5** states that the referee must ensure that the players' equipment meets the requirements of Law 4.

**LAW 4 – THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT** states that a player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewellery). One of the basic compulsory pieces of equipment of a player comprises of **shinguards**.

## Understanding what a reasonable degree of protection means?

### What is a shinguard?

In Law 4 shinguards...

- are covered entirely by the stockings
- are made of rubber, plastic or a similar suitable material
- provide a reasonable degree of protection

### What does provide a reasonable degree of protection mean?

- Shinguards must cover the length of your leg, from just below the knee to just above the ankle.
- They must offer reasonable protection to players. For example 'adult shin guards for adult players'.

### Why wear shinguard?

- A shinguard, provides protection against a large range of very serious leg injuries.
- The core function of a shin guard is to spread load over wider areas, thus reducing the local impact force of kicks, tackles or blows.



## Protocol for check players' equipment

- If feasible, all three match officials should do the equipment check together. Senior AR start Left side and Junior AR start Right side.
- Ensure that all players are present as sometimes players are not present when the referee goes to check the equipment
- Complete the inspection properly, as this will be the first contact that you have with players therefore important to set a good example early.
- If there are no official Assistant Referees then the referee should check all players' equipment in the change room (or as they come out of their changing room, or gather in the race before entering the field of play).
- Never check player's equipment on the field or around the centre circle.  
Note: In the case of junior fixtures, where match officials have consecutive games that provisions for proper checking of equipment be carried out pitch-side (such as next to the Technical Area) in team-groups, prior to kick-off.
- Check for correct equipment such as Jerseys, shorts, stockings, shinguards, undershorts, undershirts and any damaged studs.  
Note: Two important things to remember players must NOT wear jewellery at all and the goalkeeper must wear colours to distinguish him from other players, the referee and the assistant referees.
- If a player's equipment does not conform to law then inform that player that he or she cannot take part in the game until his / her equipment has been adjusted. With shinguards, make sure you use the above guideline.