

How to Minimise Conflict

Conflict can arise at any time in a game. There may be a disagreement over a decision, perceived bias, frustration shown by players due to their level of performance, confusion over instructions, and sledging between participants.

Conflict shows itself in both verbal and non-verbal ways.

Verbal – Tone of voice, abusive language

Non-Verbal – Gestures, finger pointing, threatening behaviour, and physical contact.

An umpire should always try to remain calm in conflict situations. By tailoring your own body language and not overreacting, a situation can be diffused.

An umpire must address the problem, not the emotion attached to the situation. Deal with the facts of the situation and sell yourself as being fair.

Focus on the person, make eye contact, and use their name, recognise that they have something to say and don't simply dismiss them.

Always be confident, don't try to justify your decision, back it with fact and available evidence.

Set boundaries in a courteous manner and deal with unacceptable behaviour quickly.

Above all, remember that 90% of conflict occurs not because of what was said, but the tone in which it was said.