

P-5: Establish behavior management plans

Student-friendly rules

General standards of conduct that allow students to know exactly what behaviors are allowed and prohibited.

Why have rules?



Rules are important because they:

- Promote desired student behavior
- Prevent misbehavior or lack of clarity for students on how to behave
- Create a sense of order and predictability
- Mimic the real world (we have laws...and repercussions should we choose not to follow them)
- Allow learning to occur

What are criteria for and examples of effective rules?

You can view sets of effective rules within actual behavior management plans in the Illustrations section.

Characteristics	Rationale	Examples to Follow	Examples to Avoid
<p>Few in number, yet applicable to all situations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When rules are general enough, they account for all contingencies and are useful for the majority of needs in the classroom • When rules are too specific or narrow, they may only be useful for addressing a few predictable behaviors. • When rules are few in number, they are easier for students to remember and for teachers to enforce. • Having just a few rules also makes each rule seem more important and avoids the sense that you are trying to control a student's every movement. 	<p>The following is an example of a complete set of classroom rules that is both comprehensive and manageable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respect everyone in your words and actions 2. Listen when others are speaking. 3. Class time is for class activities. 4. Come to class prepared with all required materials. 5. Follow the teacher's directions the first time. 	<p>A long list of narrow rules that only apply to specific situations.</p> <p><i>Be silent when the principal speaks on the intercom.</i></p> <p><i>Bring your textbook, pencil, and folder to class every day.</i></p> <p><i>No pens in class!</i></p> <p><i>Raise your hand to be called on.</i></p> <p><i>No profanity.</i></p> <p><i>No leaving the room without permission.</i></p>

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<p>Positively-worded</p>	<p>Positive rules explain what students should be doing. Negatively stated rules simply tell students what to avoid and challenge students to find inappropriate behaviors that fall outside the scope of the rule.</p>	<p><i>Respect your classmates in your words and actions.</i></p> <p><i>Listen when someone else is talking.</i></p> <p><i>Class time is for class activities.</i></p>	<p>Rules framed as negative statements.</p> <p><i>No disrespectful comments.</i></p> <p><i>No talking out of turn.</i></p> <p><i>No toys or games in class.</i></p>
<p>Clearly-stated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be able to understand the behavioral expectation. • Note: there can be tension between making rules that are applicable to all situations while still being clear. Regardless of your rules, make sure to plan how to explicitly introduce them so students understand. 	<p><i>Come to class prepared with all required materials.</i></p> <p><i>Follow the teacher's directions.</i></p>	<p>Rules that are vague.</p> <p><i>Every student will demonstrate habits of a responsible learner.</i></p> <p><i>Always use appropriate conduct.</i></p>

What should I keep in mind when I write my rules?

Choose rules that you are comfortable with

If you can't enforce or justify a rule, then don't make it.

Consider your students' developmental levels

- For young students it is especially important that rules are short, explicit, and easy to remember. For example:
 - While *Respect others* might go over well in upper elementary through high school, the concept might be too vague for smaller children in early elementary. *Use kind words* might serve the same purpose.
 - Very young children (ages 2-7) may find it difficult to see the world from someone else's perspective, since they are likely to be very egocentric at this point in their cognitive development. *Keep your hands to yourself* is easier to understand and follow than *Respect others*
- Regardless your age level, always remember to teach your rules explicitly.

Plan to explicitly teach students what your rules mean

All students need to see, hear, and practice exactly what your rules mean. This is especially true:

- When rules are broad and general
- For younger children who may find it difficult to understand the concepts of "respect" or "listening"