Stated in an elementary personal way,[[1]](#endnote-1)[[2]](#footnote-1) the rules of liberty are:

* I don’t hit people who don’t hit me.
* I don’t take their stuff.
* I don’t lie to them or try to trick them.
* I don’t dump my garbage on their lawn.
* I don’t try to force them to believe what I believe.

Liberty has been defined in more sophisticated adult ways but casting it in everyday language highlights its essential nature.

This approach follows a practice the author learned as a researcher in electrical engineering. The idea is to eliminate as many confounding factors as possible to concentrate on fundamentals.

In addition to being simple, these rules are reasonable. We probably all follow them in our personal lives, at least when we’re behaving in ways that make us proud. We teach them to our children.

We will refine the rules and apply them to government as we go deeper. Some policies derived from them may raise objections at their first introduction, but the hope is that most will be allayed as the picture is developed.

Let’s look at each liberty rule in a little more detail.

1. Chapter 1 What is Liberty?

   I first saw this expression of liberty in an informal piece by David Boaz of the Cato Institute. Mine is expanded a bit. Boaz also offers a comprehensive history and exposition of liberty in *The Libertarian Mind*, Simon and Schuster, New York 2015. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. End notes are collected after the last chapter, before the index, separately numbered for each chapter. Most of them point to sources illustrating or expanding upon issues raised in the text. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)