

# Authoritarianism

To understand how elected autocrats subtly undermine institutions, it's helpful to imagine a soccer game.

To consolidate power, would-be authoritarians must capture the referees, sideline at least at least some of the other side's star players, and rewrite the rules of the game to lock in their advantage, in effect tilting the playing field against their opponent. ... Because these measures are carried out piecemeal and with the appearance of legality, the drift into authoritarianism doesn't always set off fire alarms.

**Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt,**  
*How Democracies Die*