

# Reading an RFC

# History (RFC 2555)

- RFC 1: “Host Software”
  - ▶ “Mindful that our group was informal, junior and unchartered, I wanted to emphasize these notes were the beginning of a dialog and not an assertion of control.”
- Standardization of format
  - ▶ Structure, intellectual property rights, terminology (RFC 2119)
  - ▶ Security, IANA
- Kinds of RFCs: proposed standard, standards-track, informational, experimental, best current practice (BCP)

# RFC Process (simplified)

- Start with a draft: draft-levis-roll-trickle-00
- Revisions: draft-levis-roll-trickle-XX
- Accepted by working group: draft-ietf-roll-trickle-00
- Revisions: draft-ietf-roll-trickle-XX
- Accepted by working group chair for publication
- Working group, IETF last call
- IESG review
- Approved as an RFC

# Terminology

- **MUST, REQUIRED, SHALL:** absolute requirement.
- **SHOULD, RECOMMENDED:** “mean that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to ignore a particular item, but the full implications must be understood and carefully weighed before choosing a different course.”
- **MAY, OPTIONAL:** “mean that an item is truly optional.”

# Example: RFC5681