

BASIC PLAY

The following rules have penalties if not followed. They can be different for stroke play and match play (lost of strokes vs. loss of hole).

1. Clubs in your bag

You're allowed to carry up to 14 clubs in your bag during a competitive round.

2. Play within the parameters of the tee

Tee up between and behind the front of the appropriate markers - usually white for medal tees, yellow for men, red for women - and within two club lengths.

3. Avoid playing the wrong ball

Playing the wrong golf ball is a two-stroke penalty in stroke play. But if you're unsure the ball is yours - in the rough, for example - mark it carefully with a tee peg or some other object, lift but do not clean it (only to identify it) and replace in the identical spot.

4. Playing out of a Bunker

You are allowed to remove loose impediments and movable obstructions, just as long as doing so doesn't make the ball move. Before making a stroke while in the bunker, you are **not** allowed to deliberately touch the sand with your hand, a club or rake (or other object) to test the condition of the sand. You are not allowed to touch the sand with your club while making a practice swing or during the backswing of your stroke. If you do, it's a two-stroke penalty.

5. Green rulings

Once the ball comes to rest on the putting surface you may mark it with a coin or disk, lift and clean it but remember to replace in the exact spot. You may not rub your ball on the putting green to clean it.

Golfers are allowed to repair almost any damage on the green, such as spike marks, ball-marks, indentations from a club or flagstick, and animal damage. However, golfers are **not permitted** to repair aeration holes, natural surface imperfections, or natural wear of the hole.

6. Unplayable lies

If your ball has come to rest in a position that you believe to be unplayable, a player may take unplayable ball relief using one of three options, in each case adding one penalty stroke (see rules bag tag).

7. Out of Bounds (OB)

A ball hit beyond the confines of the course (usually marked by white stakes) must be re-played from the original position adding a penalty of one stroke.

8. Play your ball as it lies

Always play your ball as it lies, wherever it comes to rest, unless the Rules allow you to do otherwise.

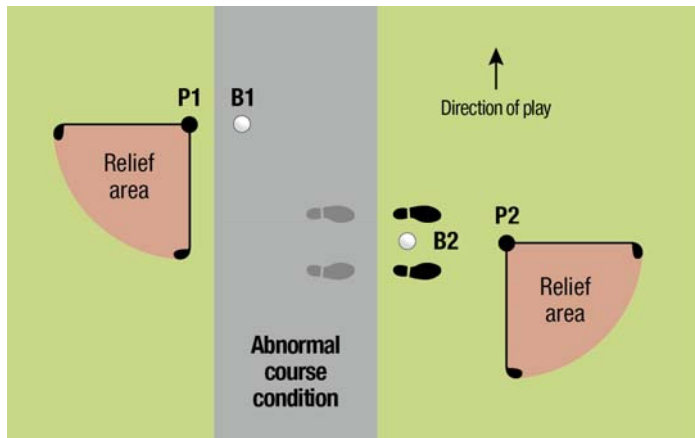
If the player's ball comes to rest and is then moved by natural forces such as wind or water, the player normally must play it from its new spot. If a ball at rest is lifted or moved by anyone or any outside influence before the stroke is made (such as being hit by another ball in play), the ball must be replaced on its original spot.

If you accidentally move your ball or ball marker on green, you can put it back - no penalty. Also, no penalty if you accidentally move ball when searching for it - just put it back.

Players should take care when near any ball at rest, and a player who causes his or her own ball or an opponent's ball to move will normally get a penalty (except on the putting green).

9. Relief from Cart Path

You are entitled to relief without penalty from any path to which a foreign material (e.g., tar, gravel, dirt) has been applied if your ball comes to rest upon the path, or if your swing or stance (any part of your foot) is inhibited by the path. How to determine relief may be affected by whether you are a right or left handed player.



The diagram assumes the player is right handed. Free relief is allowed for interference by an abnormal course condition (ACC), including an immovable obstruction, when the ball touches or lies in or on the condition (B1), or the condition interferes with the area of intended stance (B2) or swing. The nearest point of complete relief for B1 is P1, and is very close to the condition. For B2, the nearest point of complete relief is P2, and is farther from the condition as the stance has to be clear of the ACC.

10. Seeking advice

You cannot ask advice on club selection from anyone other than your team mate (if you are playing four-ball or foursomes for example) or a caddie.

Neither should you offer advice to opponents in competition. However, you may ask for information on the Rules, distances or positions of hazards or the flagstick.

11. Definition of ball striking

You must strike the ball with the head of the club. You cannot spoon, scrape or flick it in a style that cannot be described as a 'stroke'.

SOME NEW GOLF RULES 2019

Water hazards are now called Penalty Areas

1. You CAN fix damage on putting green now - like animal marks, scuff marks, etc. Does NOT include imperfections, disease, aeration holes or natural wear to hole.
2. If you accidentally move your ball or ball marker on green, you can put it back - no penalty. Also, no penalty if you accidentally move ball when searching for it - just put it back.
3. Dropping ball from penalty area is now done at knee height (to speed up pace of play and increase chances it will land in two club length drop area on first try.) But, you MUST drop from knee height - if you do not, it is a 1 stroke penalty and you must re-drop from knee height. Ball must not touch your body or equipment on drop.
4. NO penalty if you have an accidental double hit. No penalty if ball in motion hits player, caddie, her equipment or flagstick whether removed or attended. There is only a penalty if it is deliberate or if player or caddie positions equipment to stop ball in motion.
5. In Penalty Areas you CAN now lightly ground club behind ball, move a loose impediment, take a practice swing and touch ground or water. You CANNOT put your club down and use it to improve conditions for the stroke.
6. In bunkers, You CAN remove loose impediments , provided ball does NOT move. If it does, a one stroke penalty and replace the ball. You can touch sand with club or hand but NOT in a backswing or practice swing. You cannot touch sand in front or back of ball, except when searching for loose impediment or movable obstruction.
7. You can putt leaving flagstick in hole but you must decide this BEFORE making a stroke. An exception is that if it is obvious a player's ball in motion will not strike flagstick, you can remove it. If ball rests against flagstick, and part of ball is in hole, it is considered in the hole.
8. Courses can have local rule that if you hit ball out-of-bounds, you can go to spot it went out of bounds and opt to take a 2 stroke penalty and drop ball just on edge of fairway. You can NOT do this in tournaments.
9. Time to search for lost ball has been reduced to 3 minutes from 5. As always, if you suspect a ball may be hard to find, it is best to declare that you are hitting a provisional ball before moving on to search for lost ball.
10. You do not have to announce that you are going to check your ball for identification purposes. You do need to MARK your ball first and then check.