

PRINCIPAL CHANGES SINCE 2008-2009

New Decisions

- 1-3/0.5 **When Breach of Rule 1-3 Occurs**
- 1-4/11.5 **Player Wraps Towel Around Self or Places Towel on Cactus Before Taking Stance**
- 2/3 **Refusal to Comply with Rule in Match Play**
- 2-4/3.5 **Stroke Conceded by Caddie**
- 4-1/1 **Condition Requiring Clubs Conforming with Groove and Punch Mark Specifications Effective January 1, 2010**
- 4-4a/15 **Assembly of Club Components During Stipulated Round**
- 4-4a/16 **Status of Additional Clubs Being Carried for Player and of Person Carrying Them**
- 13-4/0.7 **Player Rakes Bunker When Ball Lies in Another Bunker**
- 14-2/0.5 **Meaning of “Elements”**
- 14-2/2.5 **Player Positions Bag for Purpose of Providing Shade for Ball**
- 14-3/10.3 **Use of Rod During Round for Alignment or as Swing Aid**
- 19-2/10 **Ball Stopped or Deflected by Rake Held by Player’s Caddie**
- 19-5/1.5 **Ball Lifted and Replaced; Ball Then Rolls and Strikes Ball on Putting Green**
- 20-2a/8 **Player Drops Ball to Determine Where Original Ball May Roll if Dropped**
- 20-3b/7 **Whether Original Lie May Be “Nearest Lie Most Similar”**
- 20-3b/8 **Loose Impediment Affecting Lie of Ball Moved**
- 25-1b/25.5 **Application of Exception to Rule 25-1b When Ball Lies Underground in Burrowing Animal Hole**
- 27/17 **Competitor Plays Out of Turn Other Than from Teeing Ground and Puts Another Ball into Play at Spot of Previous Stroke**
- 27-2a/1.3 **Player Intends to Play Provisional Ball but No One Present to Hear Announcement**
- 29/5.5 **Raking Sand in Bunker After Partner Fails to Extricate Ball but Before Stroke; Foursome Match**
- 30-3/3 **Application of Rule 2-2 in Four-Ball Match Play**
- 30-3e/1 **Partners Fail to Discontinue Play Immediately Contrary to Condition of Competition**
- 30-3f/2.5 **Touching Sand with Practice Swing After Partner Has Extricated Ball from Bunker; Four-Ball Match**

- 30-3f/13 **Partner Stands on Extension of Player’s Line of Play Behind Ball**
- 33-2b/1.5 **Committee Wishes to Move Hole During Stroke-Play Round Due to Severity of Location**
- 33-8/34 **Relief from Divot Holes**
- 33-8/44.5 **Status of Growing Things Rooted Within Environmentally-Sensitive Area**
- 34-1b/9 **Breach of Anti-Doping Condition Discovered After Competition Closed**

Revised Decisions

- 1-2/3.5 **Player Repairs Hole After Holing Out but Before Opponent, Fellow-Competitor or Partner Holes Out**
Amended to clarify that the player’s act of courtesy should be for players in following groups.
- 1-4/9 **Bird’s Nest Interfering with Stroke**
Expanded to address the situation where the ball lies on the putting green, to clarify the relief procedure for a ball in a hazard and to make the relief procedure more similar to that for relief from an abnormal ground condition.
- 1-4/10 **Dangerous Situation; Rattlesnake or Bees Interfere with Play**
Expanded to address the situation where the ball lies on the putting green, to clarify the relief procedure for a ball in a hazard and to make the relief procedure more similar to that for relief from an abnormal ground condition.
- 2/2 **Stipulated Round in Match Play**
Amended to refer to the final hole of the match, rather than the final hole of the round, and expanded to address a 36-hole match.
- 2-1/5 **Three Holes Played Out of Sequence in Match**
Amended so as not to require the players to replay the holes played out of sequence.
- 3-4/1 **Competitor Not Given Opportunity to Lift Ball Assisting Fellow-Competitor**
Amended to clarify that a competitor is in breach of Rule 3-4 even if he does not know that he is refusing to comply with the Rules.
- 4-1/5 **Adhesive Bandage or Tape Applied to Clubhead to Reduce Glare or for Protection**
Expanded to include reference to exceptions for material attached to the clubhead.
- 4-3/1 **Meaning of Damage Sustained in “Normal Course of Play”**
Amended to clarify that the throwing of a club for the purpose of retrieving a ball is not considered to be part of the normal course of play.
- 4-4a/1 **When Club Is Considered Added**

- Amended for clarity.
- 5-1/1.5 **Status of Ball Not on List of Conforming Golf Balls**
Amended for clarity and repositioned. (Formerly USGA/5-1/101)
- 5-3/7 **Ball Thought to Be Unfit for Play; Committee Involvement**
Amended to allow a referee or member of the Committee to fulfill the responsibilities of the opponent, marker or fellow-competitor even if the opponent, marker or fellow-competitor is readily available.
- 6-2/1 **Meaning of “Handicap”**
Amended for clarity and repositioned. (Formerly USGA/6-2/100)
- 6-2b/2 **Wrong Handicap Knowingly Used in Stroke Play; Error Discovered After Competition Closed**
Amended to clarify that A is deemed to have knowingly played off a higher handicap even if he had been uncertain as to which handicap to use.
- 6-4/5.3 **Status of Additional Persons and Items Carried by Such Persons for Player**
Amended to clarify that the additional person is not carrying the player’s clubs.
- 8-2b/1 **Caddie Casts Shadow to Indicate Line for Putting**
Amended for clarity.
- 10-1a/2 **Determination of Honor at Hole Following Claim**
Amended for clarity.
- 13-3/2 **Making Stroke While Kneeling on Towel**
Amended to clarify that the answer would be the same if the player wrapped the towel around his knees.
- 13-4/38 **Sand Smoothed After Ball Played Out of Bunker; Ball Later Returns to Smoothed Area**
Amended to correspond properly with Exception 2 to Rule 13-4.
- 14-3/16 **Use of Electronic Devices**
Amended for clarity.
- 14-6/1 **Ball Moves in Water in Water Hazard After Address**
Amended for clarity.
- 15/14 **Ball in Bunker Deemed Unplayable, Dropped in Bunker and Played; Ball Then Discovered to Be Stray Ball**
Amended to reference the player’s ability to lift the found ball for identification under Rule 12-2.
- 16-1a/9 **Brushing Loose Impediments Off Line of Putt with Palm of Hand**
Amended to provide for no penalty if nothing is pressed down and the player does not roughen the surface with the intention of testing its condition.
- 18-1/3 **Player Unaware Ball Moved by Outside Agency Does Not Replace Ball**
Amended so that the answer corresponds with the Note to Rule 18-1.

- 18-1/8 **Ball Moved by Stone Dislodged by Partner's or Opponent's Stroke**
Amended for clarity.
- 18-2a/20.5 **Player's Practice Swing Moves Loose Impediment Which Moves Ball**
Amended for clarity.
- 18-2a/21 **Ball Moved Accidentally by Player in Playing Wrong Ball**
Amended for clarity.
- 18-3b/1 **Ball Moved Accidentally by Opponent in Playing His Own Ball**
Amended for clarity.
- 18-3b/2 **Opponent's Stroke Disturbs Bushes Causing Player's Ball to Move**
Amended for clarity.
- 18-5/3 **Competitor and Fellow-Competitor Unaware Ball Moved by Fellow-Competitor's Ball Until After Completion of Hole**
Amended so that the answer corresponds with the Note to Rule 18-1.
- 20/2 **Borrowing Club for Measuring Purposes**
Amended to clarify that, if a player who is to drop a ball borrows a club to measure with, he must be able to obtain the same result with one of his own clubs.
- 20-3a/2 **Using Line on Ball for Alignment**
Amended to state explicitly that it is permissible for a player to draw a line on the ball for alignment.
- 20-3b/3 **Lie Changed by Removal of Gallery-Control Stake**
Expanded to provide the ruling if the player had sanctioned the removal of the gallery-control stake.
- 20-4/2 **Ball Lifted from Putting Green and Placed by Caddie Behind Marker**
Amended to emphasize the intent element of putting a ball into play.
- 23/6.5 **Status of Snake**
Expanded to clarify that an item or person can fall under more than one Definition.
- 23-1/6.5 **Removal of Loose Impediments from Spot Where Ball to Be Placed**
Amended to refer to the spot where the dropped ball first struck a part of the course when re-dropped.
- 24-2b/11 **Ball Lying on Elevated Part of Immovable Obstruction**
Expanded to provide the relief procedure when the ball lies underground.
- 25/13 **Bunker Totally Under Repair**
Amended to provide that a bunker that is entirely ground under repair automatically becomes through the green unless the Committee states otherwise.
- 26-1/9 **Caddie Lifts Ball in Water Hazard Without Player's Authority**
Amended to provide for no penalty under Rule 18-2a if there was no doubt or it was reasonable to assume from the player's actions or statements that he would make his next stroke from outside the water hazard.

- 26-1/19 **Permissible Dropping Area Under Lateral Water Hazard Rule So Narrow Player Has Difficulty Dropping Within It**
Amended to clarify that if the player drops the ball in a wrong place he may correct the error by using any of the options available under Rule 26-1.
- 26-2/2 **Ball Played from Within Hazard Comes to Rest in Same Hazard After Exiting Hazard**
Amended for clarity.
- 28/6 **Player Plays Second Shot, Deems Ball Unplayable and Returns to Tee**
Amended for clarity.
- 29/6 **Signing of Score Card in Foursome Stroke Play**
Amended to refer to Rule 31-3.
- 30-3f/9 **Player's Ball Moved by Partner in Playing His Own Ball**
Amended for clarity.
- 31-3/1 **Gross Score of Partner with Better Net Score Omitted from Score Card**
Amended for consistency in terminology with Rule 6-6b.
- 32-1/1 **Competing Simultaneously in Bogey, Par or Stableford Competition and Stroke-Play Competition**
Expanded to include par competitions.
- 32-1/2 **Omitting Holes in Bogey, Par or Stableford Competition**
Expanded to include par competitions.
- 33/3 **Match-Play Finalists Both Disqualified**
Amended to give the Committee the option of having the beaten semi-finalists play a match to determine the winner of the competition.
- 33-2b/1 **Holes Relocated and/or Tee-Markers Moved During Stroke-Play Round**
Expanded to refer to new Decision 33-2b/1.5.
- 33-8/24 **Local Rule Permitting Relief from Edging Grooves Around Putting Green**
Amended to have the Local Rule provide relief from interference with the player's area of intended swing.
- 33-8/32.5 **Local Rule Treating Severe Damage by Non-Burrowing Animals as Ground Under Repair**
Amended for consistency with the Note to Rule 25-1a.
- 34-1b/4 **Competitor Changes Weight of Club During Round; Breach Discovered After Competition Closed**
Amended to clarify the time period within which the player may have known he had incurred a penalty.

Withdrawn Decision

- 25-3/2 **Player Makes Several Strokes on Wrong Putting Green**

Re-Numbered Decisions

- 5-1/1.5 **Status of Ball Not on List of Conforming Golf Balls**
(Formerly USGA/5-1/101)
- 6-2/1 **Meaning of “Handicap”**
(Formerly USGA/6-2/100)