

RULES OF GOLF EXPLAINED

# TRAINER'S GUIDE

LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS



## Introduction to the Rules of Golf Explained Video Series

Rules of Golf Explained is a collection of 12 short videos offering simple, straight-forward explanations of how to play by the Rules and what your choices are when applying the Rules in situations that happen while playing. The explanations should be familiar but each will probably contain a thing (or things) not previously known or realized by many golfers who view them.

The following information is provided to help you conduct a presentation approximately 20 minutes in length to a small group of golfers using any of the 12 Rules of Golf Explained videos as the center piece. Each presentation is divided into four parts:

- 1) **TEASER QUESTION (1 to 2 minutes):** Each video begins by showing an incident and asking a Rules question about it. Ask participants to consider the question and write down or remember their answer before continuing to view the video. This question will be reviewed and participants will have the opportunity to find out the correct answer at the end of the video. This teaser question is designed to focus the attention of participants on the topic covered in the video.
- 2) **VIDEO (3 to 5 minutes depending on the video)**
- 3) **TEASER QUESTION REVIEW AND ANSWER (2 to 4 minutes):** Most participants, after watching the video, should be clear on the correct answer to this question (even if they were not entirely sure prior to viewing the video). As the presenter, you will have the option to click the button for either the correct or incorrect answer.
  - a. If the correct answer is selected, a message communicating the answer is correct will appear.
  - b. If the incorrect answer button is selected, a message stating that the answer is incorrect will appear.

Regardless of which answer is selected, three buttons will appear.

- a. **<Back to Question>** allows the opportunity to review the question.
- b. **<Review>** will replay the portion of video that provides the answer to the question.
- c. **<Continue>** will advance to the next question without reviewing the answer to the question.

Notes are provided in the next section of this Trainer's Guide for this and the other three questions to help you as the presentation leader clear up any confusion participants might have with incorrect answers.

- 4) **THREE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (5 to 8 minutes):** The three additional follow-up questions are meant to reinforce other important points made in the video. As the presenter, you will once again have the opportunity to click the buttons for the correct or incorrect answers. As outlined above with the first question, you will always have the option to:
  - a. Review the question.
  - b. Replay the relevant part of the video.
  - c. Continue to the next question or the end of the video.

A note of caution: These videos are not comprehensive explanations of the Rules covered, but broad overviews meant to cover fundamental and commonly encountered aspects of each Rule presented. If questions come up that are not answered by the video, we recommend they be handled individually after the formal presentation session. If you know the answer and are comfortable answering, please do. If you are not, the USGA can be contacted at (908) 326-1850 or by email at [Rules@usga.org](mailto:Rules@usga.org).

## **Rules of Golf Explained – Loose Impediments**

This segment focuses on Loose Impediments. Loose impediments are natural objects, things that are naturally present on golf courses but which have become detached and are therefore somewhat out of place. Loose Impediments include items such as pine cones, leaves, sticks and stones. They may be moved by the player in most instances, as long as the ball does not move.

Two of the basic principles of the game of golf are **1) you play the course as you find it** and **2) you play your ball as it lies**. However, the Rules of Golf make an exception to these principles by allowing players to move loose impediments that might interfere with their play.

The video describes what loose impediments are and when they may and may not be moved out of the way.

### **The primary messages of this segment are:**

- DETACHED NATURAL OBJECTS are considered loose impediments
- Most of the time, loose impediments may be moved without penalty
- There is a penalty if you cause your ball to move when you move a loose impediment (except when your ball is on the putting green).

### **The secondary message of this segment is:**

- If your ball and a loose impediment are in the same hazard the loose impediment may not be touched or moved.
- It's a penalty to move a loose impediment out of the way of a moving ball.

### Teaser Question (Question 1)

**Q1.** Do the Rules allow loose impediments such as stones to be removed when your ball and the stone are in the same bunker?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ **No** (correct answer)

Click button "Continue to video to find the answer."

### Teaser Question (Question 1) Review

Question answered correctly: "That's correct!"

Question answered incorrectly: "Sorry, that's not correct."

Choose between the three options:

- **<Back to Question>** allows the opportunity to correctly answer the question, or
- **<Review>** to replay that portion of the video which answers this question, or
- **<Continue>** to go to Question 2.

### Three Follow-up Questions (Questions 2, 3 and 4)

**Q2.** Which of the following do the Rules of Golf consider loose impediments?

- ☐ Drink bottle (incorrect, drink bottles are man-made and therefore obstructions)
- ☐ **Fallen leaves** (correct answer)
- ☐ Red water hazard stake (incorrect, water hazard stakes are obstructions)
- ☐ **Fallen tree branch** (correct answer)
- ☐ **Sand on putting green** (correct answer)

If all three correct answers are chosen: "That's correct!"

If only one, two, or three of the four correct answers are chosen: "Your choice is correct! However, there are three loose impediments among the five choices."

If the incorrect answer is chosen: "Sorry, that's not correct. This is not a loose impediment."

Choose between the three options:

- **<Back to Question>** allows the opportunity to correctly answer the question, or
- **<Review>** to replay that portion of the video which answers this question, or
- **<Continue>** to go to Question 3.



**Q3.**Are you allowed to get help to remove a loose impediment that interferes with your play?

- ☐ **Yes** (correct answer)
- ☐ No

Question answered correctly: "That's correct!"

Question answered incorrectly: "Sorry, that's not correct."

Choose between the three options:

- **<Back to Question>** allows the opportunity to correctly answer the question, or
- **<Review>** to replay that portion of the video which answers this question, or
- **<Continue>** to go to Question 4.

**Q4.**If your ball moves because you move a loose impediment in the fairway or the rough, the ball must be replaced and:

- ☐ There is no penalty
- ☐ **You incur a one-stroke penalty (correct answer)**

Question answered correctly: "That's correct!"

Question answered incorrectly: "Sorry, that's not correct."

Choose between the three options:

- **<Back to Question>** allows the opportunity to correctly answer the question, or
- **<Review>** to replay that portion of the video which answers this question, or
- **<Continue>** to go to the end of the video.

## **Resources:**

## **Video Script:**

### **► – VIDEO CLIP WITH INTRODUCTORY QUESTION**

#### **PART 1 – INTRODUCTION**

One of the fundamental principles underlying the Rules of Golf is you must **PLAY THE COURSE AS YOU FIND IT** and you are not permitted to alter it in order to improve your lie, your line of play, or the area of your intended stance or intended swing.

The Rules however make an exception to this principle when it comes to the treatment of **LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS**. Loose impediments may be moved **WITHOUT PENALTY** even if doing so improves one of those areas.

#### **PART 2 – DEFINITION**

Loose impediments are **NATURAL OBJECTS** ... things that are normally and naturally present on golf courses. What distinguishes loose impediments from all other natural objects is that they have become **DETACHED** and are therefore somewhat out of place. Fallen leaves ... loose stones ... broken-off twigs ... pine cones and pine needles ... and tree branches are loose impediments commonly encountered on golf courses.

#### **PART 3 – RELIEF**

While loose impediments may be removed without penalty, that doesn't mean they can be removed entirely without risk. If moving a loose impediment causes your ball to move, you incur a penalty of one stroke and must replace the ball to its original location, so be careful when touching or removing loose impediments close to your ball.

This player has a large loose impediment interfering with the area of his intended swing and his line of play. He incurs no penalty for moving it out of his way as long as he doesn't cause his ball to move. Nothing in the Rules prevents him from getting help to move it.

#### **PART 4 - EXCEPTIONS**

The Rules include three exceptions to the general treatment of loose impediments as just reviewed. One is generous, the other two involve penalties.

Exception 1: Since a ball on the putting green may be marked and lifted and loose impediments removed without penalty, there is also no penalty when a ball left on the green moves as a result of removing a loose impediment ... as long as the ball is replaced.

Exception 2: Loose impediments may not be touched or moved when **YOUR BALL** and **THE LOOSE IMPEDIMENT** lie in or touch the same bunker or same water hazard. If you do you will breach of the loose impediment Rule ... a loss-of-hole penalty in match play and a two-stroke penalty in stroke play.

Exception 3: When a ball is in motion, loose impediments that might influence the movement of that ball must not be removed. Doing so is a loss-of-hole penalty in match play and a two-stroke penalty in stroke play.

## **PART 5 – QUESTIONS**

For more information about LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS refer to the Definition of Loose Impediments on page 28 of the Rules of Golf and to Rule 23-1 – Loose Impediments; Relief on page 90.

(pause)

The USGA and the R&A jointly govern the game worldwide, administering the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status, Equipment Standards and World Amateur Golf Rankings.