



Summary Chart: Proposed Changes in Definitions and Key Terms in the New Rules of Golf for 2019

The purpose of this document is to identify in one place for ease of reference all of the proposed changes to the formal Definitions and other key terms in the proposed new Rules of Golf for 2019. There are many terms - some defined, some undefined – that are essential to understand in applying the Rules. This document shows how those terms will change in the proposed new Rules.

This document is organized in three parts — (1) a chart describing all proposed changes to the defined terms that are found in the current Rules of Golf; (2) a chart describing the proposed new defined terms that have been added in the proposed changes to the Rules of Golf; and (3) a chart describing other proposed changes to key terms in the Rules that are not part of the formal Definitions.

Each entry identifies the new and/or old term and explains the change.

Chart #1

Proposed Changes to the Formal Definitions Currently Found in the Rules of Golf

Current Defined Term	Proposed New Defined Term	Explanation
Abnormal ground conditions	Abnormal course conditions (now includes immovable obstructions)	Including immovable obstructions in the umbrella term “abnormal ground conditions” allows current Rules 24-2, 24-3 and 25-1 to be combined into a single Rule with the same relief procedures.
Addressing the Ball	Eliminated	Formal definition no longer needed, given recent and proposed new Rule revisions.
Ball Deemed to Move	Eliminated	Covered under definition of “Move.”



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Current Defined Term	Proposed New Defined Term	Explanation
Ball Holed	Eliminated	Covered under definition of “Holed.”
Ball Lost	Eliminated	This term is covered under definition of “Lost Ball.”
Burrowing Animal Hole	Animal Hole	Revised to include all holes dug by animals (except when dug by animals that are loose impediments, such as worms or insects), not just those animals that dig a hole for habitation or shelter. For example, this new term includes holes made by a dog.
Casual Water	Temporary Water	Revised to indicate more clearly the nature of the condition and to help in translation; no substantive change.
Competitor (and “Fellow Competitor”)	Eliminated	This term is currently limited to stroke play only, and this often leads to confusion. The proposed new Rules will now use the generic term “player” for both match play and stroke play. The term “Fellow Competitor” (which is currently defined as part of the definition of “Competitor”) has also been eliminated.
Equity	Eliminated	This term is often misunderstood and misapplied. The proposed new Rules still recognize a similar concept in Rule 20.3, but without giving it a label.
Forecaddie	Eliminated	This term is not needed to apply the current Rules or the proposed new Rules.
Forms of Match Play	Match Play	Revised so that “match play” is added as a formal definition which then identifies the different forms of match play.
Forms of Stroke Play	Stroke Play	Revised so that “stroke play” is added as a formal definition which then identifies the different forms of stroke play.
Hazards	Eliminated	The current term is an umbrella term covering both water hazards (now to be part of the new term “penalty areas”) and bunkers; penalty areas and bunkers will now be treated entirely separately in the Rules.



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Current Defined Term	Proposed New Defined Term	Explanation
Lateral Water Hazard	Eliminated	Water hazards are now part of the new term “penalty areas,” and the concept of a red-marked water hazard from which lateral relief is allowed is now called a red penalty area.
Line of Putt	Eliminated	The single term will now be “line of play.” There is no need for a separate term as the proposed new Rules will permit players to touch the line of their putt on the putting green.
Move or Moved	Move	The single term “move” is enough.
Nearest Point of Relief	Nearest Point of Complete Relief	The word “Complete” has been added to emphasize that when taking relief from interference by certain conditions or situations, the player must take complete relief.
Observer	Eliminated	This term is not needed to apply the current Rules or the proposed new Rules.
Outside Agency	Outside Influence	Revised to indicate more clearly that it is relevant when these people or objects influence play.
Rub of the Green	Eliminated	This term is not used in the proposed new Rules.
Rule or Rules	Eliminated	The formal definition not needed; new Rule 1.3 explains what “the Rules” means.
Single	Eliminated	The term is no longer used in this context within the Rules of Golf.
Stipulated Round	Round	Eliminated “stipulated,” which is unnecessary and rarely used by golfers or Committees.
Teeing Ground	Teeing Area	Revised to correspond to use of word “area” to describe certain defined areas of the course (such as “general area” and “penalty area”).



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Through the Green	General Area	Revised to eliminate the confusion about what the words “through” and “the green” mean in this term, as many golfers believe this term refers to a ball that has carried over and through the putting green. The term “general area” is intended to convey that it covers the entire area of the course with the exception of four specific areas (teeing area, penalty areas, bunkers and putting green).
Water Hazard	Penalty Area	Revised term to reflect the expanded authority to be given to Committees to mark additional types of areas (not containing water) to have the same status as today’s red- or yellow-marked water hazards. Examples include jungles, lava-rock fields, deserts, etc.

Chart #2
Proposed New Definitions to be Added in the New Rules of Golf for 2019

Proposed New Defined Term	Use of Term in Current Rules of Golf	Explanation
Animal	None	Added for clarity and for efficiency in writing the Rules that relate to animals.
Attend	Undefined term “attend” used in current Rule 17-1	Added to bring together important concepts currently covered in Rule 17 and Decisions.
Ball-Marker	Undefined term “ball-marker” used in current Rule 20 and throughout the Rules and Decisions	Added to clarify that a ball-marker is any artificial object used to mark the position of a ball (not just something made for that purpose); use of a loose impediment as a ball-marker is no longer allowed.



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Conditions Affecting the Stroke	None	Added to encompass all five areas (lie of ball, area of intended stance, area of intended swing, line of play, and area in which to drop or place a ball) where a player is restricted from improving conditions (current Rule 13-2; proposed new Rule 8.1a), allowing for efficiency in collectively referencing these areas throughout the Rules.
Drop	No current definition (but “drop” is currently used in Rule 20-2 and many other relief Rules)	Added to highlight this important procedure and to focus attention on its revised and relaxed requirements.
Embedded	No current definition but “embedded ball” is used in Rule 25-2 (and related Decision 25-2/0.5)	Added to highlight and formalize the internal definition currently found in Rule 25-2 and related Decision 25-2/0.5.
General Penalty	Not a defined term as such but defined in Rule 2-6 and Rule 3-5 and many uses in penalty statements	Added for efficiency in writing many penalty statements.
Immovable Obstructions	No current definition (but concept covered in definition of Obstructions)	Added to formalize this key term and to highlight the difference in treatment between Immovable Obstructions and Movable Obstructions.
Improve	No current definition (but used in Rule 13 and concept currently covered under Decision 13-2/0.5)	Added to formalize and define this key concept, bringing the essential guidance in Decision 13-2/0.5 into the Definitions.



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Integral Part of the Course	No current definition (but concept covered in definition of Obstructions)	Added to formalize and highlight the unique treatment of integral parts of the course, in conjunction with new definitions for immovable and movable obstructions.
Known or Virtually Certain	No current definition (but concept currently covered in Decision 26-1/1)	Added to highlight the importance of this standard (which will be expanded to apply to ball moved situations) and to clarify that it means at least 95% likely.
Lie	No current definition (but the term is used in numerous Rules and Decisions)	Added to clarify the meaning of this key term.
Mark	No current definition (but the term is used in numerous Rules and Decisions)	Added to allow for efficiency in referencing this concept throughout the Rules, in conjunction with the new definition of “ball-marker.”
Maximum Score	None	Added to define this new form of stroke play.
Movable Obstructions	No current definition (but concept covered in definition of Obstructions)	Added to formalize this key term and to highlight the difference in treatment between Immovable Obstructions and Movable Obstructions.
Natural Forces	None (but concept is used within Rule 18)	Added to highlight this important concept of when a ball at rest has been moved by something other than a person or outside influence (such as by wind or water or when the ball moves for no apparent reason because of the effects of gravity); it previously was only found in multiple unrelated Decisions and had no label.



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No Play Zone	No current definition (but relates to current term “environmentally sensitive area” found in Appendix I)	Added to bring together the existing authority to declare Environmentally Sensitive Areas and areas of ground under repair from which play is prohibited, and as part of an expanded authority given to Committees to prohibit play from areas for any reason they decide is appropriate.
Number of Strokes Taken	No current definition (but relates to current concept of “wrong information” currently found in Rule 9-2)	Added to formalize this important concept and to make it easier to understand, and to allow for efficiency in referring to this concept throughout the match play Rules.
Par / Bogey	“Par” and “bogey” are not defined in the current Definitions, but are referred to in the definition of Forms of Stroke Play and are explained in Rule 32.	Added to formalize the use of these terms for this form of play covered in current Rule 32 and new Rule 21.3; also, have consolidated them into the single term “Par/Bogey” because there is only a single form of play (in which the fixed score may be par, bogey or some other fixed target score set by the Committee).
Point of Maximum Available Relief	No current definition (but used in Rule 25 and concept currently covered under Decision 25-1b/5)	Added to formalize the guidance currently only available through Decisions.
Relief Area	None	Added to define the new concept of an area of specific dimensions where a ball must be dropped and played from whenever a player is taking relief under a Rule.
Replace	No current definition (but “replace” is currently used in Rule 20-3 and many other Rules)	Added to highlight and formalize this important procedure, and emphasize that it requires intent to put a ball into play.



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Score Card	No current definition (but the term is used in Rule 6-6)	Added to bring this essential part of stroke play into the Definitions and to reflect that electronic-scoring methods are allowed.
Serious Breach	No current definition (but the term is currently used in several Rules, with different meanings in different contexts)	Added to highlight and formalize this important concept that now applies only to playing from a wrong place in stroke play when the player has gained a significant advantage in doing so; the current use of this term in other contexts (such as a serious breach of etiquette or a serious breach under current Rule 1-2) are now considered “serious misconduct” under new Rule 1.2a.
Stableford	“Stableford” is not defined in the current Definitions, but is referred to in the definition of Forms of Stroke Play and is explained in Rule 32.	Added to formalize the use of this term for this form of play covered in current Rule 32 and new Rule 21.1.
Stroke and Distance	No current definition (but the term is currently used in many relief Rules)	Added to formally identify this important relief procedure that is used under multiple Rules.
Tee	No current definition (but the term used in Rule 11 and covered in Appendix IV)	Added to bring into the defined terms the information previously included in Appendix IV.
Wrong Place	No current definition (but concept currently covered in Rule 20-7a)	Added to formalize a key concept and to give examples that help explain it.



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Chart #3
Proposed New or Changed Undefined Terms to be Used in the New Rules of Golf for 2019

Proposed New Term	Term Used in Current Rules of Golf	Explanation
Advice Giver	None (but Rules refer to a person appointed to give advice in a team competition)	Added to provide a name for the person in a team competition who is allowed by the Committee to give advice to all the players on a team.
Back-on-a-Line Relief	None (but concept is currently covered in relief options under Rules 26-1b and 28b that provide relief behind a known point)	Added as a description of how relief may be taken from abnormal course conditions (Rule 16.1c), penalty areas (Rule 17.1c(2)) and unplayable lies (Rules 19.2b and 19.3b).
Code of Conduct	None	Added to refer to the new Local Rule authority to be given to Committees to adopt a code that sets the Committee's own standards for player conduct and sets penalties for breach of those standards.
Damage on the putting green	None (repair on the putting green is currently only permitted for old-hole plugs and ball marks)	Added as an umbrella term for the additional types of damage that may now be repaired on the putting green; includes all types of damage on the putting green except aeration holes, natural defects of the ground surface or natural wear of the hole).
Edge	Margin	Changed the term to help clarify what this important concept means.



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Dangerous Animal Situation	No current term (but concept currently covered in Decision 1-4/10)	Added as part of adding Rule 16.2, which provides relief from dangerous animal situations where a player cannot play his or her ball as it lies without being seriously endangered.
Fairly Searching	Searching	Added to highlight this important concept that allows a player to take reasonably necessary actions (for example, bending growing things) during a search for his or her ball.
Immediate Suspension & Normal Suspension	Suspension of Play and Note to Rule 6-8	Added “immediate suspension” to help highlight a Committee’s ability to require play to stop at once when there is a potential danger to players; and adds “normal suspension” to refer to all other reasons for stopping play (such as bad weather or darkness).
Lateral Relief	None (but concept is currently covered in relief options under Rules 26-1c and 28c that provide relief to the side of a known point)	Added to describe how relief may be taken from penalty areas and unplayable lies (Rules 17.1c(3) and 19.2c, respectively).
Local Rules	Local Rules and Conditions of Competition	All Conditions of Competition that effectively are a Rule (that is, they impose obligations on the player and have penalties for breach of those obligations) are now part of the category of Local Rules. Conditions of Competition are now limited to items such as eligibility, dates of the competition or other non-Rules related information or requirements.
Reasonable Judgment	None	Added as a new standard that applies when assessing a player’s measurement or estimation of a spot, area or distance when applying a Rule. The player’s reasonable judgment will be upheld (even if later shown to be wrong by other evidence such as video review) if the player did all that can be reasonably expected under the circumstances to make an accurate estimation or measurement.



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Red Penalty Area	Lateral Water Hazard	This type of penalty area is now designated by the color of its marking (red in this case).
Reference Point or Reference Line	Many (Nearest Point of Relief, Point where ball last crossed margin of hazard)	Added to establish a consistent approach when a player takes relief. It is the point or line from which a player would start measuring to determine the relief area in which he or she may take relief.
Ruling Request	Claim	Changed the term to increase understanding of this important match-play concept; a player now requests a ruling rather than making a claim.
Serious Misconduct	Serious Breach of Etiquette	Changed the term to increase understanding and highlight the importance of players conducting themselves appropriately on the course (see Rule 1.2).
Spirit of the Game	Not part of the Rules (currently only found in the Etiquette Section)	Added to highlight this fundamental part of what it means to play golf: the need to act with integrity, show consideration to others and take good care of the course.
Unreasonable Delay	Undue Delay	Changed the term to make it more understandable and expanded to include some actions that were previously considered to constitute a discontinuance of play.
Yellow Penalty Area	Water Hazard	This type of penalty area is now designated by the color of its marking (yellow in this case).