



# Draft Proposed New Rules of Golf for 2019

---

The Full Text of Proposed Rules 1-24 and Definitions

R&A Rules Limited and the United States Golf Association

March 1, 2017

<b>I. Fundamentals of the Game (Rules 1-4)</b>	<b>1</b>
Rule 1 – The Game, Player Conduct and the Rules	1
1.1 The Game of Golf	1
1.2 Standards of Player Conduct	1
1.3 Playing by the Rules	2
Rule 2 – The Course	5
2.1 Course Boundaries and Out of Bounds	5
2.2 Defined Areas of the Course	5
2.3 Objects or Conditions that May Interfere with Play	6
2.4 No Play Zones	6
Rule 3 – The Competition	7
3.1 Central Elements of Every Competition	7
3.2 Match Play	8
3.3 Stroke Play	12
Rule 4 – The Player's Equipment	15
4.1 Clubs	15
4.2 Balls	18
4.3 Use of Equipment	20
<b>II. Playing the Round and a Hole (Rules 5-6)</b>	<b>23</b>
Rule 5 – Playing the Round	23
5.1 Meaning of Round	23
5.2 Practicing on Course Before or Between Rounds	23
5.3 Starting and Ending a Round	24
5.4 Playing in Groups	25
5.5 Practice During Round	25
5.6 Unreasonable Delay; Prompt Pace of Play	26
5.7 Stopping Play; Resuming Play	27
Rule 6 – Playing a Hole	31
6.1 Starting Play of a Hole	31
6.2 Specific Rules for Playing Ball from Teeing Area	32
6.3 Ball Used in Play of Hole	34
6.4 Order of Play When Playing Hole	36
6.5 Completing Play of a Hole	38

<b>III. Playing the Ball (Rules 7-11)</b>	40
Rule 7 – Searching for and Identifying Ball	40
7.1 How to Fairly Search for Ball	40
7.2 How to Identify Ball	41
7.3 Lifting Ball to Identify It	41
7.4 Ball Moved During Search or Identification	41
Rule 8 – Course Played as It Is Found	43
8.1 Player Actions That Improve Conditions Affecting the Stroke	43
8.2 Player's Deliberate Actions to Improve Other Physical Conditions to Affect His or Her Own Play	45
8.3 Player's Deliberate Actions to Improve or Damage Physical Conditions to Affect Another Player's Play	46
Rule 9 – Ball Played as It Lies; Ball at Rest Lifted or Moved	47
9.1 Ball Played as It Lies	47
9.2 Deciding Whether and Why Ball Moved	47
9.3 Ball Moved by Natural Forces	49
9.4 Ball Lifted or Moved by Player	49
9.5 Ball Lifted or Moved by Opponent	50
9.6 Ball Moved by Outside Influence	51
9.7 Ball-Marker Moved or Lifted	52
Rule 10 – Preparing for and Making a Stroke; Advice and Help; Caddies	53
10.1 Making a Stroke	53
10.2 Advice and Other Help	54
10.3 Caddie	56
Rule 11 – Ball in Motion After Stroke Hits Person, Animal or Object	60
11.1 Ball in Motion After Stroke Accidentally Hits Someone or Something	60
11.2 Ball in Motion After Stroke Deliberately Deflected or Stopped	61
11.3 Deliberately Moving Objects or Altering Conditions to Affect Ball in Motion After Stroke	62
<b>IV. Special Rules for Bunkers and the Putting Green (Rules 12-13)</b>	64
Rule 12 – Bunkers	64
12.1 When Ball Lies in Bunker	64
12.2 Playing Ball in Bunker	64
12.3 Special Rules for Relief for Ball in Bunker	65

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

Rule 13 – Putting Greens .....	66
13.1 Specific Rules for Putting Greens.....	66
13.2 The Flagstick.....	69
13.3 Ball Overhanging Hole or Resting against Flagstick .....	71
<b>V. Lifting and Returning a Ball to Play (Rule 14).....</b>	<b>72</b>
Rule 14 – Procedures for Ball: Marking, Lifting and Cleaning, Replacing on Spot, Dropping in Relief Area, Playing from Wrong Place.....	72
14.1 Marking, Lifting and Cleaning Ball .....	72
14.2 Lifted or Moved Ball to Be Replaced on Spot.....	73
14.3 Dropping Ball in Relief Area.....	75
14.4 When Replaced, Dropped or Placed Ball Is in Play .....	78
14.5 Correcting Mistake Made in Taking Relief.....	78
14.6 Making Next Stroke from Where Previous Stroke Made .....	79
14.7 Playing from Wrong Place .....	79
<b>VI. Relief Without Penalty (Rules 15-16) .....</b>	<b>82</b>
Rule 15 – Relief from Movable Objects: Loose Impediments, Movable Obstructions, Balls Helping or Interfering with Play .....	82
15.1 Loose Impediments.....	82
15.2 Movable Obstructions .....	83
15.3 Ball or Ball-Marker Helping or Interfering with Play .....	84
Rule 16 – Relief from Abnormal Course Conditions (Including Immovable Obstructions), Dangerous Animal Situations, Embedded Ball.....	86
16.1 Abnormal Course Conditions (Including Immovable Obstructions) .....	86
16.2 Dangerous Animal Situation .....	90
16.3 Embedded Ball.....	91
16.4 Lifting Ball to See If It Lies in Condition Where Relief Allowed .....	92
<b>VII. Relief With Penalty (Rules 17-19) .....</b>	<b>93</b>
Rule 17 – Ball in Penalty Area .....	93
17.1 Options for Ball in Penalty Area.....	93
17.2 Relief Options after Playing Ball From Penalty Area.....	96
17.3 No Relief under Other Rules for Ball in Penalty Area .....	97
Rule 18 – Stroke and Distance Relief, Ball Lost or Out of Bounds; Provisional Ball .....	98
18.1 Relief under Penalty of Stroke and Distance Allowed at any Time.....	98
18.2 Ball Lost or Out of Bounds: Stroke and Distance Relief Must Be Taken.....	98
18.3 Provisional Ball.....	99

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

Rule 19 – Ball Unplayable .....	102
19.1 Player May Decide to Take Unplayable Ball Relief Anywhere Except Penalty Area .....	102
19.2 Relief Options for Unplayable Ball in General Area or on Putting Green .....	102
19.3 Relief Options for Unplayable Ball in Bunker.....	103
<b>VIII. Procedures for Players and Committee in Applying the Rules (Rule 20) .....</b>	<b>104</b>
Rule 20 – Resolving Rules Issues During Round; Rulings by Referee and Committee.....	104
20.1 Resolving Rules Issues During Round.....	104
20.2 Rulings on Issues under the Rules.....	108
20.3 Situations Not Covered by the Rules.....	109
<b>IX. Other Forms of Play (Rules 21-24).....</b>	<b>110</b>
Rule 21 – Other Forms of Individual Stroke Play and Match Play .....	110
21.1 Stableford .....	110
21.2 Maximum Score .....	113
21.3 Par/Bogey.....	115
21.4 Three-Ball Match Play.....	117
21.5 Other Forms of Playing Golf .....	118
Rule 22 – Foursomes and Threesomes.....	119
22.1 Overview of Foursomes and Threesomes .....	119
22.2 Either Partner Acts for Side .....	119
22.3 Side Must Alternate in Making Strokes.....	119
22.4 Starting the Round .....	120
Rule 23 – Four-Ball and Best-Ball.....	122
23.1 Overview of Four-Ball and Best-Ball.....	122
23.2 Scoring in Four-Ball and Best-Ball.....	122
23.3 Player's Actions Affecting Play of Partner's Ball.....	123
23.4 One Or Both Partners May Represent the Side.....	124
23.5 Side's Order of Play .....	125
23.6 When Penalty Applies to One Partner Only or Applies to Side .....	125
Rule 24 – Team Competitions .....	128
24.1 Overview of Team Competitions .....	128
24.2 Conditions of Competition in Team Play .....	128
24.3 Team Captain.....	128
24.4 Advice.....	129

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

<b>Definitions</b>	130
<i>Abnormal Course Condition</i>	130
<i>Advice</i>	130
<i>Animal</i>	130
<i>Animal Hole</i>	130
<i>Areas of the Course</i>	131
<i>Attend</i>	131
<i>Ball in Play</i>	131
<i>Ball-Marker</i>	132
<i>Best-Ball</i>	132
<i>Bunker</i>	132
<i>Caddie</i>	133
<i>Committee</i>	133
<i>Conditions Affecting the Stroke</i>	133
<i>Course</i>	134
<i>Drop</i>	134
<i>Embedded</i>	134
<i>Equipment</i>	134
<i>Flagstick</i>	135
<i>Four-Ball</i>	135
<i>Foursomes</i>	135
<i>General Area</i>	135
<i>General Penalty</i>	136
<i>Ground Under Repair</i>	136
<i>Hole</i>	137
<i>Holed Out</i>	137
<i>Holed</i>	137
<i>Honor</i>	137
<i>Immovable Obstruction</i>	137
<i>Improve</i>	137
<i>Integral Part of the Course</i>	137
<i>Known or Virtually Certain</i>	138
<i>Lie</i>	138
<i>Line of Play</i>	138

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

<i>Loose Impediment</i> .....	138
<i>Lost Ball</i> .....	139
<i>Mark</i> .....	139
<i>Marker</i> .....	139
<i>Match Play</i> .....	140
<i>Maximum Score</i> .....	140
<i>Movable Obstruction</i> .....	140
<i>Move</i> .....	140
<i>Natural Forces</i> .....	140
<i>Nearest Point of Complete Relief</i> .....	141
<i>No Play Zone</i> .....	141
<i>Number of Strokes Taken</i> .....	142
<i>Obstruction</i> .....	142
<i>Opponent</i> .....	142
<i>Outside Influence</i> .....	143
<i>Out of Bounds</i> .....	143
<i>Par/Bogey</i> .....	143
<i>Partner</i> .....	144
<i>Penalty Area</i> .....	144
<i>Penalty Stroke</i> .....	145
<i>Point of Maximum Available Relief</i> .....	145
<i>Provisional Ball</i> .....	145
<i>Putting Green</i> .....	146
<i>Referee</i> .....	146
<i>Relief Area</i> .....	146
<i>Replace</i> .....	147
<i>Round</i> .....	147
<i>Score Card</i> .....	147
<i>Serious Breach</i> .....	147
<i>Side</i> .....	147
<i>Stableford</i> .....	148
<i>Stance</i> .....	148
<i>Stroke</i> .....	148
<i>Stroke and Distance</i> .....	148

*Stroke Play*..... 149

*Substituted Ball* ..... 149

*Tee*..... 149

*Teeing Area*..... 150

*Temporary Water* ..... 150

*Three-Ball*..... 150

*Threesomes* ..... 150

*Wrong Ball*..... 151

*Wrong Place*..... 151

*Wrong Putting Green*..... 151

DRAFT



## **I. Fundamentals of the Game (Rules 1-4)**

### **Rule 1 – The Game, Player Conduct and the Rules**

*Purpose of Rule 1: Rule 1 describes these central principles for the player:*

- **Play the course as you find it and play the ball as it lies.**
- You are responsible for your own conduct and must **play by the Rules and in the spirit of the game.**
- If you breach a Rule, a **penalty** will be applied to make sure that you gain no advantage over an opponent or the field in stroke play.

#### **I.1 The Game of Golf**

Golf is played in a *round* of 18 (or fewer) holes on a course by striking a ball with a club.

Each hole starts with a *stroke* from the *teeing area* and ends when the ball goes in the *hole* on the *putting green*.

After each *stroke*, the player:

- Plays the *course* as he or she finds it, and
- Plays the ball as it lies.

**But** there are **exceptions** where the Rules allow the player to alter conditions on the *course* and allow or require the player to play the ball from a different place than where it lies (see [Handbook \\_\\_](#)).

#### **I.2 Standards of Player Conduct**

##### **a. Conduct Expected of All Players**

All players are expected to play in the spirit of the game by:

- Acting with integrity – for example, by following the Rules, applying all penalties, and being honest.
- Showing consideration to others – for example, by playing at a prompt pace, looking out for the safety of others, and not distracting the play of another player.
- Taking good care of the *course* – for example, by replacing divots, raking *bunkers*, repairing ball-marks, and not causing unnecessary damage to the course.

The *Committee* may **disqualify** a player for serious misconduct that is contrary to the spirit of the game.

Penalties other than disqualification may be imposed for player misconduct only if covered in a Code of Conduct under Rule 1.2b.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on what is the spirit of the game and serious misconduct.

## b. Code of Conduct

The *Committee* may set its own standards of player conduct in a Code of Conduct adopted as a Local Rule.

- The Code may include penalties for breach of its standards, such as a one-stroke penalty or the *general penalty*.
- The *Committee* may also disqualify a player for serious misconduct in failing to meet the Code's standards.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** Guidance on setting standards and penalties in a Code of Conduct.

## 1.3 Playing by the Rules

The "Rules" means:

- Rules 1-24 of these Rules of Golf, and
- Any "Local Rules" the *Committee* adopts for the competition or the *course*, as allowed in Committee Procedures, \_\_.

### a. Player Responsibilities

Players are responsible for applying the Rules. The player may ask for help with the Rules from a *referee*, but if help is not reasonably available the player must play on and raise the issue with the *Committee* later (see Rule 20.1a).

Players are expected to be honest in:

(1) Applying Penalties.

- Players are expected to apply their own penalties.
- If a player breaches a Rule and deliberately ignores the penalty, **the player is disqualified.**
- If two or more players deliberately agree to ignore any Rule or any penalty, **they are disqualified.**

(2) Estimating or Measuring.

- Many Rules require players to estimate or measure a spot, point, line, area or distance.
- Such estimates or measurements need to be made promptly and with care but often cannot be precise.
- So long as the player does all that can be reasonably expected under the circumstances to make an accurate estimation or measurement, the player's reasonable judgment will be accepted even if later shown to be wrong by other information (such as video technology).

**b. Penalties**

(1) Actions Giving Rise to Penalties. Players may be penalized for their own actions or for the actions of people acting for them, such as their *caddie*.

(2) Levels of Penalties. Penalties are meant to cancel out any potential advantage to the player. There are three main penalty levels:

- One-Stroke Penalty. This penalty applies in both *match play* and *stroke play* under certain Rules where either (a) the potential advantage from a breach is minor or (b) a player takes relief under penalty by playing a ball from somewhere other than where the original ball came to rest.
- General Penalty (Loss of Hole in Match Play, Two-Stroke Penalty in Stroke Play). This penalty applies for a breach of most Rules, where the potential advantage is more significant than where only one *penalty stroke* applies.
- Disqualification Penalty. In both *match play* and *stroke play*, a player may be disqualified from the competition for certain actions or Rule breaches involving serious misconduct or the potential advantage is too high for the player to have a reliable score.

**Handbook \_\_:** List of all Rules by penalty level.

(3) Waiving, Altering or Adding Penalties. The *Committee* may waive, alter or add a penalty only in these two situations:

- When a *referee* or the *Committee* has made a mistake (see Rule 20.2c).
- In exceptional situations, when the *Committee* decides that a disqualification penalty should be waived or reduced to a lesser penalty.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on when to waive or alter a disqualification penalty.

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

(4) Applying Penalties to Multiple Breaches. A player will sometimes breach either multiple Rules or the same Rule multiple times before an intervening event happens, such as making a *stroke* or discovering the breach.

If the specific Rules do not say whether the player gets only one penalty or gets a separate penalty for each such breach, the answer depends on what the player did:

- Single Act or Related Acts. The player gets only one penalty; but if the act or acts breached multiple Rules involving different penalties, the most serious of the penalties applies.
- Unrelated Acts. The player gets a separate penalty for each breach.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on multiple breaches and penalties

DRAFT

## Rule 2 – The Course

**Purpose of Rule 2:** Rule 2 describes the basic things every player should know about the **course**: the “general area,” four other specific defined areas and the several types of defined objects and conditions that may be present and can interfere with play.

*It is important to know the area the ball lies in and the status of any interfering objects and conditions, because that often affects the requirements and options for playing the ball.*

### 2.1 Course Boundaries and Out of Bounds

Golf is played on a *course* whose boundaries are set by the *Committee*. All areas not on the *course* are *out of bounds* (see Rule 18.2).

### 2.2 Defined Areas of the Course

There are five *areas of the course*.

#### a. The General Area

The *general area* covers the entire *course* **except** for the four specific *areas of the course* described in (b) below.

It is called the “general” area because:

- It covers most of the *course* and is where a player’s ball will most often be played until the ball reaches the *putting green*.
- It includes every type of ground and growing or attached objects found in that area, such as fairway, rough, sand, trees, etc.

#### b. The Specific Areas

Specific Rules may apply to four *areas of the course* that are not in the *general area*:

- The *teeing area* of the hole being played – Rule 6.2,
- All *bunkers* – Rule 12,
- All *penalty areas* – Rule 17, and
- The *putting green* of the hole being played – Rule 13.

## 2.3 Objects or Conditions that May Interfere with Play

Specific Rules may give relief from interference by certain defined objects or conditions, such as:

- *Loose impediments* – Rule 15.1,
- *Movable obstructions* – Rule 15.2, and
- *Abnormal course conditions*, which includes *immovable obstructions*, *ground under repair*, *temporary water* and *animal holes* – Rule 16.1.

**But** there is no relief from *integral parts of the course* that may interfere with play.

## 2.4 No Play Zones

*No play zones* are designated parts of an *abnormal course condition* (see Rule 16.1f) or a *penalty area* (see Rule 17.1d) where play is not allowed.

A player must take relief when:

- His or her ball lies in a *no play zone*, or
- The *no play zone* interferes with playing a ball lying outside of it.

A Code of Conduct may tell players to stay out of a *no play zone* entirely.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule that designates a *no play zone* that is *out of bounds* but may interfere with play of a ball on the course.

## Rule 3 – The Competition

**Purpose of Rule 3:** Rule 3 covers the three central elements of all golf competitions – namely, (1) playing either **match play** or **stroke play**, (2) playing either on an **individual** basis or with a **partner as part of a side** and (3) scoring by either **gross scores** or **net scores** (after applying handicap).

### 3.1 Central Elements of Every Competition

#### a. Form of Play: Match Play or Stroke Play

(1) Match Play or Stroke Play. These are very different forms of play:

- In *match play*, a player and an *opponent* compete against each other based on holes won or lost.
- In the standard form of *stroke play* (see Rule 3.3), all players compete with one another based on the total score – this is, adding up the total number of strokes taken (including *penalty strokes*) to *hole out* on each hole in all *rounds*.

Most Rules apply in both forms of play, but certain Rules apply only in one or the other.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on the differences in the two forms of play and whether and how they may be combined in a single *round*.

(2) Other Forms of Stroke Play. Rule 21 covers other forms of *stroke play* (*Stableford*, *Maximum Score* and *Par/Bogey*) that use a different scoring method. Rules 1-20 apply in these forms of play, but as modified by Rule 21.

#### b. How Players Compete: Playing as an Individual or as Partners

Golf is played either by individual players competing on their own or by *partners* competing together as a *side*.

Although Rules 1-20 focus on individual play, they also apply:

- In competitions involving *partners* (*Foursomes*, *Threesomes*, *Four-Ball* and *Best-Ball*), but as modified by Rules 22-23, and
- In team competitions, but as modified by Rule 24.

### c. How Players Score: Gross Scores or Net Scores

(1) Gross-Score (or Scratch) Competitions. The player's "gross score" for a hole or the round is the total number of strokes taken, including penalty strokes. The player's handicap is not used.

In Rules 1-24, references to a player's score and number of strokes taken mean the gross score and gross number of strokes, unless there is a specific reference to net scores and handicap strokes.

(2) Net-Score (or Handicap) Competitions.

- The player's "net score" for a hole or the round is the gross score adjusted for the player's handicap strokes.
- This is done so that players of differing abilities can compete in a fair way.

Rules 1-24 apply to net-score competitions, as modified by the Rules on how handicaps are used. (For match play, see Rule 3.2b; for stroke play, see Rules 3.3b(5), (6).)

**Handbook** \_\_: Guidance on events where players compete in gross-score and net-score competitions at the same time.

## 3.2 Match Play

**Purpose of Rule 3.2:** Match play has specific Rules (particularly about **concessions** and **giving information about the number of strokes taken**) because the player and opponent compete solely against each other on every hole. Each player can see the other's play and protect his or her own interests.

### a. Result of Hole and Match

(1) Winning a Hole. A player wins a hole when:

- The player holes out with a lower score than the opponent,
- The opponent concedes the hole, or
- The opponent gets a loss of hole penalty (the general penalty).

(2) Tying a Hole. A hole is tied (also known as "halved") when:

- The player and opponent hole out with the same score, or
- After the hole has begun, the player and opponent agree to consider the hole tied.



(3) Winning a Match. A player wins a match when:

- The player leads the *opponent* by more holes than remain to be played,
- The *opponent* concedes the match, or
- The *opponent* is disqualified.

(4) Extending Tied Match. If a match is tied after the final hole, the match is extended one hole at a time until there is a winner. The *Committee* decides the holes to be played.

**But** the conditions of the competition may say that the match will end in a tie rather than be extended.

(5) Concession of Stroke, Hole or Match. A player may concede the *opponent's* stroke, a hole or a match:

- Conceding Stroke. This is allowed any time the *opponent's* ball is at rest and before the stroke is made. The *opponent* has then *holed out* with a score that includes that conceded stroke, and the ball may be removed by anyone.
- Conceding Hole. This is allowed any time before the completion of the hole, including before the players start the hole.
- Conceding Match. This is allowed any time before the completion of the match, including before the players start the match.

A concession is final and cannot be declined or withdrawn.

A concession is made only when clearly communicated, either verbally or by an action that clearly shows the player's intent to concede the *stroke*, the hole or the match.

## **b. Applying Handicaps in Net-Score Match**

(1) Declaring Handicaps. The player and *opponent* should tell each other their handicaps before the match.

If a player starts a match having declared a wrong handicap:

- Declared Handicap Too High. The player is **disqualified** if this affects the number of strokes the player gives or gets. If it does not, **there is no penalty**.
- Declared Handicap Too Low. **There is no penalty** and the player must play off the declared lower handicap.

(2) Holes Where Handicap Strokes Applied.

- Handicap strokes are given by hole, and the lower net score wins the hole.
- If a tied match is extended, handicap strokes are given by hole in the same way as in the *round* (unless the *Committee* provides for a different way of doing so).

Each player is responsible for knowing the holes where each player gives or gets handicap strokes.

If the players mistakenly apply handicap strokes on a hole, the agreed result of the hole stands, unless the players correct that mistake in time as described in Rule 3.2c(3).

**c. Responsibilities of Players**

(1) Telling Opponent about Number of Strokes Taken. At any time, the *opponent* may ask the player how many *strokes* (including *penalty strokes*) the player has taken.

When asked for the *number of strokes taken*, or when giving that information without being asked,

- The player must give the right *number of strokes taken*.
- A player who fails to respond to the *opponent's* request has given the wrong *number of strokes taken*.

The player **loses the hole** if he or she gives the *opponent* the **wrong number of strokes taken**, unless the player corrects that mistake in time:

- Wrong Number of Strokes Given While Playing Hole. The player must give the right *number of strokes taken* before the *opponent* makes another *stroke* or takes a similar action such as conceding the player's *stroke* or the hole.
- Wrong Number of Strokes Given After Hole Completed. The player must give the right *number of strokes taken* before either player makes a *stroke* from the next *teeing area* or, for the final hole of the match, before both players leave the *putting green*.

**Exception – No Penalty If No Effect on Result of Hole:** If the player gives the wrong *number of strokes taken* after a hole is completed but this does not affect the *opponent's* understanding of whether the hole was won or lost **there is no penalty**.

(2) Telling Opponent about Penalty. When a player gets a penalty, the player must tell the *opponent* about that penalty as soon as reasonably possible, taking into account how near the player is to the *opponent* and other practical factors.

If the player fails to do so and does not correct that mistake before the *opponent* makes another stroke or takes a similar action such as conceding the player's stroke or the hole, **the player loses the hole**.

**Exception – When Opponent Knew of Player's Penalty:** If the *opponent* knew that the player had a penalty, such as when seeing the player obviously take relief under penalty, **there is no penalty** for failing to tell the *opponent* about it.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on when it is not reasonably possible for a player to tell the *opponent* about a penalty.

(3) Knowing Score of Match. The players are expected to know the match score – that is, whether one of them leads by a certain number of holes (“holes up” in the match) or the match is tied (also known as “all square”).

If the players mistakenly agree on a wrong match score:

- They may correct the match score before either player makes a *stroke* from the next *teeing area* or, for the final hole, before both players leave the *putting green*.
- If not corrected in that time, that wrong match score becomes the actual match score.

**Exception – When Player Requests Ruling in Time:** If the player makes a timely request for a ruling (see Rule 20.1b), and it is found that the *opponent* either (1) gave the wrong *number of strokes taken* or (2) failed to tell the player about a penalty, the wrong match score must be corrected.

(4) Protecting Own Rights and Interests. The players in a match should protect their own rights and interests under the Rules:

- If a player knows or believes that the *opponent* has breached a Rule that has a penalty, the player may choose to ignore it.
- **But** if the player and *opponent* deliberately agree to ignore a breach or penalty, **both players are disqualified under Rule 1.3a**.
- If the player and *opponent* disagree whether one of them has breached a Rule, either player may protect his or her rights by asking for a ruling under Rule 20.1b.

### 3.3 Stroke Play

**Purpose of Rule 3.3:** *Stroke play has specific Rules (particularly for scoring and **holing out**) because all players in a competition need to be treated equally under the Rules as they are competing against all the other players. After the round, the player and the **marker** (who keeps the player's score) must **certify** that the scores (for each hole) are right and the player must return the **score card** to the Committee.*

#### a. Winner in Stroke Play

The player who completes all *rounds* with the lowest total score is the winner.

In a net-score competition, this means the lowest total net score.

#### b. Scoring In Stroke Play

(1) Score Card. A player's "score card" may be in any paper or electronic form approved by the Committee that allows:

- The player's score to be entered for each hole,
- The *marker* and the player to certify the scores, either by physical signature or electronic certification, and
- The player's handicap to be shown for a net-score competition.

(2) Marker's Responsibility: Entering Scores and Certifying Score Card.

- After each hole, the *marker* should confirm the player's score for that hole with the player and enter it on the *score card*.
- When the *round* has ended, the *marker* must certify the *score card*. If the player had more than one *marker*, each *marker* must certify the scores for those holes where he or she was the *marker*.

(3) Player's Responsibility: Certifying and Returning Score Card. When the *round* has ended, the player:

- Should carefully check the hole scores entered by the *marker* and raise any issues with the Committee,
- In a net-score competition, should make sure that the correct handicap is shown on the *score card*,
- Must make sure that the *marker* certifies the *score card*,

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

- May only change a hole score entered by the *marker* with the *marker's* consent or the *Committee's* approval, and
- Must certify the *score card* and promptly return it to the *Committee*, after which the player must not change the *score card*.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance for *Committee* on how to define when a *score card* has been returned and what to do if the *marker* does not perform his or her duties for the player.

### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 3.3b(3): The player is disqualified.**

(4) Wrong Score for Hole. If the player returns a *score card* with a wrong score for any hole:

- Returned Score Higher Than Actual Score. The higher returned score for the hole stands.
- Returned Score Lower Than Actual Score or No Score Returned. The player is **disqualified**.

**Penalty Exception – Failure to Include Penalty of Which Unaware:** If one or more hole scores are lower than actually taken because they excluded one or more *penalty strokes* that the player did not know he or she had before returning the *score card*:

- The player is **not disqualified**.
- Instead, if the mistake is found before the close of the competition, the *Committee* will revise the player's score for that hole or holes by:
  - Adding the **penalty stroke(s)** that should have been included in the score for that hole or holes under the Rules, and
  - Adding **an extra two penalty strokes** to the score for each such hole where the player failed to include the unknown *penalty stroke(s)*.
- This Exception does not apply when the excluded penalty is disqualification.

(5) Scoring in a Net-Score Competition. If the player returns a *score card* without the right handicap:

- Handicap on Score Card Too High or No Handicap Shown. The player is **disqualified from the net-score competition**.
- Handicap on Score Card Too Low. There is **no penalty** and the player's net score stands using the lower handicap as shown.

(6) Player Not Responsible for Adding Scores or Applying Handicap. The Committee is responsible for adding up the player's hole scores and, in a net-score competition, applying handicap strokes.

If the player returns a *score card* with the scores added up or with handicap strokes applied, **there is no penalty** if he or she makes a mistake in doing so.

### c. Failure to Hole Out

A player must *hole out* at each hole in a *round*. If a player fails to *hole out* at any hole:

- The player must correct that mistake before making a *stroke* from the next *teeing area* or, for the final hole of the *round*, before leaving the *putting green*.
- If the mistake is not corrected in that time, **the player is disqualified**.

**Rule 21:** Rules for other forms of *stroke play* (*Stableford, Maximum Score and Par/Bogey*) where scoring is different and a player is not required to *hole out*.

DRAFT

## Rule 4 – The Player’s Equipment

**Purpose of Rule 4:** Rule 4 covers **equipment** that may be used during a round, based on the principle that **golf is a challenging game in which success should depend on the player’s judgment, skills and abilities**. The player:

- Must use **conforming clubs and balls**,
- Is limited to no more than 14 clubs and normally must not replace damaged or lost clubs, and
- Is restricted in the use of other devices that give artificial help to his or her play.

### 4.1 Clubs

#### a. Clubs Allowed in Making a Stroke

(1) Conforming Clubs. In making a stroke:

- A player must use a club that conformed to the Equipment Rules at the start of his or her round.
- **But** if an originally conforming club’s playing characteristics change because of wear through normal cumulative use, it is still a conforming club.

“Playing characteristics” means any part of the club that affects how it performs in making a stroke, such as its grip, shaft, clubhead or lie or loft (including lie or loft of an adjustable club).

(2) Use or Repair of Club Damaged During Round. If a conforming club is damaged during a round, the player normally must not replace it with another club. (For limited exceptions, see Rules 4.1b(1), (3).)

**But** the damaged club continues to be treated as conforming for the rest of the round, regardless of the nature or cause of the damage. The player may:

- Continue to make *strokes* with the damaged club for the rest of the round, or
- Repair the club by restoring it as nearly as possible to its condition before this damage happened, while still using the original grip, shaft and clubhead. **But** in doing so the player must not:
  - Unreasonably delay play (see Rule 5.6a), or
  - Repair any damage from before the round.

“Damaged during a *round*” means that a club’s playing characteristics are changed because of any act or incident during the *round*, whether:

- By the player, such as making a *stroke* or practice swing with the club, putting it in and taking it out of a golf bag, dropping or leaning on it, or throwing or abusing it, or
- By any other person or *outside influence*.

**But** a club is not “damaged during a *round*” if its playing characteristics are deliberately adjusted during the *round* by the player or anyone acting for the player (see (3) below).

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on the differences between wear through normal use, damage during a *round* and deliberate adjustment of a club’s playing characteristics.

(3) *Deliberately Changing Club’s Playing Characteristics During Round*. A player must not make a *stroke* with a club whose playing characteristics the player (or anyone acting for the player) deliberately changed during the *round*:

- By physically adjusting the club (except when allowed to repair damage under (2) above), or
- By applying any substance to the clubhead (other than in cleaning it) to affect how it performs in making a *stroke*.

**PENALTY FOR MAKING STROKE WITH CLUB IN BREACH OF RULE 4.1a:**  
The player is **disqualified**.

**But there is no penalty** under this Rule for merely carrying (but not making a *stroke* with) a non-conforming club or a club whose playing characteristics were deliberately changed during the *round* (but such a club would still count towards the 14-club limit in (b)).

## **b. Limit of 14 Clubs; Starting, Adding and Replacing Clubs**

(1) *Limit of 14 Clubs*. A player must not:

- Start a *round* with more than 14 clubs, or
- Have more than 14 clubs during the *round*.

If the player starts a *round* with fewer than 14 clubs, he or she may add clubs during the *round* up to the 14-club limit under (4) below.

(2) *No Sharing of Clubs*. The player is limited to those clubs he or she started with or added as allowed in (1), and must not make a *stroke* with a club carried by anyone else playing on the *course*.



(3) No Replacing Lost or Damaged Clubs. If a player has started with 14 clubs or added clubs up to the limit of 14 clubs and then loses or damages a club during the *round*, the player must not replace that club with another club.

**Exception – Replacing Damaged Club When Player Did Not Cause Damage:** If a player's club is damaged during the *round* and the player (or anyone acting for the player) did not cause that damage:

- The player may replace the damaged club with any club under (4) below, **but**
- The player must declare the damaged club out of play and **is disqualified** if he or she makes a *stroke* with that club during the rest of the *round*.

(4) Restrictions When Adding or Replacing Clubs. When adding or replacing a club under (1) or (3) above, a player must not:

- Unreasonably delay play (see Rule 5.6a), or
- Add or borrow any club chosen by another player who is playing on the *course* (whether or not in the same playing group or same competition), or
- Build a club from parts carried by anyone for the player during the *round*.

#### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 4.1b:**

- **When Breach Discovered:** Upon discovering a breach, the player must immediately declare any excess club out of play (see Rule 4.1c) and apply the penalty based on when the breach was discovered:
  - While Playing the Hole. The penalty applies to the hole being played. In *match play*, the player must complete the hole, apply the result of that hole to the match score and then apply the penalty to adjust the match score.
  - Between the Play of Two Holes. The penalty applies to the hole just completed, not to the next hole.
- **Penalty in Match Play – Match Score Revised by Deducting Hole, Maximum of Two Holes:**
  - This is a match adjustment penalty – it is **not** the same as a loss of hole penalty.
  - At the end of the hole being played or just completed, the match score is revised by **deducting one hole** for each hole where a breach happened, but with a **maximum deduction of two holes** in the *round*.

- For example, if a player who started with 15 clubs is playing the 3<sup>rd</sup> hole when the breach is discovered and then wins that hole to go three up in the match, the maximum adjustment of two holes applies and he or she would now be one up in the match.
- **Penalty in Stroke Play – Two Penalty Strokes, Maximum of Four Strokes:** The player must add **two penalty strokes** to his or her score for each hole where a breach happened, but with a **maximum of four penalty strokes** in the *round* (adding two *penalty strokes* at each of the first two holes where a breach happened).

### c. Declaring Excess Clubs Out of Play

(1) During Round. When a player discovers during a *round* that he or she is in breach of Rule 4.1b for having more than 14 clubs or for making a *stroke* with another player's club, the player must immediately:

- Decide which clubs will not be used for the rest of the *round*, and
- Declare those excess clubs out of play to the *opponent* in *match play* or the *marker* or another player in the group in *stroke play*, and
- Not make a *stroke* with them for the rest of the *round*.

If the club belongs to another player, that other player may continue to use the club.

(2) Before Round. If a player discovers shortly before starting a *round* that he or she accidentally has more than 14 clubs, he or she should try to leave any excess clubs behind.

**But** as an option **without penalty**:

- The player may declare any such excess club out of play before the start of the *round*, and
- The excess clubs may be kept by the player (but must not be used) during the *round*, and they do not count towards the 14-club limit.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 4.1c: The player is disqualified.**

## 4.2 Balls

### a. Balls Allowed During Round

(1) Conforming Ball Must Be Played. In making each *stroke*, a player must use a ball that conforms to the Equipment Rules.

A player may get a conforming ball from anyone else, including another player on the *course*.

(2) Deliberately Altered Ball Must Not Be Played. A player must not make a stroke at a ball to which any substance has been deliberately applied to change its playing characteristics.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 4.2a:** The player is **disqualified**.

#### b. Damage to Ball While Playing Hole

(1) Ball Breaks into Pieces. If a player's ball breaks into pieces after a stroke, **there is no penalty** and the stroke is canceled. The player must play a *substituted ball* from where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).

(2) Cut or Cracked Ball. If a player reasonably believes that his or her ball has been cut or cracked while playing a hole:

- The player may lift the ball to see if it is cut or cracked, but must *mark* its spot first.
- The player must not clean the lifted ball, **except** when it is on the *putting green* (see Rule 13.1).
- The player may only *substitute* another ball if it can be clearly seen that the original ball is cut or cracked and this damage happened during the hole being played – **but** not if it is only scratched or scraped or its paint is only damaged or discolored.
- If the original ball is cut or cracked and the player chooses to *substitute* another ball, the player must *replace* the *substituted ball* on the *marked spot*; if not, the player must *replace* the original ball on that spot.

Nothing in this Rule prohibits a player from *substituting* another ball under any other Rule or between the play of two holes.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 4.2b:**

- The player must add **one penalty stroke** if he or she breaches the Rule in one or more of these ways: (1) does not *mark* the ball before lifting it, (2) cleans the lifted ball when not allowed, or (3) lifts the ball without a reasonable belief that it became cut or cracked on the hole being played (**except** on the *putting green* where the player may lift under Rule 13.1a).
- The player gets the **general penalty** if he or she (1) plays the ball from a *wrong place* after failing to *replace* the ball on the *marked spot* (see Rule 14.7), or (2) plays a *substituted ball* when not allowed to do so (see Rule 6.3b).

- **But in stroke play, the player gets only two penalty strokes in total if he or she gets both the one-stroke penalty and a related general penalty; in that case, the one-stroke penalty does not apply.**

## 4.3 Use of Equipment

### a. Scope of Rule 4.3

Rule 4.3 applies to all types of *equipment* that a player might use during a *round*, **except** that the requirement to play with conforming clubs and balls is covered by Rules 4.1 and 4.2 and not by this Rule.

This Rule only concerns the use of *equipment*. It does not limit the *equipment* that a player may carry during a *round*.

### b. Allowed and Prohibited Uses of Equipment

A player may use *equipment* to help his or her play during a *round*, **except** that a player must not create a potential advantage in either of these ways:

- Use *equipment* to artificially replicate or reduce a required skill or judgment, or
- Use *equipment* in an abnormal way in making a *stroke*. “Abnormal way” means a way that is fundamentally different than its intended use and is not normally recognized as part of playing the game.

The main categories of allowed and prohibited uses of *equipment* during a *round* are listed below. A player who is uncertain whether he or she may use a piece of *equipment* in a particular way should ask for a ruling (see Rule 20.2).

#### (1) Measuring Distance and Directional Information.

- Allowed Uses. Using *equipment* to obtain distance information (for example, a distance-measuring device) or directional information (for example, a compass).
- Prohibited Uses. Using *equipment* to measure elevation changes, or to interpret any distance or directional information (such as to access a recommended *line of play* or club selection).

#### (2) Measuring Wind and Weather Conditions.

- Allowed Uses. Using *equipment* to measure non-wind related weather information (for example, temperature or humidity) or to review publicly available weather forecasts (including wind related information).

- Prohibited Uses. Using *equipment* to measure wind speed or other wind-related information.

(3) Advice-Related Information Collected Before or During Round.

- Allowed Uses. Using *equipment* to review information that was created before the start of the *round*, such as playing information from previous *rounds*, swing tips or club recommendations.
- Prohibited Uses. Using *equipment* to process and interpret information specific to the *round* being played (such as club recommendations based on current *round* distances or effective distance based on wind and other variable conditions).

(4) Recording of Playing Information During Round.

- Allowed Uses. Using *equipment* to collect playing and physiological information during a *round* (such as shot distance, club distance or heart rate) for use after the current *round*.
- Prohibited Uses. Using *equipment* to review playing and physiological information recorded during the current *round*.

(5) Audio and Video Devices.

- Allowed Uses. Using *equipment* to listen to audio or watch video of matters unrelated to golf (such as a traffic report or background music). **But** consideration must be shown to others (see Rule 1.2).
- Prohibited Uses. Using *equipment* to eliminate distractions, help with swing tempo or view or listen to a broadcast of the competition being played.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting the use of audio and video devices during a *round*.

(6) Clothing and Shoes.

- Allowed Uses. Using clothing to provide protection from the elements and general support for posture and using shoes to help with obtaining a firm *stance*.
- Prohibited Uses. Using clothing or shoes that provide undue help with posture or balance.

(7) Gloves and Gripping Agents.

- Allowed Uses. Using the following *equipment* to help in gripping the club: a plain glove that meets the Equipment Rules; resin, powders and other moisturizing or drying agents; or a towel or handkerchief wrapped around the grip to help with gripping the club.
- Prohibited Uses. Using a glove that does not meet the Equipment Rules, or other *equipment* that provides undue help with hand position or grip pressure.

(8) Stretching Devices and Training Aids.

- Allowed Uses. Using non-golf swing related *equipment* for the purpose of stretching.
- Prohibited Uses. Using training aids and other similar golf swing related devices, including any piece of stretching *equipment* designed for use in a golf swing.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting the use of motorized transportation.

**c. Medical Exception**

A player is not in breach of Rule 4.3 if he or she uses *equipment* to help with a medical condition, so long as:

- The player has a medical reason to use the *equipment*, and
- The *Committee* finds that its use does not give the player any unfair advantage over other players.

**Handbook \_\_:** Further examples of allowed and prohibited uses and additional information on the design and use of *equipment*.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 4.3:**

- First breach during *round*: **General Penalty.**
- Subsequent breach during *round*: The player is **disqualified.**

## **II. Playing the Round and a Hole (Rules 5-6)**

### **Rule 5 – Playing the Round**

**Purpose of Rule 5:** Rule 5 covers how to play a **round** – such as where and when a player may **practice** before, during or after a round, when rounds begin and end and what happens when play has to stop or resume again.

Players are expected to:

- Start each round on time and
- Play continuously and at a prompt pace during each hole until the round is completed.

**When it is a player's turn to play, it is recommended that he or she make the stroke in no more than 40 seconds, and usually more quickly than that.**

#### **5.1 Meaning of Round**

A “round” is 18 or fewer holes played in the order set by the Committee.

When a round ends in a tie and play continues on to break the tie:

- Tied Match Extended One Hole at a Time. This is not a new round, but rather is the continuation of the same round.
- Play-off in Stroke Play. This is a new round.

#### **5.2 Practicing on Course Before or Between Rounds**

##### **a. Match Play**

A player may practice on the course before a round or between rounds of a competition.

##### **b. Stroke Play**

On the day of a competition, a player must not practice on the course before a round, but may practice on the course after completing play for that day.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.2:** The player is **disqualified**.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_** – The Committee may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting, restricting or allowing practice before or between rounds.

## 5.3 Starting and Ending a Round

### a. When to Start Round

A player's *round* starts when the player makes a *stroke* from the *teeing area* of his or her first hole.

The player must:

- Be ready to play at the starting time and starting point set by the *Committee*, and
- Start at (and not before) that time.

If the starting time is delayed for any reason (such as weather, slow play of other groups or the need for a ruling by a *referee*), there is no breach of this Rule if the player is present and ready to play when the player's group is able to start.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.3a:** The player is **disqualified**, **except** in these three situations:

- **Exception 1 – Player Arrives at Starting Area, Ready to Play, No More Than Five Minutes Late:** The player gets the *general penalty* applied to his or her first hole.
- **Exception 2 – Player Starts No More Than Five Minutes Early:** The player gets the *general penalty* applied to his or her first hole.
- **Exception 3 – Committee Finds Exceptional Circumstances Prevented Player from Starting on Time:** There is no breach of this Rule and **no penalty**.

### b. When Round Ends

A player's *round* ends:

- In *match play*, when all players in the match complete the final hole or the result of the match is decided.
- In *stroke play*, when the player *holes out* at the final hole (including correction of a mistake, such as under Rule 6.1 or Rule 14.7b).

**Rule 23.4:** When a *round* starts and ends in *Four-Ball* and *Best-Ball* competitions.



## 5.4 Playing in Groups

### a. Match Play

During a *round*, the player and *opponent* must play each hole in the same group so they are able to see each other's play.

### b. Stroke Play

During a *round*, the player must remain in the group set by the *Committee*, unless the *Committee* approves a change either before or after it happens.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.4:** The player is **disqualified**.

## 5.5 Practice During Round

### a. No Practice Strokes While Playing Hole

While playing a hole, a player must not make a practice *stroke* at any ball on or off the *course*.

These are not practice *strokes*:

- A practice swing made with no intent to strike a ball.
- Hitting a ball back to a practice area or to another player, when done solely as a courtesy.
- *Strokes* made by a player in playing out a hole whose result has been decided.

### b. Restriction on Practice Strokes Between Play of Two Holes

Between the play of two holes, a player must not make a practice *stroke*, **except** that the player may practice putting or chipping on or near:

- *The putting green* of the hole just completed,
- Any practice *putting green*, or
- *The teeing area* of the next hole.

**But** such practice *strokes* must not be made from a *bunker* and must not unreasonably delay play (see Rule 5.6a).

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting practice putting or chipping on or near the *putting green* of the hole just completed.

### c. Practice When Play Is Suspended

While play is suspended, a player may practice:

- As allowed in Rule 5.5b,
- Anywhere other than on the *course*, and
- Anywhere else the *Committee* allows.

#### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.5: *General Penalty*.**

If the breach happens between the play of two holes, the penalty applies to the next hole.

### 5.6 Unreasonable Delay; Prompt Pace of Play

#### a. Unreasonable Delay of Play

A player must not unreasonably delay play, either when playing a hole or between holes.

A player may be allowed a short delay for certain reasons, such as:

- When seeking help from a *referee* or the *Committee*,
- When suddenly becoming ill, or
- When there are other good reasons.

**Handbook** \_\_: Guidance on delay that is reasonable or unreasonable.

#### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.6a:**

- First breach: **One *penalty stroke*.**
- Second breach: ***General Penalty*.**
- Third breach: ***Disqualification*.**

If the player unreasonably delays play between holes, the penalty applies to the next hole.

#### b. Prompt Pace of Play

A *round* of golf is meant to be played at a prompt pace.

Each player should recognize that his or her pace of play is likely to affect how long it will take other players to play their *rounds*, including both those in the player's own group and those in following groups.

Players are encouraged to allow faster groups to play through.

(1) *Pace of Play Recommendations*. The player should play at a prompt pace throughout the *round*, including the time taken to:

- Prepare for and make each *stroke*,
- Move from one place to another between *strokes*, and
- Move to the next *teeing area* after completing a hole.

A player should prepare in advance for the next *stroke* and be ready to play when it is his or her turn.

When it is the player's turn to play:

- It is recommended that the player make the *stroke* in no more than 40 seconds after he or she is (or should be) able to play without interference or distraction, and
- The player should usually be able to play more quickly than that and is encouraged to do so.

Players may play out of turn to save time under Rule 6.4a (*match play*) and 6.4b (*stroke play*).

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance for players on prompt pace of play.

(2) *Committee Pace of Play Policy*. To encourage and enforce prompt play, the *Committee* should adopt a Local Rule setting a Pace of Play Policy.

This Policy may set a maximum time to complete a *round*, a hole or series of holes and a *stroke*, and it may set penalties for not following the Policy (see *Committee Procedures*, \_\_).

## 5.7 Stopping Play; Resuming Play

### a. When Players May or Must Stop Play

During a *round*, a player must not stop play **except** in these situations:

(1) *Suspension by Committee*. All players must stop play if the *Committee* suspends play (see Rule 5.7b).

(2) Stopping Play by Agreement in Match Play. Players in a match may agree to stop play for any reason, **except** if doing so delays the competition.

(3) Individual Player Stopping Play Because of Lightning. A player may stop play if he or she believes there is danger from lightning.

Leaving the course is not, by itself, stopping play. A player's temporary delay of play is covered by Rule 5.6a and not by this Rule.

If a player stops play for any reason not allowed under this Rule, **the player is disqualified**.

## **b. What Players Must Do When Committee Suspends Play**

(1) Immediate Suspension (Such as When There is Imminent Danger). If the Committee declares an immediate suspension of play, all players must stop play at once and must not play again until the Committee resumes play.

The Committee should use a distinct method of telling players about an immediate suspension.

**Handbook** \_\_: Guidance on what it means to stop play at once and when waiver of disqualification is justified.

(2) Normal Suspension (Such as for Darkness or Unplayable Course). If the Committee suspends play for normal reasons what happens next depends on where each playing group is:

- Between Play of Two Holes. If all players in a group are between the play of two holes, they must stop play and must not play from the next teeing area until the Committee resumes play.
- While Playing a Hole. If any player in a group has started a hole, the players may choose either to stop play at once or to play out the hole. If the players do not agree on what to do:
  - Match Play. If a player in a match stops play, the *opponent* must stop play as well and both players must not play again until the Committee resumes play.
  - Stroke Play. Any player in *stroke play* may continue play of the hole even if others in the group stop play, so long as the player's *marker* stays to keep the player's score.

Once a player stops play, he or she must not play again until the Committee resumes play (see (d) below).

If a player continues play of the hole:

- The player may then stop play before completing the hole.
- If the player completes the hole, he or she must not play from the next *teeing area* until the *Committee* resumes play.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.7b:** The player is **disqualified, except** that the *Committee* may waive or change the penalty if it finds that doing so is justified.

### c. What Players Must Do When Play Resumes

(1) Where to Resume Play. A player must resume play from where he or she stopped play on a hole or, if between the play of two holes, at the next *teeing area*, even if play is resumed on a later day.

(2) When to Resume Play. The player must be present at the location identified in (1) and ready to play:

- At the time set by the *Committee* for play to resume, and
- The player must resume play at (and not before) that time.

If the ability to resume play is delayed for any reason (such as when players in the group ahead need to play first and move out of the way), there is no breach of this Rule if the player is present and ready to play when the player's group is able to resume play.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.7c:** The player is **disqualified, except** that the three exceptions in Rule 5.3a apply here as well.

### d. Lifting Ball When Play Stops; Replacing and Substituting Ball When Play Resumes

When stopping play of a hole under this Rule, the player may *mark* and lift the ball **without penalty**.

Either before or when play is resumed:

(1) When Player's Ball Was Lifted. The player must *replace* the original ball or a *substituted ball* on the spot from which the ball was lifted.

(2) When Player's Ball Was Not Lifted. The player may play the ball as it lies, or may *mark* and lift the ball and *replace* that ball or a *substituted ball* on that *marked spot*.

(3) When Player's Ball or Ball-marker Was Moved (Including by Natural Forces) While Play was Stopped. The player must either:

- Place a *ball-marker* to mark the original spot of the ball (which if not known must be estimated), and then *replace* the original ball or a *substituted ball* on that spot, or
- *Replace* the original ball or a *substituted ball* on the original spot (which if not known must be estimated).

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5.7d: General Penalty.**

DRAFT

## Rule 6 – Playing a Hole

**Purpose of Rule 6:** Rule 6 covers how to play a **hole** – such as the specific Rules for teeing off, the requirement to use the same ball for an entire hole except when **substitution** is allowed, the **order of play** (which matters more in match play than stroke play) and completing a hole.

### 6.1 Starting Play of a Hole

#### a. Playing Ball from Inside Teeing Area

A player must start each hole by playing a ball from inside *the teeing area* under Rule 6.2b.

#### b. What to Do If Ball is Played from Outside Teeing Area

If a player who is starting a hole plays a ball from outside *the teeing area* (including from a wrong set of tee markers):

(1) Match Play – Opponent May Cancel Stroke.

- **There is no penalty** but the *opponent* may cancel the *stroke*. This must be done promptly, and before either player makes another *stroke*.
- If the *opponent* cancels the *stroke*, the player must play another ball from inside *the teeing area*.
- If the *opponent* does not cancel the *stroke*, the *stroke* counts and the ball is *in play* and must be played as it lies.

(2) Stroke Play – Player Must Correct Mistake.

- The player **must add two penalty strokes** and correct the mistake by playing a ball from inside *the teeing area*.
- The ball played from outside *the teeing area* is not *in play*. That *stroke* and any more *strokes* on the hole before the mistake is corrected do not count.

**PENALTY FOR FAILING TO CORRECT MISTAKE IN STROKE PLAY IN BREACH OF RULE 6.1b(2):** The player is **disqualified** if he or she:

- **Makes a stroke from the next teeing area without first correcting the mistake, or,**
- **If playing the final hole of the round, leaves the putting green without first announcing that he or she will correct the mistake.**

## 6.2 Specific Rules for Playing Ball from Teeing Area

### a. When Teeing Area Rules Apply

The specific Rules in Rule 6.2b for *teeing areas* apply only in the following two situations where a ball to be played from *the teeing area* is not *in play* until a *stroke* is made at it:

(1) Starting Play of Hole. When the player is starting play of a hole under Rule 6.1, which includes when the player has made a *stroke* in trying to start the hole but the *stroke* did not count because:

- The *stroke* was canceled under any Rule, or,
- In *stroke play*, the *stroke* was made from outside *the teeing area*.

(2) Playing Again from Teeing Area. When the player chooses or is required under a Rule to play again from *the teeing area* under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 14.6).

But Rule 6.2 does not apply:

- In any situation when a player will play a *ball in play* that lies in *the teeing area* (for example, after the player made a *stroke* at a teed ball and missed it or it came to rest in the *teeing area*).
- In all such situations, *the teeing area* has no significance and the player must proceed in the same way as when playing any ball in the *general area*.

### b. Teeing Area Rules

These Rules apply when a player is starting a hole or playing again from *the teeing area* (as stated in Rule 6.2a):

(1) Where to Play Ball From.

- The player must play a ball from anywhere inside *the teeing area*, which means that a part of the ball must touch or overhang *the teeing area*.
- The player may stand outside of *the teeing area* in making the *stroke*.

(2) Ball May be Teed. The ball must be played from either:

- A conforming tee placed in or on the ground, or
- The ground itself, including sand or other natural substances put in place to set the ball on.



The player must not make a *stroke* at a ball on a non-conforming tee or a ball teed in a way not allowed by this Rule.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 6.2b(2):**

- First breach: **General Penalty**
- Second breach: **Disqualification.**

(3) Certain Conditions in Teeing Area May be Improved. Before making a *stroke*, **without penalty** the player is allowed to:

- Alter the ground surface in *the teeing area*,
- Move, bend or break natural objects that are attached or growing in *the teeing area* , or
- Remove dew, frost or water in *the teeing area*.

**But** the player gets the **general penalty** if he or she *improves* any other conditions affecting the *stroke* in breach of Rule 8.1a.

(4) Tee-Markers in Teeing Area Must Not Be Moved. Before making a *stroke*, the player must not move a tee-marker in *the teeing area* to *improve* the conditions affecting the *stroke*. If the player does so, **he or she gets the general penalty.**

(5) Ball is Not in Play Until Stroke is Made. Whether the ball is teed or placed on the ground:

- It is not *in play* until the player makes a *stroke* at it, and
- The ball may be lifted or *moved* **without penalty** before the *stroke* is made.

**But** once the *stroke* is made, if the ball comes to rest in *the teeing area* (including if the *stroke* missed the ball), the ball is *in play* and Rule 6.2b does not apply.

(6) When Ball Falls off Tee. If a teed ball falls off the *tee* or is knocked off the *tee* by the player before the player has made a *stroke* at it, it is not *in play* and may be re-teed **without penalty.**

**But** if the player makes a *stroke* at that ball while it is falling or after it has fallen off, **there is no penalty**, the *stroke* counts and the ball is *in play*.

## 6.3 Ball Used in Play of Hole

**Purpose of Rule 6.3:** A hole is played as a progression of strokes made from the teeing area to the putting green and into the hole. After teeing off, the player is normally expected to play the same ball until the hole is completed. The player gets a penalty if he or she makes a stroke at a **wrong ball** or a **substituted ball** when substitution is not allowed by the Rules.

### a. Holing Out with Same Ball Played from Teeing Area

A player may play any conforming ball when starting a hole from the teeing area and may change balls between the play of two holes.

The player must *hole out* with the same ball played from the teeing area, **except** when:

- That ball is *lost* or comes to rest *out of bounds*, or
- The player *substitutes* another ball (whether or not allowed to do so).

The player should put a mark on the ball to be played to help identify it (see Rule 7.2).

### b. Substitution of Another Ball While Playing Hole

(1) Substituted Ball Becomes Ball in Play. If a player *substitutes* another ball while playing a hole, the *substituted ball* becomes the *ball in play* (see Rule 14.4). This is true both:

- When Substitution is Allowed by Rules. See **Handbook** \_\_ for List of Rules allowing substitution.
- When Substitution is Not Allowed by Rules. The incorrectly substituted ball becomes the player's *ball in play* and is not a *wrong ball*.

(2) Making Stroke at Incorrectly Substituted Ball. A player must not make a stroke at an incorrectly substituted ball. (For a ball played from a *wrong place*, see Rule 14.7.)

### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 6.3b(2): General Penalty.**

In addition, in *stroke play*:

- The player must play out the hole with the incorrectly substituted ball.
- **But** the player gets only **two penalty strokes in total** if he or she also gets a related penalty for playing that incorrectly substituted ball from a *wrong place* (only one *general penalty* applies, not two).

### c. Wrong Ball

(1) Making Stroke at Wrong Ball. A player must not make a stroke at a wrong ball.

**Exception – Ball Moving in Water:** There is **no penalty** if a player makes a stroke at a wrong ball that is moving in water in a penalty area or in temporary water:

- The stroke does not count, and
- The player must correct the mistake under the Rules by playing the right ball from its original spot or playing a ball from where allowed by another Rule.

#### **PENALTY FOR PLAYING WRONG BALL IN BREACH OF RULE 6.3c(1) – General Penalty.**

In match play,

- If the player and opponent play each other's ball during the play of a hole, the first to make a stroke at a wrong ball **loses the hole**.
- If it is not known which wrong ball was played first, there is **no penalty** and the hole must be played out with the balls exchanged.

In stroke play,

- The strokes made by the player at a wrong ball do not count.
- The player must correct the mistake under the Rules.
- If the player makes a stroke from the next teeing area without first correcting the mistake or, if playing the final hole of the round, leaves the putting green without first announcing that he or she will correct the mistake, the player is **disqualified**.

(2) What to Do When Player's Ball is Played by Someone Else as a Wrong Ball. The player must replace the original ball or a substituted ball on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated) before it was played as a wrong ball.

### d. When a Player is Allowed to Play More than One Ball at a Time

A player is allowed to play more than one ball at one time only when:

- Playing a provisional ball (which will either become the ball in play or be abandoned (see Rule 18.3c, d), or

- Playing two balls in *stroke play* to correct a possible *serious breach* in playing from a *wrong place* (see Rule 14.7c) or when uncertain about the right procedure to use while playing a hole (see Rule 20.1c(3)).

## 6.4 Order of Play When Playing Hole

**Purpose of Rule 6.4:** Rule 6.4 covers the **order of play** throughout play of a hole. The order of play from the teeing area depends on who has the **honor**, and after that is based on which ball is farthest from the hole.

- Because the order of play is central in match play, if a player plays out of turn, the opponent may **cancel that stroke** and make the player play again.
- But in stroke play, there is no penalty for playing out of turn, and players are both allowed and encouraged to play “ready golf” – that is, to **play out of turn in a safe and responsible way for convenience or to save time**.

### a. Match Play

(1) Order of Play. The player and opponent must play in this order:

- Starting First Hole. At the first hole, the *honor* (who plays first from the teeing area) is decided by the order of the draw or, if there is no draw, by lot or agreement.
- Starting All Other Holes. The player who wins a hole has the *honor* at the next teeing area. If the hole was tied, the player with the *honor* at the previous teeing area keeps it.
- After Both Players Start a Hole. The ball farther from the hole is played first. If the balls are the same distance from the hole or their relative distances are not known, the ball to be played first is decided by lot or agreement.

(2) Opponent May Cancel Player's Stroke Made Out of Turn. If a player plays when it was the opponent's turn to play, **there is no penalty but:**

- The *opponent* may cancel the *stroke*. This must be done promptly, and before either player makes another *stroke*.
- If the *opponent* cancels the *stroke*, the player must, when it is his or her turn to play, play the original ball or a *substituted ball* from where that *stroke* was made (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).
- If the *opponent* does not cancel the *stroke*, the *stroke* counts and the player must play the ball as it lies.

**Exception – Playing Out of Turn to Save Time:** To save time, a player may invite the *opponent* to play out of turn. If the *opponent* does so, the player gives up the right to cancel the *stroke* played out of turn.

**Rule 23.5:** Order of play in *Four-Ball* and *Best-Ball*.

**b. Stroke Play**

(1) Normal Order of Play.

- Starting First Hole. The *honor* at the first *teeing area* is decided by the order of the draw or, if there is no draw, by lot or agreement.
- Starting All Other Holes.
  - The player in the group with the lowest gross score at a hole has the *honor* at the next *teeing area*; the player with the second lowest score should play next; and so on.
  - If two or more players have the same score at a hole, they should play in the same order as at the previous *teeing area*.
  - The *honor* is based on gross scores, even in a net-score competition.
- After All Players Have Started a Hole.
  - The ball farthest from the *hole* should be played first.
  - If two or more balls are the same distance from the *hole* or their relative distances are not known, the ball to be played first should be decided by lot or agreement.

**But there is no penalty** if a player in *stroke play* plays out of turn, **except** that if two or more players agree to play out of turn to give one of them an advantage, **each of them must add two penalty strokes.**

**Rules 21.1d, 21.3d:** Order of play in other forms of *stroke play*.

(2) Playing Out of Turn for Convenience or to Save Time. Players are both allowed and encouraged to play out of turn in a safe and responsible way, such as when:

- Two or more players agree to do so for convenience or to save time,
- A player's ball comes to rest a very short distance from the *hole* and the player wishes to *hole out*, or

- An individual player is ready and able to play before another player whose turn it is to play, so long as in playing out of turn the player does not endanger, distract or interfere with any other player.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on playing out of turn to save time.

#### c. When Player Will Play Provisional Ball or Another Ball from Teeing Area

The order of play is for all other players in the group to make their first *stroke* on the hole before the player plays the *provisional ball* or another ball from the *teeing area*.

If more than one player will play a *provisional ball* or another ball from the *teeing area*, the order of play is the same order as before.

For a *provisional ball* or another ball played out of turn, see Rules 6.4a(2) and 6.4b.

#### d. When Taking Relief or When Playing Provisional Ball From Anywhere Other Than Teeing Area

The order of play in these two situations is:

(1) Ball Played Other Than as It Lies.

- When Player Discovers That He or She is Required by Rules to Take Relief by Playing from Spot of Previous Stroke. The order of play is based on where the previous stroke was made.
- When Player Has Choice to Play Ball as It Lies or Take Relief. The order of play is based on where the original ball lies. This applies even when the player has already decided to play a ball under penalty of *stroke and distance* or from a place different from where the original ball lies.

(2) Provisional Ball. The order of play is for a player to play the *provisional ball* right after making the previous *stroke*, **except:**

- When starting a hole from the *teeing area* (see Rule 6.4c), or
- When the player initially goes forward to search for the original ball. Once the player decides to play a *provisional ball* and is in position to do so, the order of play is based on where that ball will be played from.

### 6.5 Completing Play of a Hole

- Match Play. A hole is completed when:

➤ The player *holes out*, or

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

- The player's next *stroke* is conceded, or
- The result of the hole is decided (such as when the *opponent's* score for the hole is less than the player possibly could take or the player or *opponent* gets a loss of hole *penalty*).
- Stroke Play. A hole is completed when the player *holes out* under Rule 3.3c.

**Rules 21.1b(2), 21.2b(2), 21.3b(2) and 23.2:** When hole is completed in other forms of *stroke play* or in *Four-Ball* or *Best-Ball*.

DRAFT

### **III. Playing the Ball (Rules 7-11)**

#### **Rule 7 – Searching for and Identifying Ball**

**Purpose of Rule 7:** Rule 7 allows the player to take reasonable actions in **fairly searching** for and **identifying** his or her ball in play after each stroke.

- But the player still must be careful, as a penalty will apply if excessive actions cause improvement.
- The player gets no penalty if the ball is accidentally moved during search, but must then replace the ball on its original spot before the next stroke.

#### **7.1 How to Fairly Search for Ball**

##### **a. Player May Take Reasonable Actions to Find Ball**

The player is responsible for finding his or her *ball in play* after each stroke.

The player may fairly search for the ball by taking reasonable actions to find and identify it, such as:

- Moving sand and water,
- Moving or bending grass, bushes, tree branches and other growing or attached natural objects, and
- Breaking such objects (**but** not if the player deliberately breaks such objects).

If doing these things *improves* the *conditions affecting the stroke*,

- **There is no penalty** under Rule 8.1 if the *improvement* results from a fair search.
- **But** if the *improvement* results from actions that exceeded what was reasonably necessary for a fair search, the player **gets the general penalty** for breach of Rule 8.1.

##### **b. What to Do If Sand Affecting Lie of Player's Ball Is Moved While Trying to Find or Identify It**

- The player must re-create the original *lie* in the sand, but may leave a small part of the ball visible if the ball had been covered by sand.
- If the player plays the ball without having re-created the original *lie*, **the player gets the general penalty**.



## 7.2 How to Identify Ball

A player's ball at rest may be identified in any one of these ways:

- By the player or anyone else seeing a ball come to rest in circumstances where it is known to be the player's ball.
- By seeing the player's identifying mark on the ball (see Rule 6.3a).
- By finding a ball with the player's brand, model, number and condition in an area where the player's ball is expected to be – **but** this does not apply if an identical ball lies in the same area and there is no way to tell which one is the player's ball.

## 7.3 Lifting Ball to Identify It

If a ball might be the player's ball but cannot be identified as it lies:

- The player may lift the ball to identify it, but must *mark* its spot first and must not clean it more than needed to identify it.
- If the lifted ball is the player's ball, it must be *replaced* on the *marked* spot.

### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 7.3:**

- If the lifted ball is the player's ball, the player must add **one penalty stroke** if he or she breached the Rule in one or more of these ways: (1) did not *mark* the ball before lifting it, (2) cleaned the lifted ball more than necessary, or (3) lifted the ball when not necessary to identify it.
- **But** in *stroke play*, the player gets only **two penalty strokes in total** (and the one-stroke penalty does not apply) if he or she also gets a related **general penalty** for (1) playing the ball from a *wrong place* after failing to *replace* the ball on the *marked* spot (see Rule 14.7), or (2) playing a *substituted ball* when not allowed to do so (see Rule 6.3).

## 7.4 Ball Moved During Search or Identification

There is **no penalty** if the player's ball is accidentally *moved*:

- By the player, *opponent* or anyone else while searching for it, or
- By the player while identifying it.

In either situation, the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated). In doing so:

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

- If the ball was lying on, under or against any growing or attached natural objects, the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot under or against such objects.
- If the ball was covered by sand, the original *lie* must be re-created and the ball *replaced* in that *lie* (see Rule 14.2d(1)). The player may leave a small part of the ball visible if the ball had been covered by sand.

### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 7.4: *General Penalty*.**

DRAFT

## Rule 8 – Course Played as It Is Found

**Purpose of Rule 8:** Rule 8 sets out a **fundamental principle of golf: “play the course as you find it.”** When the player’s ball comes to rest, he or she normally has to accept the **conditions affecting the next stroke and not improve** them. The player also must not **deliberately alter other physical conditions** on the course to affect either his or her own play or someone else’s play.

### 8.1 Player Actions That Improve Conditions Affecting the Stroke

To support the principle of “play the course as you find it,” this Rule restricts what a player may do to *improve* any of these protected “conditions affecting the stroke”:

- The *lie* of the player’s ball at rest,
- The area of intended *stance*,
- The area of intended *swing*,
- The *line of play*, and
- The *relief area* where the player will *drop* or place a ball.

#### a. Actions That Are Not Allowed

**Except** in the limited ways allowed in Rules 8.1b and c, a player must not take any of these actions if they *improve the conditions affecting the stroke*:

(1) Move, bend or break any:

- Growing or attached natural object, or
- Fixed artificial object (including *immovable obstructions* and *integral parts of the course*).

(2) Alter the surface of the ground (such as by creating or eliminating holes, indentations or uneven surfaces).

(3) Remove or press down:

- Sand or loose soil, or
- Divots that have already been replaced or other cut turf already in place.

- (4) Build a *stance*, either by altering the ground or positioning something in place.
- (5) Remove dew, frost or water.

## b. Actions That Are Allowed

In preparing for or making a *stroke*, the player may take any of these actions and **there is no penalty even** if doing so *improves the conditions affecting the stroke*:

- (1) Fairly search for his or her ball by taking reasonable actions to find and identify it (see Rule 7.1a).
- (2) Ground the club lightly right in front of or right behind the ball. **But**:
  - This does not include pressing the club on the ground, and
  - When a ball lies in a *bunker*, touching the sand right in front of or behind the ball with a club is prohibited under Rule 12.2b.
- (3) Firmly place the feet in taking a *stance*, including a reasonable amount of digging in with the feet in sand.
- (4) Fairly take a *stance* by doing what is reasonably necessary to get to the ball and take a *stance*. **But** the player:
  - Is not entitled to a normal *stance* or swing, and
  - Must use the least intrusive course of action to deal with the situation.
- (5) Make a *stroke*, including the backswing for a *stroke* which is then made. (**But** when the ball lies in a *bunker*, touching the sand in the *bunker* in the backswing is prohibited under Rule 12.2b.)
- (6) Alter the ground surface in *the teeing area* or remove dew, frost or water from *the teeing area* (see Rule 6.2b).
- (7) Remove sand and loose soil on *the putting green* and repair damage on *the putting green* (see Rule 13.1b).
- (8) Move a natural object to see if it is loose. **But** if the object is found to be attached, it must stay attached and be returned as nearly as possible to its original position.

### c. Restoring Conditions Altered After Ball Came to Rest

If the *conditions affecting the stroke* are altered after the player's ball came to rest:

(1) When Restoration of Conditions Not Allowed. If the conditions were altered by the player (or anyone acting for the player) or by *natural forces* such as wind or water, the player must accept those altered conditions and must not restore them if doing so would *improve* them.

(2) When Restoration of Conditions Allowed. If the conditions were altered by an *animal* or by any person other than the player (or anyone acting for the player), **without penalty** the player may:

- Restore the original conditions as nearly as possible, and *replace* the ball on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated) if it *moves* while doing so.
- *Mark*, lift, clean and *replace* the ball on the *marked* spot if reasonably necessary to restore the original conditions or if material ended up on the ball when the conditions were altered.
- If the altered conditions cannot be easily restored, lift and *replace* the ball by *placing* it on the nearest spot (not nearer the *hole*) that (1) has the most similar *conditions affecting the stroke*, (2) is within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) of its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), and (3) is in the same *area of the course* as that spot.

The *lie* of a ball that is altered when the ball is lifted or *moved* is covered by Rule 14.2d, not by Rule 8.1c.

### 8.2 Player's Deliberate Actions to Improve Other Physical Conditions to Affect His or Her Own Play

This Rule covers physical conditions in areas other than the *conditions affecting the stroke* as covered in Rule 8.1a.

Before playing a ball, a player must not deliberately take any actions listed in Rule 8.1a (except as allowed in Rule 8.1b or c) to alter any physical conditions to affect either:

- Where the player's ball might go or come to rest after the *stroke* or a later *stroke*, or
- Where the player's ball might go or come to rest if it *moves* before the *stroke* is made (for example, when the ball is on a steep slope and the player is concerned that it might roll into a bush).

### 8.3 Player's Deliberate Actions to Improve or Damage Physical Conditions to Affect Another Player's Play

A player must not deliberately take any of the actions listed in Rule 8.1a (**except** as allowed in Rules 8.1b or c) to alter either:

- The *conditions affecting the stroke* of another player, or
- Physical conditions in any other areas to affect:
  - Where another player's ball might go or come to rest if it *moves* before the *stroke* is made, or
  - Where another player's ball might go or come to rest after the *stroke* or a later *stroke*.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 8: *General Penalty*.**

DRAFT

## Rule 9 – Ball Played as It Lies; Ball at Rest Lifted or Moved

**Purpose of Rule 9:** Rule 9 sets out a **fundamental principle of the game**: “**play the ball as it lies.**”

- If the player’s ball comes to rest and is then moved by **natural forces** such as wind or water, the player must normally 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, the ball must be **replaced** on its original spot.
- **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 usually get a penalty (except on the putting green).

### 9.1 Ball Played as It Lies

#### a. Playing Ball from Where It Came to Rest

The player’s ball at rest must be played as it lies, **except** when the Rules allow or require the player:

- To play a ball from another place on the course, or
- To lift a ball and then *replace* it on the spot where it was at rest.

**Handbook** \_\_: List of such Rules.

#### b. What to Do When Ball Moves in Backswing or While Stroke Is Made

In the unusual case where the player’s ball at rest *moves* after the player has begun the stroke or the backswing for a stroke and then makes the stroke:

- The ball is not *replaced*, no matter what caused it to *move*.
- Instead, the player must play the ball from where it comes to rest after the stroke.
- If the player caused the ball to *move*, see Rule 9.4b to find out if there is a penalty.

### 9.2 Deciding Whether and Why Ball Moved

#### a. Deciding Whether Ball Moved

(1) Meaning of Moved. A ball has “moved” under the Rules:

- Only if it leaves its spot and comes to rest on any other spot, and this could be seen by the naked eye (whether or not anyone actually sees it do so).
- This includes a ball that *moves* vertically down.
- If the ball only moves back and forth (sometimes referred to as “oscillating”) and stays on or returns to the same spot, it has not *moved*.

(2) Standard for Deciding Whether Ball Moved.

- A player’s ball at rest will be found to have *moved* only if it is *known or virtually certain* that it did.
- If the ball might have *moved* but this is not *known or virtually certain*, it has not *moved* and must be played as it lies.

**b. Deciding What Caused Ball to Move**

When a player’s ball at rest has *moved*:

- It must be decided what caused it to *move*.
- This tells the player whether to *replace* the ball or play it as it lies and whether there is a penalty.

(1) Four Possible Causes. The Rules recognize only four possible causes for a ball at rest that *moves* before the player makes a *stroke*:

- *Natural forces*, such as wind or water (see Rule 9.3),
- The player, including the player’s *caddie* (see Rule 9.4),
- The *opponent* in *match play*, including the *opponent’s caddie* (see Rule 9.5), or
- An *outside influence*, including any other player in *stroke play* (see Rule 9.6).

(2) Standard for Deciding What Caused Ball to Move.

- The player, the *opponent* or an *outside influence* will be found to have caused the ball to *move* only if it is *known or virtually certain* that they did so.
- If it is not *known or virtually certain* that at least one of these was the cause, the Rules will assume that *natural forces* caused the ball to *move*.



In applying this standard, all reasonably available information must be considered, which means all information the player knows or should know, or can get with reasonable efforts and without unreasonable delay.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on applying the “*known or virtually certain*” standard.

### 9.3 Ball Moved by Natural Forces

“*Natural forces*” means wind or water or when something happens for no apparent reason, such as the effects of gravity.

If *natural forces* cause the player’s ball at rest to *move*:

- There is **no penalty**, and
- The ball must be played from its new spot rather than being *replaced* on its original spot.

**Exception – Player’s Ball on Putting Green Must Be Replaced If It Moves after Having Already Been Lifted and Replaced on Its Original Spot (see Rule 13.1c):**

The ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), no matter what caused it to *move*.

### 9.4 Ball Lifted or Moved by Player

This Rule applies only when it is *known or virtually certain* that the player (including the player’s *caddie*) lifted his or her ball at rest or caused it to *move*.

#### a. When Lifted or Moved Ball Must Be Replaced

If the player lifts or *moves* his or her ball at rest, the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), **except**:

- When the player lifts the ball to take relief under a Rule or to *replace* the ball on a different spot, or
- When the ball *moves* only after the player has begun the backswing for a *stroke* and then makes the *stroke* (see Rule 9.1b).

**Handbook \_\_:** List of Rules under which a lifted ball is not to be *replaced*.

#### b. Penalty for Lifting, Moving or Deliberately Touching Ball

If the player lifts, *moves* or deliberately touches his or her ball at rest, **the player must add one penalty stroke**.

**But** there are four **exceptions** where **the player gets no penalty** for doing so:

**Exception 1: (Player Allowed to Lift or Move Ball):** When the player lifts or moves the ball under a Rule that:

- Allows the ball to be lifted and then *replaced* on its original spot,
- Requires a *moved* ball to be *replaced* on its original spot, or
- Allows or requires the player to play a ball from a place or spot different from where it lies.

**Exception 2 (Accidental Movement While Searching):** When the player accidentally moves the ball while searching for it or trying to identify it (see Rule 7.4).

**Exception 3 (Accidental Movement on Putting Green):** When the player accidentally moves the ball on the *putting green* (see Rule 13.1c).

**Exception 4 (Accidental Movement While Applying Rule):** When the player accidentally moves the ball while:

- *Marking*, lifting or *replacing* the ball, when allowed to do so (see Rules 14.1 and 14.3a),
- Removing a *movable obstruction* (see Rule 15.2), or
- Measuring under a Rule (such as to decide the order of play under Rule 6.4).

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance that a ball moving while the player is taking an action means the entire time from when the player begins to take that action until the action is completed.

## 9.5 Ball Lifted or Moved by Opponent

This Rule applies only when it is *known or virtually certain* that the *opponent* (including the *opponent's caddie*) lifted the player's ball at rest or caused it to move.

### a. When Lifted or Moved Ball Must Be Replaced

If the *opponent* lifts or moves the player's ball at rest, the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), **except**:

- When the *opponent* is conceding a *stroke*, hole or match (see Rule 3.2a(5)), or
- When the *opponent* lifts or moves the ball at the player's request because the player intends to take relief under a Rule or *replace* the ball on a different spot.

**Handbook \_\_:** List of Rules under which a lifted ball is not to be *replaced*.

## b. Penalty for Lifting, Moving or Deliberately Touching Ball

If the *opponent* lifts, moves or deliberately touches the player's ball at rest, **the opponent must add one penalty stroke.**

**But** there are several **exceptions** where **the opponent gets no penalty** for doing so:

**Exception 1 (Opponent Allowed to Lift Player's Ball):** When conceding a *stroke*, a hole or the match to the player or when the *opponent* lifts the ball at the player's request.

**Exception 2 (Same Exceptions as for the Player):** When the *opponent* takes any of the actions covered by **Exceptions 2, 3 or 4** in Rule 9.4b.

An *opponent* playing the player's ball as a *wrong ball* is covered by Rule 6.3c(1), not by this Rule.

## 9.6 Ball Moved by Outside Influence

This Rule applies only when it is *known or virtually certain* that an *outside influence* lifted or moved the player's ball at rest.

### a. No Penalty and Ball Replaced

If it is *known or virtually certain* that an *outside influence* (including another player in *stroke play*) caused a player's ball to move:

- **There is no penalty**, and
- The ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated).

### b. When Player's Ball is Not Found but it is Known or Virtually Certain that an Outside Influence Moved It

- The player must *replace* a *substituted ball* on its estimated original spot (which if not known must be estimated).
- **But** if this is not *known or virtually certain*, the player must play a *substituted ball* under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.1).

## 9.7 Ball-Marker Moved or Lifted

This Rule covers what to do if a *ball-marker* is moved or lifted before the ball is *replaced*.

### a. When Ball-Marker Must Be Replaced

If the player's *ball-marker* is lifted or moved in any way (including by *natural forces*) before the ball is *replaced*, either:

- The *ball-marker* must be replaced to *mark* the original spot of the ball (which if not known must be estimated), or
- The ball itself must be *replaced* on that spot.

### b. Penalty for Lifting or Moving Ball-Marker

If the player or *opponent* lifts the player's *ball-marker* or causes it to move, **the player or opponent must add one penalty stroke.**

**Exception – Rule 9.4b and 9.5b Exceptions Apply to Lifting or Moving Ball-Markers:** In all situations where the player or *opponent* gets **no penalty** for lifting or accidentally *moving* the player's ball, there is also **no penalty** for lifting or accidentally moving the player's *ball-marker*.

### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 9:**

- If the player plays the ball from a *wrong place* after (1) failing to *replace* a moved or lifted ball or *ball-marker* in breach of this Rule or (2) *replacing* a moved ball that should have been played from where it was at rest, the player gets the **general penalty** for breach of Rule 14.7.
- In *stroke play*, the player gets only **two penalty strokes in total** if he or she had also:
  - Incorrectly *substituted* the ball (see Rule 6.3) that was played from a *wrong place* (only one *general penalty* applies, not two), or
  - Lifted or *moved* the ball or *ball-marker* in breach of Rule 9.4b or Rule 9.7b (the one-stroke penalty does not apply).

## Rule 10 – Preparing for and Making a Stroke; Advice and Help; Caddies

***Purpose of Rule 10:** Rule 10 covers how to prepare for and make a **stroke**, including **assistance** and **advice** the player may get from others. A stroke is made by fairly striking a ball with a club. The fundamental challenge is to direct and control the movement of the entire club by making a free swing.*

### 10.1 Making a Stroke

Rule 10.1 covers several acts that are prohibited in making a *stroke*.

In each case, if a player makes a *stroke* in breach of the Rule, the *stroke* counts and there is also a penalty.

#### a. Fairly Striking the Ball

In making a *stroke*, the player must fairly strike at the ball with the head of the club and must not push, scrape or scoop the ball.

**Handbook** \_\_: Examples of a push, scrape or scoop.

#### b. Striking the Ball More Than Once

If a player's club strikes the ball more than once in making a *stroke*, the **player must add one penalty stroke**.

#### c. Anchoring the Club

In making a *stroke*, the player must not anchor the club, either:

- Directly, by deliberately holding the club or a gripping hand against any part of the body (**except** that the player may hold the club or a gripping hand against a hand or forearm), or
- Indirectly, through use of an “anchor point,” by deliberately holding a forearm against any part of the body to use a gripping hand as a stable point around which the other hand may swing the club.

“Forearm” means the part of the arm below the elbow joint and includes the wrist.

#### d. Making Stroke while Standing Across or on Line of Play

The player must not make a *stroke* from a *stance* with one foot deliberately placed on each side of, or with either foot deliberately touching, the *line of play* or an extension of that line behind the ball.

For this Rule only, the *line of play* does not include a reasonable distance on either side.

**Exception – There is **No Penalty** If Stance Is Taken Accidentally or to Avoid Another Player’s Line of Play.**

#### e. Playing Moving Ball

A player must not make a *stroke* at a moving ball, **except** in these three situations:

- **Ball Begins to Move Only after Player Begins Backswing for Stroke:** **There is no penalty under this Rule.** (If the player caused the ball to move, see Rule 9.4b for whether the player gets a penalty.)
- **Ball Falling Off Tee:** Making a *stroke* at a ball falling off a tee is covered by Rule 6.2b(6), not by this Rule.
- **Ball Moving in Water:** Making a *stroke* at a ball moving in water is covered by Rule 10.1f, not by this Rule.

#### f. Ball Moving in Water

When a ball is moving in water in a *penalty area* or in *temporary water*,

- The player may make a *stroke* at the moving ball **without penalty, but:**
- The player must **not** deliberately delay making the *stroke* to allow the wind or current to move the ball to a better place.

A ball moving in water in a *penalty area* or in *temporary water* may be lifted if the player takes relief under Rule 17 or Rule 16.1.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 10.1: General Penalty.**

### 10.2 Advice and Other Help

**Purpose of Rule 10.2:** *The player must act alone in making the stroke. Golf is a game of skill and personal challenge. One of the fundamental challenges is deciding the strategy and tactics for play. So there are limits to the **advice** and **help** the player may get during a round. The player may ask for advice only from his or her **caddie** or partner and must not give advice to other players.*

#### a. Advice

During a *round*, a player must not:

- Give *advice* to anyone in the competition playing on the course, or

- Ask anyone for *advice*, other than the player's *caddie*.

This does not apply before a *round*, during a suspension of play or between *rounds* in a competition.

**Rules 22, 23, 24:** In forms of play involving *partners*, a player may give *advice* to his or her *partner* or the *partner's caddie* and may ask the *partner* or *partner's caddie* for *advice*.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on comments or deliberate actions that are or are not *advice*.

## b. Other Help

(1) Pointing Out Target Line When Ball Will be Played From Anywhere Other than Putting Green.

- Any person may point out the player's target line for the *stroke*, such as a building or tree in the distance.
- The player may have anyone stand on or close to the player's target line to show where it is, **but** that person must move away before the *stroke* is made.
- The player may have an object (such as a bag or towel) put on the *course* to show the target line, **but** the object must be removed before the *stroke* is made.

(2) Pointing Out Target Line When Ball Will be Played from Putting Green. The player's *caddie*:

- May point out a target line before the *stroke* is made, **but**:
- Must not deliberately stand on or close to the target line to help the player while the *stroke* is being made.

### Exception – Caddie May Attend the Flagstick While Stroke Is Made (see Rule 13.2c)

In pointing out the target line:

- The *caddie* may touch the *putting green* with hands, feet or anything he or she is holding, but must not *improve conditions affecting the stroke* in breach of Rule 8.1.
- **But** the player or *caddie* must not put an object anywhere on or off the *putting green* to show the target. This is not allowed even if that object is removed before the *stroke* is made.

(3) Help with Stance, Alignment or Positioning of Body. When a player begins taking a stance for the stroke and until the stroke is made:

- The player's caddie must not deliberately stand on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball, and
- The player must not position his or her feet or body for the stance by reference to any object (such as a club) that was placed by or for the player on the course to help with stance, alignment or positioning of the body or club for a stroke, **except** that the player may touch the course with the club while holding it.

"Taking a stance for the stroke" under this Rule means:

- When the player intends to remain in position to make the stroke.
- If the player positions his or her feet or body next to the ball but intends to back away without making the stroke, and then does back away, this Rule does not yet apply.

**Exception – When Caddie Accidentally Stands on or Close to Line of Play or Extension of Line of Play Behind Ball:** The player gets **no penalty** under (2) or (3).

(4) Physical Help and Protection from Elements. A player must not make a stroke:

- While getting physical help from any other person, or
- With any person or object deliberately positioned to give protection from sunlight, rain, wind and other elements.

Before the stroke is made, such help or protection is allowed, **except** as prohibited in Rule 10.2b(3).

This Rule does not prohibit the player from taking his or her own actions to protect against the elements while making a stroke, such as by wearing protective clothing or holding an umbrella over his or her own head.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 10.2: General Penalty.**

### 10.3 Caddie

**Purpose of Rule 10.3:** The player may have a **caddie** to carry the player's clubs, give advice and help the player during the round. Rule 10.3 lists various actions the player's caddie is allowed or not allowed to take for the player.



**a. Caddie May Help Player During Round**

(1) Meaning of Caddie. A “caddie” is someone who helps a player during a *round* in these ways:

- Carrying or Handling Clubs – A person who carries or handles a player’s clubs during play is that player’s *caddie* even if not named as a *caddie* by the player, **except** when only taking a casual act to help (such as getting a club the player left behind or moving the player’s bag or cart out of the way).
- Advice – A player’s *caddie* is the only person a player may ask for *advice*.

When a player has a *caddie*:

- Other people may carry other items (such as a rain-suit, umbrella or food and drink) for the player and take other casual acts to help the player.
- Such a person is not the player’s *caddie* unless named as such by the player or unless he or she carries or handles the player’s clubs.

(2) Two or More Players May Share a Caddie. When there is a Rules issue involving a specific action of a shared *caddie* and it needs to be decided which player the action was taken for:

- If the *caddie*’s specific action was taken at the direction of one of the players sharing the *caddie*, the action was taken for that player.
- If none of those players directed that specific action, the action was taken for the player sharing the *caddie* whose ball was involved.

(3) Player Allowed Only One Caddie at a Time.

- The player must not have more than one *caddie* at any one time.
- The player may change *caddies* during a *round*, but must not do so temporarily to get *advice* from the new *caddie*.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting or requiring the use of *caddies* or restricting a player’s choice of *caddie*.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 10.3a(3):**

- The player gets the **general penalty** for each hole during which he or she is helped by more than one *caddie*.

- If the breach happens or continues between the play of two holes, the player gets the **general penalty** for the next hole.

## b. What a Caddie May Do

These are examples of what a *caddie* is allowed and not allowed to do:

(1) Actions Always Allowed. A *caddie* may always take these actions when the Rules allow the player to take them:

- Carry and handle the player's clubs and other *equipment* (including driving a cart or pulling a trolley).
- Search for the player's ball – Rule 7.1.
- Give information, *advice* and other help – Rules 10.2a and 10.2b.
- Smooth *bunkers* (see Rule 12.2b(2)) or take other actions to care for the *course*.
- Repair damage on the *putting green* – Rule 13.1b.
- *Attend* or remove the *flagstick* – Rule 13.2c.
- Clean the player's ball – Rule 14.1a.
- *Mark*, lift and *replace* the player's ball on the *putting green* – Rule 14.1b.
- Remove *loose impediments* and *movable obstructions* – Rules 15.1 and 15.2.

(2) Actions Allowed Only With Player's Authorization. A *caddie* may take these actions only when the Rules allow the player to take them and only with the player's authorization (which must be given each time rather than given generally for a *round*):

- When the player's ball lies anywhere other than the *putting green*, lift the player's ball under a Rule requiring it to be *replaced* – Rule 14.1b.
- Lift the player's ball after the player has decided to take relief under a Rule – Rule 14.1a.
- Restore conditions that were altered after the player's ball came to rest – Rule 8.1c.

(3) Actions Not Allowed. A *caddie* is not allowed to do these things for the player:

- *Replace* a ball, unless the *caddie* had lifted or *moved* the ball – Rule 14.2b.

- Drop a ball in a *relief area* – Rule 14.3b.
- Decide to take relief under a Rule (such as treating a ball as unplayable under Rule 19 or taking relief from an *abnormal course condition* or *penalty area* under Rules 16.1 or 17); the *caddie* may advise the player to do so, but the player must decide.
- Concede a *stroke*, hole or match to the *opponent* or agree with the *opponent* on the match score – Rule 3.2.
- In *stroke play*, serve as the player's *marker* or certify the player's *score card* – Rule 3.3

### c. Player Responsible for Caddie's Breach of Rules

The player is responsible for the *caddie's* actions during a *round*.

If a *caddie's* action would breach a Rule if done by the player, or if the *caddie* takes an action that only the player may take under a Rule, the player gets the penalty under that Rule.

## Rule 11 – Ball in Motion After Stroke Hits Person, Animal or Object

**Purpose of Rule 11:** Rule 11 covers what to do if the player's **ball in motion after a stroke** accidentally hits a person, animal, equipment or anything else on the course. The player must normally accept such outcomes, whether favorable or not, and play the ball from where it comes to rest. Also, a ball in motion should be left to come to rest without deliberate interference. Any deliberately deflected ball must be played from where it is estimated it would have come to rest.

### 11.1 Ball in Motion After Stroke Accidentally Hits Someone or Something

If a player's ball in motion after a stroke accidentally hits any person or outside influence:

- There is **No Penalty** to Any Player.
  - This is true even if the ball in motion hits the player, the opponent or any other player or any of their equipment.
  - **Exception in Stroke Play:** If the player's ball in motion hits another ball at rest on the putting green and both balls were at rest on the putting green before the stroke, the player **must add two penalty strokes**.
- The Ball Must be Played as It Lies. The player must accept the outcome and play the ball from where it comes to rest, **except** in two situations:

**Exception 1 – When Ball Played from Anywhere Other than Putting Green Comes to Rest on Any Person, Animal or Moving Outside Influence:** The player must not play the ball as it lies. Instead, the player must take relief:

- When Ball Lies Anywhere Other than Putting Green. The player must drop the original ball or a substituted ball in and play it from this relief area:
  - Reference Point: Estimated point right under where the ball came to rest on the person, animal or moving outside influence.
  - Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
  - Limits on Location of Relief Area:
    - Must be in the same area of the course as the reference point, and
    - Not nearer the hole than the reference point.

- When Ball Lies on Putting Green. The player must place the original ball or a *substituted ball* on the estimated spot right under where the ball came to rest on the person, animal or moving *outside influence*.

**Exception 2 – When Ball Played from Putting Green Accidentally Hits Any Person, Animal or Movable Obstruction on Putting Green:** The *stroke* is canceled and the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated) and played again, **except** in these two situations:

- Ball in Motion Hits Another Ball at Rest or Ball-Marker on Putting Green. The *stroke* is not canceled and the ball must be played as it lies.
- Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Flagstick or Person Attending Flagstick. This is covered by Rule 13.2d(1), not by this Rule.

## 11.2 Ball in Motion After Stroke Deliberately Deflected or Stopped

### a. Meaning of Deliberately Deflected or Stopped

This Rule applies when any person deliberately deflects or stops a player's ball in motion, which means when:

- Any person deliberately touches the ball in motion, or
- The ball in motion hits *any equipment* or other object (other than a ball at rest or *ball-marker*) or any person (such as the player's *caddie*) that a player deliberately positioned or left in a particular place so that the *equipment*, object or person might deflect or stop the ball in motion.

A ball at rest or *ball-marker* that might deflect or stop a ball in motion is covered by Rule 15.3, not by this Rule.

### b. When Penalty Applies to a Player

- A player gets the **general penalty** if he or she deliberately deflects or stops any ball in motion after a *stroke*.
- This is true whether it is the player's own ball or a ball played by an *opponent* or any other player in the competition.

### c. Where Deliberately Deflected or Stopped Ball Must be Played From

When a player's ball in motion is deliberately deflected or stopped by any person, it must not be played as it lies. Instead, the player must take relief:

(1) Stroke Made from Anywhere Other than Putting Green. The player must take relief based on the estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest if not deflected or stopped:

- When Ball Would Have Come to Rest on Course Anywhere Other than Putting Green. The player must drop the original ball or a substituted ball in and play it from this relief area:
  - Reference Point: Estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest.
  - Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
  - Limits on Location of Relief Area:
    - Must be in the same area of the course as the reference point, and
    - Not nearer the hole than the reference point.
- When Ball Would Have Come to Rest on Putting Green. The player must place the original ball or a substituted ball on the estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest.
- When Ball Would Have Come to Rest Out of Bounds. The player must play under penalty of stroke and distance (see Rule 18.2).

(2) Stroke Made from Putting Green. The stroke is canceled, and the ball must be replaced on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated) and played again.

### 11.3 Deliberately Moving Objects or Altering Conditions to Affect Ball in Motion After Stroke

While any player's ball is in motion after a stroke, a player must not deliberately do any of these things to affect where that ball might come to rest:

- Alter conditions by taking any of the actions listed in Rule 8.1a, or
- Lift or move:
  - A ball at rest or ball-marker, even if belonging to the player (see Rule 13.1a and Rule 15.3a),

**Full Draft Text** of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

- A *loose impediment* (see Rule 15.1a Exception 2), or
- A *movable obstruction*, **except** that the player may move any player's equipment (other than a ball at rest or *ball-marker*).

*Attending* or removing the *flagstick* while a ball is in motion after a *stroke* is covered by Rule 13.2, not by this Rule.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 11.3: *General Penalty*.**

DRAFT

## **IV. Special Rules for Bunkers and the Putting Green (Rules 12-13)**

### **Rule 12 – Bunkers**

**Purpose of Rule 12:** Rule 12 is a **specific Rule for bunkers**. A bunker is a specially prepared area intended to test the player's ability to play a ball from the sand. To make sure the player confronts this challenge, there are some restrictions on touching the sand before the stroke is made and on where relief may be taken for a ball in a bunker.

#### **12.1 When Ball Lies in Bunker**

A ball lies in a *bunker* when any part of the ball is inside the edge of the *bunker* and it:

- Touches sand in the *bunker*, or
- Rests on a *loose impediment, movable obstruction, abnormal course condition* or *integral part of the course* in the *bunker*.

If a ball enters sand in a *bunker* and comes to rest in any type of ground under the sand, the ball is in the *bunker*.

#### **12.2 Playing Ball in Bunker**

##### **a. Touching or Removing Loose Impediments and Movable Obstructions**

Before playing a ball in a *bunker*, the player may touch or remove *loose impediments* under Rule 15.1 and *movable obstructions* under Rule 15.2.

This includes any reasonable touching or movement of the sand in the *bunker* that happens while doing so.

##### **b. Restrictions on Touching Sand in Bunker**

(1) *When Touching Sand Results in Penalty*. Before making a *stroke* at a ball in a *bunker*, the player must not:

- Deliberately touch the sand with a hand, club, rake or other object to test the condition of the sand to learn information about the next *stroke*, or
- Touch sand in the *bunker* with a club:
  - In the area right in front of or behind the ball, or
  - In making a practice swing, or
  - In making the backswing for a *stroke*.



(2) When Touching Sand Does Not Result in Penalty. **Except** as covered in (1), this Rule does not prohibit a player from touching the sand in any other way, such as:

- Digging in with the feet to take a *stance* for a practice swing or the *stroke*,
- Raking or smoothing the *bunker* to care for the *course*,
- Placing clubs, *equipment* or other objects in the *bunker*,
- Measuring, *marking*, lifting, *replacing* or taking other actions under a Rule,
- Resting, staying balanced or preventing a fall, or
- Striking the sand in frustration or anger.

But the player gets a penalty under Rule 8.1a if his or her actions in touching the sand *improve the conditions affecting the stroke* in breach of that Rule.

(3) No Restrictions Once Ball is Played Out of Bunker. Once the ball has been played and is no longer in the *bunker*:

- The player may touch or smooth the sand without restriction, at any time the ball is outside the *bunker*.
- This is true even if the ball later rolls back into the *bunker* or if the player may *drop* a ball in and play it from the *bunker*.

### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 12.2: General Penalty.**

## **12.3 Special Rules for Relief for Ball in Bunker**

When a ball is in a *bunker*, special relief Rules may apply in these situations:

- Interference by an *abnormal course condition* – Rule 16.1d,
- Interference by a dangerous *animal* situation – Rule 16.2a, and
- Unplayable ball – Rule 19.3.

## Rule 13 – Putting Greens

**Purpose of Rule 13:** Rule 13 is a **specific Rule for putting greens**. Because they are specially prepared for playing the ball along the ground, greens have certain different Rules than for other parts of the course – such as allowing cleaning of the ball, repair of damage and removal of sand and loose soil. There is also no penalty for accidentally moving a ball or ball-marker on the green.

### 13.1 Specific Rules for Putting Greens

#### a. Marking, Lifting and Cleaning Ball

A ball that lies on or touches any part of the *putting green* may be *marked*, lifted and cleaned. The ball must be *replaced* on the *marked spot*.

**Exception – Restriction on Lifting Ball or Ball-Marker while Another Ball in Motion After Stroke (see Rule 11.3).**

#### b. Improvements Allowed on Putting Green

The player may do these two things on the *putting green*, no matter where the ball lies:

(1) Repair of Damage. A player may repair damage on the *putting green* **without penalty** (see Rule 8.1b(7)), **but** only:

- By using a hand or foot, or a normal ball-mark repair tool, tee, club or similar item of normal *equipment*, and
- Without unreasonably delaying play (see Rule 5.6a).

“Damage on the *putting green*” includes all types of damage **except** aeration holes, natural defects of the ground surface or natural wear of the *hole*. Common examples include damage caused by:

- Players – such as ball marks, spike marks and other shoe damage and scrapes or indentations caused by *equipment* or a *flagstick*.
- Greenkeeping staff or the *Committee* – such as old hole plugs, turf plugs, seams of cut turf and scrapes or indentations from maintenance tools or vehicles.
- *Animals* or other *outside influences* – such as *animal tracks* or hoof prints.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on what is unreasonable delay when repairing damage on the *putting green* and how to apply a Pace of Play Policy to such repairs.

(2) Removal of Sand and Loose Soil. Sand and loose soil on the *putting green* (but not elsewhere on the *course*) may be removed **without penalty**. (See Rule 8.1b(7)).

### c. Specific Rules When Ball or Ball-Marker Moves on Putting Green

(1) No Penalty for Accidentally Causing Ball to Move. If a player, *opponent* or another player in *stroke play* accidentally moves the player's ball or *ball-marker* on the *putting green*:

- The ball or *ball-marker* must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), **except** when Rule 9.1b applies because the ball *moved* only after the player began the backswing for a *stroke* and then made the *stroke*.
- If the player or *opponent* deliberately lifts or *moves* the player's ball or *ball-marker* on the *putting green*, see Rule 9.4 and Rule 9.5 to find out if there is a penalty.

(2) When to Replace Ball Moved by Natural Forces. If *natural forces* cause a player's ball on the *putting green* to move, where the player must play from next depends on whether the ball had already been lifted from and *replaced* on its original spot:

- Ball Already Lifted and Replaced – The ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), even though it was *moved by natural forces* and not by the player, the *opponent* or an *outside influence* (see Rule 9.3, Exception).
- Ball Not Already Lifted and Replaced – The ball must be played as it lies (see Rule 9.3).

In all other situations, Rule 9 applies in the same way whether a *moved* ball or *ball-marker* was on or off the *putting green*.

### d. Testing Putting Green

During a *round*, a player must not deliberately take either of these actions to test any *putting green*:

- Roughen the surface, or
- Roll a ball, **except** that, between the play of two holes, a player may roll a ball on the *putting green* of the hole just completed and on any practice *putting green*.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a *Local Rule* prohibiting a player from rolling a ball on the *putting green* of the hole just completed.

**e. Relief Must be Taken from Wrong Putting Green**

(1) Interference by Wrong Putting Green. Interference under this Rule exists when:

- A ball lies on or touches any part of a *wrong putting green*, or
- A *wrong putting green* interferes with the player's area of intended *stance* or swing.

(2) Relief Must Be Taken. When there is interference by a *wrong putting green*, the player must not play the ball as it lies.

Instead, **without penalty** the player must drop the original ball or a *substituted ball* and play it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: The *nearest point of complete relief* in the *general area*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - Must be in the *general area*,
  - Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
  - There must be complete relief from all interference by the *wrong putting green*.

(3) No Relief Where Clearly Unreasonable. There is no relief under Rule 13.1e when interference exists only because the player chooses a club, type of *stance* or swing or direction of play that is clearly unreasonable under the circumstances.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_**: The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule denying relief from a *wrong putting green* that only interferes with the area of intended *stance*.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 13.1: General Penalty.**

## 13.2 The Flagstick

**Purpose of Rule 13.2:** This Rule explains the player's choices for dealing with the flagstick and what happens when a ball hits the flagstick. The player may leave the flagstick in the hole or have it **attended** or removed, but must decide before making a stroke. The player gets no penalty if the ball hits the unattended flagstick in the hole or accidentally hits an attended or removed flagstick or the person attending it, and the ball is normally played as it lies.

### a. Meaning of Flagstick

The *flagstick* is a movable pole (usually with a flag attached) that is placed in the *hole* to show where the *hole* is.

Before playing a ball, the player may leave the *flagstick* in the *hole*, remove it or have it *attended* (as defined in (c) below).

### b. Unattended Flagstick Left in Hole

(1) No Need to Have Flagstick Attended or Removed. The unattended *flagstick* may be left in the *hole* when the player makes any *stroke*, even from the *putting green*.

If the unattended *flagstick* is in the *hole* when the *stroke* is made, the *flagstick* must not be deliberately removed while the ball is in motion to affect where the ball might come to rest.

(2) Position of Flagstick in Hole. Before making a *stroke* with the unattended *flagstick* in the *hole*:

- The player may leave the *flagstick* as he or she finds it, or center the *flagstick* in the *hole*.
- **But** the player must not make a *stroke* having deliberately tried to gain an advantage by moving the *flagstick* to a position other than centered.

(3) No Penalty if Ball Hits Unattended Flagstick in Hole. **There is no penalty** if the player's ball in motion hits an unattended *flagstick* in the *hole*.

If the ball is not *holed*, the ball must be played as it lies.

### c. Attended or Removed Flagstick

(1) Meaning of Attended. A *flagstick* is "attended" if, when the player makes a *stroke*, any person is:

- Touching the *flagstick* in the *hole* or standing close enough to touch it, or
- Holding the *flagstick* above the *hole* to show where the *hole* is.

That person remains the *flagstick* attendant until the ball comes to rest.

(2) Attendance or Removal Authorized by Player. The *flagstick* may be *attended* or removed by anyone the player authorizes to do so.

The player has authorized *attendance* if, before the *stroke* is made:

- The player asks or directs someone to *attend* or remove the *flagstick*,
- The player's *caddie* *attends* or removes the *flagstick*, even if the player is not aware of it, or
- The player knows that the *flagstick* has been removed or is being *attended*, and does not object.

(3) Unauthorized Attendance or Removal. When not authorized by the player, an *opponent* in *match play* or another player in *stroke play* (or their *caddies*) must not deliberately *attend* or remove the *flagstick* to affect where the player's ball might come to rest.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 13.2b, c: General Penalty.**

For a breach of Rule 13.2c(3), the penalty applies to the *opponent* or other player who *attended* or removed the *flagstick* without authority.

**d. Ball Hits Attended or Removed Flagstick or Person Attending It**

(1) Ball Accidentally Hits Attendant or Flagstick. If the player's ball in motion after a *stroke* accidentally hits an *attended* or removed *flagstick* or the person *attending* it:

- There is **no penalty**, and
- The ball must be played as it lies.

(2) Ball Deliberately Deflected or Stopped by Attendant. If the player's ball in motion after a *stroke* is deliberately deflected or stopped by the person *attending* the *flagstick*:

- When a Penalty Applies. If that attendant is a player or a player's *caddie*:
  - That player gets the **general penalty** for breach of Rule 11.2.
  - This includes when a player or *caddie* *attending* the *flagstick* deliberately fails to prevent the ball from being deflected or stopped, such as deliberately failing to move out of the way of the ball or to remove the *flagstick* from the hole.

- Where Ball Must Be Played From. No matter who deliberately deflected or stopped the player's ball:
  - The player must not play the ball from where it comes to rest.
  - Instead, the player must estimate the spot where the ball would have come to rest if not deliberately deflected or stopped and take relief under Rule 11.2.

### 13.3 Ball Overhanging Hole or Resting against Flagstick

#### a. Ball Overhanging Hole

If any part of a player's ball overhangs the lip of the *hole* after a *stroke*:

- The player is allowed a reasonable time to reach the *hole* and ten extra seconds to see whether the ball will fall into the *hole*.
- If the ball falls into the *hole* in this time, the player has *holed out* with that previous *stroke*.
- If the ball does not fall into the *hole* in this time, it is at rest.
- If the ball then falls into the *hole* before it is played, the player has *holed out* with the previous *stroke*, but **must add one penalty stroke** to the score for the hole.

While the player is waiting to see if the ball will fall into the *hole* in the time allowed, an *opponent* or other player in *stroke play* must not deliberately lift or *move* the player's ball.

#### b. Ball Resting against Flagstick in Hole

If a player's ball after a *stroke* comes to rest against the unattended *flagstick* in the *hole* but is not below the level of the lip of the *hole*:

- The ball is not *holed*, but the player or anyone he or she authorizes may move the *flagstick*.
- If the ball then falls into the *hole*, the player has *holed out* with the previous *stroke*.
- If the ball *moves* but does not fall into the *hole*, it must be *replaced* **without penalty** by placing it on the lip of the *hole*.

An *opponent* or other player in *stroke play* must not deliberately move the *flagstick* to affect whether a player's ball resting against the *flagstick* in the *hole* will be *holed*.

#### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 13.3b: General Penalty.**

## **V. Lifting and Returning a Ball to Play (Rule 14)**

### **Rule 14 – Procedures for Ball: Marking, Lifting and Cleaning, Replacing on Spot, Dropping in Relief Area, Playing from Wrong Place**

**Purpose of Rule 14:** Rule 14 covers the essential topics of when and how the player may **lift, mark and clean** the ball and how to put a ball back into play by **replacing** or **dropping** it.

- These situations need to be handled in a consistent way so that a ball is played from the right place.
- A ball to be replaced must be placed on and played from a particular **spot**, whereas in taking relief with or without penalty a ball must be dropped in and played from a particular **relief area**.
- A mistake in using these procedures may be corrected without penalty before the ball is played, but the player gets a penalty if he or she **plays the ball from the wrong place**.

#### **14.1 Marking, Lifting and Cleaning Ball**

##### **a. How to Mark Spot of Ball to Be Lifted and Replaced**

Before lifting a ball under a Rule requiring the ball to be *replaced* on its original spot, the player must *mark* the spot.

If the spot is *marked* with a *ball-marker*, the player must remove the *ball-marker* before making a stroke.

If the player lifts the ball without first *marking* its spot, *marks* its spot in a wrong way or makes a stroke with a *ball-marker* left in place, **the player must add one penalty stroke**.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on *ball-markers* and how to *mark* a ball.

##### **b. Who May Lift Ball**

The player or anyone the player authorizes may always lift the player's ball.

Also, when the ball lies on the *putting green*, the player's *caddie* may lift the ball without the player's authorization.

If the player's *caddie* lifts the ball without authorization when it lies anywhere other than the *putting green*, **the player must add one penalty stroke**.



### c. Cleaning Lifted Ball

A ball lifted from *the putting green* may always be cleaned (see Rule 13.1).

A ball lifted from anywhere else may always be cleaned **except** when it is lifted:

- To See if It is Cut or Cracked. Cleaning is not allowed (see Rule 4.2b).
- To Identify It. Cleaning is allowed only as much as is needed to identify it (see Rule 7.2).
- Because It Interferes with Play. Cleaning is not allowed (see Rule 15.3a(2)).
- To see if It Lies In Condition Where Relief is Allowed. Cleaning is not allowed, unless the player takes relief under a Rule (see Rule 16.4).

If the player cleans a lifted ball when not allowed, **the player must add one penalty stroke.**

## 14.2 Lifted or Moved Ball to Be Replaced on Spot

### a. Original Ball to Be Replaced

When a ball must be *replaced* after it was lifted or *moved*, the original ball must be used.

#### Exception – When Substituted Ball May Be Replaced:

- When the original ball cannot be recovered with reasonable effort and in a few seconds, so long as the player did not deliberately cause that to happen.
- When play resumes after a suspension of play (see Rule 5.7d).

### b. Who May Replace Ball

A player's ball may be *replaced* under the Rules only by these people:

- The player may always *replace* the ball.
- If someone other than the player lifted or *moved* the ball, the ball may also be *replaced* by that other person.

If the player plays a ball that was *replaced* by someone not allowed to do so, **the player must add one penalty stroke.**

### c. Spot on Which Ball Is Replaced

When a ball is lifted or *moved* and a Rule requires it to be *replaced*:

- The ball must be *replaced* on its original spot.
- If that spot is not *marked* or known, it must be estimated.

If the ball was at rest above the ground on, under or against any growing, attached or fixed objects:

- The “spot” of the ball includes its vertical location *relative* to the ground.
- This means that the ball must be *replaced* on, under or against those objects on the same spot where it was at rest.

### d. Where to Replace Ball When Original Lie Altered

If the *lie* of a ball has been altered, the player must *replace* the ball in this way:

(1) Ball in Sand. When the ball was at rest in sand, whether in a *bunker* or anywhere else on the *course*:

- In *replacing* the ball on its spot, the player must re-create the original *lie* as much as possible.
- In re-creating the *lie*, the player may leave a small part of the ball visible if the ball had been covered by sand.

(2) Ball Anywhere Other Than in Sand. When the ball was at rest anywhere other than in sand, the player must *replace* the ball by placing it on the nearest spot (not nearer the *hole*) with a *lie* most similar to the original *lie* that is:

- Within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), and
- In the same *area of the course* as that spot.

If the player knows that the original *lie* was altered but does not know what the *lie* was, the player must estimate the original *lie* and *replace* the ball under (1) or (2) above.

### e. What to Do If Ball Does Not Stay on Spot

If a player tries to *replace* a ball but it does not stay on its spot, the player must try a second time.

If the ball again does not stay on that spot, the player must *replace* the ball by placing it on the nearest spot (not nearer the *hole*) where the ball will stay at rest, **but** with these limits depending on where the original spot is located:

- Original Spot in General Area. The nearest spot must be in the *general area*.
- Original Spot in Bunker or Penalty Area. The nearest spot must be either in the same *bunker* or in the same *penalty area*.
- Original Spot on Putting Green. The nearest spot must be either on the *putting green* or in the *general area*.

#### f. Ball or Ball-Marker Moved While Replacing

If a ball or *ball-marker* is accidentally *moved* while *replacing* a ball, **there is no penalty** and the ball or *ball-marker* must be *replaced*.

### 14.3 Dropping Ball in Relief Area

#### a. How Ball Must Be Dropped

When *dropping* a ball in a *relief area* under a Rule, the player must:

- Hold the ball above the ground without it touching any growing thing or other natural or artificial object, and
- Let go of the ball so that it falls through the air before coming to rest.

To avoid any doubt, it is recommended that the ball be *dropped* from a height of at least one inch above the ground, including any growing thing or natural or artificial object.

When *dropping* a ball under any Rule (including when the *dropping* procedure requires the player to place a ball under Rule 14.3e), the player may use the original ball or a *substituted ball*.

**PENALTY: Making a Stroke at a Ball That Was Dropped Incorrectly – One penalty stroke.**

#### b. Player Must Drop Ball

The player's ball must be *dropped* only by the player. No one else (including a *caddie*) may do so.

**PENALTY: Making a Stroke at a Ball Dropped by a Wrong Person – One penalty stroke.**

**c. Ball Must Be Dropped in and Played from Relief Area**

When a player *drops* a ball in taking relief:

- The ball must be *dropped* in, come to rest in and be played from the *relief area*.
- If the ball is *dropped* outside the *relief area* or comes to rest outside the *relief area*, it must be lifted and *dropped* again.

The player may stand either inside or outside the *relief area* when *dropping* a ball.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 14.3c:**

- **Making Stroke at Ball That was Dropped Outside Relief Area but Came to Rest in Relief Area: One *penalty stroke*.** (The player has not played from a *wrong place*.)
- **Making Stroke at Ball That Came to Rest Outside Relief Area: *General Penalty* for playing from a *wrong place* under Rule 14.7.**

**d. Actions Affecting Where Dropped Ball Comes to Rest**

(1) *Dropped Ball Accidentally Hits Anyone or Anything*. If a *dropped* ball accidentally hits any person, *equipment* or other object before coming to rest, **there is no *penalty***.

If the ball comes to rest in the *relief area*, it must be played as it lies (see Rule 14.3c).

If the ball comes to rest outside the *relief area*, it must be *dropped* again (see Rule 14.3c).

(2) *Dropped Ball Deliberately Deflected or Stopped*. While any ball is in motion after being *dropped* in the *relief area*, the player who *dropped* it or any other player must not deliberately deflect or stop the ball to affect where it may come to rest.

If any player does so:

- **He or she gets the *general penalty***, and
- In *stroke play*, the player who is taking relief must *drop* the ball again, no matter where it came to rest or would have come to rest.

**Exception – Player Deliberately Deflects or Stops Dropped Ball in Motion Outside Relief Area When There Is No Reasonable Chance It Will Return to and Come to Rest in Relief Area: **There is no *penalty***.** The ball must be lifted and *dropped* again.

**e. What to Do When Dropped Ball Comes to Rest Outside the Relief Area**

(1) Dropping Ball Again. If a *dropped* ball comes to rest outside the *relief area*:

- The ball must be *dropped* again.
- If it again comes to rest outside the *relief area*, it must be *dropped* again. There is no set limit on the number of times to *drop* a ball again.
- If a ball *dropped* more than once in one place does not come to rest in the *relief area*, the player must try other places in the *relief area*, even if the ball may come to rest in a less favorable *lie* or place.
- The player should make all reasonable efforts to *drop* the ball so that it will come to rest in the *relief area*, such as by *dropping* from the lowest possible height and *dropping* in different places if necessary (such as trying the middle or the opposite sides of the *relief area*) .

(2) What to Do When Dropped Ball Will Not Stay in Relief Area. In unusual situations, a *dropped* ball may not stay in the *relief area* despite the player's repeated attempts under (1) above.

If this happens and it is reasonable to conclude that a *dropped* ball will not come to rest in the *relief area* no matter where and how the ball is *dropped*:

- The player must place the ball on and play it from a spot chosen by the player that is anywhere in the *relief area*.
- If the placed ball does not stay at rest on the spot chosen, the player must apply Rule 14.2e.
- Only the player may place a ball under this Rule. No one else (including a *caddie*) may do it for the player.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULES 14.1, 14.2, 14.3:**

- If a player plays the ball from a *wrong place* after *replacing* or *dropping* a ball in breach of these Rules, the player gets the **general penalty** for breach of Rule 14.7.
- In *stroke play*, the player gets only two *penalty strokes* in total if he or she had also *incorrectly substituted* (see Rule 6.3) the ball played from a *wrong place* (only one *general penalty* applies, not two).

## 14.4 When Replaced, Dropped or Placed Ball Is in Play

When the player's *ball in play* has been lifted:

- It is again *in play* when *replaced*, *dropped* or placed with the intent for it to be *in play*.
- This applies whether the original ball or a *substituted ball* is used and whether the ball is in the right place or a *wrong place*.

A *replaced* ball is *in play* even if the *ball-marker* has not been removed.

## 14.5 Correcting Mistake Made in Taking Relief

### a. Player May Lift Ball to Correct Mistake, If the Ball Has Not Yet Been Played

When a *ball in play* has been *substituted*, *replaced*, *dropped* or placed by a wrong person, in a *wrong place* or by using a procedure not allowed under the Rules:

- The player may lift the ball **without penalty** and correct the mistake.
- But this is allowed only before the ball has been played.

### b. Relief Rule and Relief Option to Use When Correcting Mistake

The relief Rule and relief option to be used when correcting the mistake depends on whether the ball lifted under Rule 14.5a had been *dropped* or placed under a Rule that the player was allowed to use:

(1) When Player Had Used a Relief Rule and Relief Option that were Allowed. The player must correctly take relief using that same Rule and relief option.

(2) When Player Had Used a Relief Rule or Relief Option that was Not Allowed. The player may take relief under any Rule or relief option that applies to his or her situation.

### c. No Penalties for Ball Lifted to Correct Mistake

When a ball is lifted to correct a mistake under Rule 14.5a:

- The player does not count any penalty for actions taken relating to that *ball in play* before it was lifted, such as for accidentally causing the ball to *move* (see Rule 9.4b) or for *improving conditions affecting the stroke* (see Rule 8.1).
- **But** if those same actions by the player were also in breach of a Rule for the play of the ball that was put *in play* to correct the mistake (such as when the player's actions also *improved the conditions affecting the stroke* to be made at that ball), **the penalty applies** to the play of that ball.

## 14.6 Making Next Stroke from Where Previous Stroke Made

This Rule applies whenever a player must or may make the next *stroke* from where a previous *stroke* was made – such as when playing under penalty of *stroke and distance* or playing again after a canceled *stroke*.

- How the player must put a ball *in play* depends on the *area of the course* where that previous *stroke* was made.
- In all situations, the player may use the original ball or may *substitute* another *ball*.

### a. Previous Stroke Made from Teeing Area

The original ball or a *substituted ball* must be played from anywhere inside the *teeing area* (and may be teed) under Rule 6.2b.

### b. Previous Stroke Made from General Area, Penalty Area or Bunker

The original ball or a *substituted ball* must be *dropped* in and played from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: Spot where the previous *stroke* was made.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - Must be in the same *area of the course* as the reference point, and
  - Not nearer the *hole* than the reference point.

### c. Previous Stroke Made from Putting Green

The original ball or a *substituted ball* must be placed on the spot where the previous *stroke* was made, using the procedures for *replacing* a ball under Rule 14.2.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 14.6: General Penalty.**

## 14.7 Playing from Wrong Place

### a. Place from Where Ball Must be Played

After starting a hole:

- A player must make each *stroke* from where his or her ball comes to rest, **except** when the Rules require or allow the player to play a ball from another place (see Rule 9.1).
- A player must not play his or her *ball in play* from a *wrong place*.

**Handbook** \_\_: List of situations where a ball has been played from a *wrong place*.

### **PENALTY FOR PLAYING FROM WRONG PLACE: General Penalty.**

In *stroke play*, the player gets only **two penalty strokes in total** if he or she had also:

- Incorrectly *substituted* the ball (see Rule 6.3) that was played from a *wrong place* (only one *general penalty* applies, not two), or
- Breached a Rule involving a related one-stroke penalty (such as when the ball played from a *wrong place* was *replaced*, *dropped* or placed in a wrong way (see Rules 14.2c, 14.3c-d) or by a wrong person (see Rules 14.2b, 14.3b) (the one-stroke penalty does not apply).

#### **b. How to Complete Hole After Playing from Wrong Place in Stroke Play**

(1) Player Must Decide whether to Play Out Hole with Ball Played from Wrong Place or to Correct the Mistake by Playing from Right Place. In *stroke play*, what a player does next depends on whether it was a *serious breach* – that is, whether the player gained a significant advantage by playing from a *wrong place*:

- Not a Serious Breach. The player must play out the hole with the ball played from a *wrong place*, without correcting the mistake.
- Serious Breach. The player must correct the mistake of playing from a *wrong place*:
  - Before making a *stroke* from the next *teeing area*, the player must play out the hole with a ball played from a right place under the Rules, or
  - If it is the final hole of the *round*, then before leaving the *putting green* the player must announce that he or she will play out the hole with a ball played from a right place under the Rules.
  - If the mistake is not corrected in time, **the player is disqualified.**
- What to Do If Uncertain Whether Breach Is Serious. The player should play out the hole with both the original ball played from a *wrong place* and a second ball played from a right place under the Rules.

(2) Player Who Tries to Correct Mistake Must Report to Committee. If a player tries to correct the mistake by playing a ball from a right place under the Rules under (1):



- The player must report the facts to the *Committee* before returning the score card.
- This applies whether the player played out the hole with only that ball or with two balls.

If the player does not report the facts to the *Committee*, he or she **is disqualified**.

(3) When Player Tried to Correct Mistake, Committee will Decide Player's Score for Hole. The player's score for the hole depends on whether the *Committee* finds that there was a *serious breach* in playing the original ball from a *wrong place*:

- No Serious Breach.
  - The score with the original ball played from a *wrong place* counts, and **the player must add two penalty strokes** to the score with that ball.
  - If the player did not *hole out* with the original ball, **the player is disqualified**.
  - If a second ball was played, all *strokes* made with that ball, and any *penalty strokes* the player got solely by playing that ball, are disregarded.
- Serious Breach.
  - The score with the ball played to correct the mistake of playing from a *wrong place* counts (including all *strokes* taken by the player before playing the original ball from a *wrong place*), and **the player must add two penalty strokes** to the score with that ball.
  - The *stroke* made in playing the original ball from a *wrong place* and any further *strokes* made in continuing to play that ball, including any *penalty strokes* solely from playing that ball, are disregarded.
  - If the ball played to correct the mistake was also played from a *wrong place*:
    - If the *Committee* finds that this was not a *serious breach*, **the player must add two more penalty strokes**, making a **total of four penalty strokes in all** (two for playing the original ball from a *wrong place* and two for playing the other ball from a *wrong place*).
    - If the *Committee* finds that this was a *serious breach*, **the player is disqualified**.

**Handbook** \_\_: Guidance on what is a *serious breach*.

## **VI. Relief Without Penalty (Rules 15-16)**

### **Rule 15 – Relief from Movable Objects: Loose Impediments, Movable Obstructions, Balls Helping or Interfering with Play**

**Purpose of Rule 15:** Rule 15 covers when and how the player may take free relief from **loose (natural) impediments and movable (artificial) obstructions**, which are normally not considered part of the challenge of playing the course:

- *In most cases, a player may remove loose impediments and movable obstructions that interfere with play, but there is a penalty if the player moves loose impediments causing his or her ball at rest to move (except on the putting green).*
- *A ball that helps or interferes with the play of another ball may usually be lifted (but not cleaned) and then will be replaced.*

#### **15.1 Loose Impediments**

##### **a. Removal of Loose Impediments**

A loose impediment anywhere on or off the course may be removed **without penalty, except** in these two situations:

**Exception 1 – Removing Loose Impediments Where Ball Must Be Replaced:**  
Before a ball that has been lifted or moved from anywhere other than the putting green is replaced on its spot:

- A player must not deliberately remove any loose impediments that, if moved, would likely have caused the ball at rest to move.
- If the player does so, **he or she must add one penalty stroke.**
- This Exception does not apply to the incidental movement of loose impediments while marking, lifting, moving or replacing a ball.

**Exception 2 – Restriction on Deliberately Removing Loose Impediments to Affect Ball in Motion After a Stroke (see Rule 11.3).**

In either situation, any loose impediments that are removed need not be replaced.

## b. Ball Moved When Removing Loose Impediment

If the player's removal of a *loose impediment* causes his or her ball to *move*:

- The ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated).
- If the *moved* ball had been at rest anywhere other than on the *putting green*, **the player must add one penalty stroke under Rule 9.4b.**

## 15.2 Movable Obstructions

### a. Relief from Movable Obstructions

(1) Removal of Movable Obstructions. A movable obstruction anywhere on or off the course may be removed **without penalty.**

**Exception – Restrictions on Deliberately Removing Movable Obstructions to Affect a Ball in Motion After a Stroke (see Rule 11.3).**

If the player's ball *moves* while he or she is removing a *movable obstruction*:

- **There is no penalty,** and
- The ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated).

(2) Relief When Ball Is In or On Movable Obstruction Anywhere Other than Putting Green. **Without penalty** the player may lift the ball, remove the *obstruction* and *drop* the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and play it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: Estimated point right under where the ball was at rest in or on the *obstruction*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - Must be in the same *area of the course* as the reference point, and
  - Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point.

(3) Relief When Ball is In or On Movable Obstruction on Putting Green. Without penalty, the player may:

- Lift the ball and remove the *obstruction*, and
- Place the original ball or a *substituted ball* on the estimated spot right under where the ball was at rest on the *obstruction*, using the procedures for *replacing a ball* under Rule 14.2.

#### b. Ball in Movable Obstruction But Not Found

If the player's ball has not been found but it is *known or virtually certain* that it came to rest in a *movable obstruction*:

- The player may take relief under Rule 15.2a(2), using as the reference point the estimated point right under where the ball last crossed the edge of the *obstruction*.
- **But** if it is not *known or virtually certain* that the ball came to rest in a *movable obstruction*, the player must play under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.2).

### 15.3 Ball or Ball-Marker Helping or Interfering with Play

#### a. Ball on Putting Green Helping Play

Rule 15.3a applies only to a ball at rest on the *putting green*, not anywhere else on the *course*.

If a player reasonably believes that a ball at rest on the *putting green* might help anyone's play (such as by serving as a possible backstop near the *hole*), the player may:

- *Mark* and lift the ball under Rule 13.1 if it is his or her own, or if the ball belongs to another player, require the other player to *mark* and lift the ball.
- The lifted ball must be *replaced* on the *marked spot*.
- In *stroke play* only, a player required to *mark* and lift a ball may play first instead.

In *stroke play*:

- Two or more players (including *partners*) must not agree to leave a ball in place to help any player.
- If they do and that player then makes a *stroke* with the helping ball left in place, **each player who made the agreement must add two penalty strokes.**

## b. Ball Anywhere on Course Interfering With Play

If a player reasonably believes that another player's ball at rest anywhere on the *course* might interfere with the player's own play:

- The player may require the other player to *mark* and lift the ball, which must not be cleaned (**except** when lifted from the *putting green*).
- The lifted ball must be *replaced* on the *marked* spot.
- In *stroke play* only, a player required to *mark* and lift his or her ball under this Rule may play first instead.

Interference exists when another player's ball at rest:

- Might interfere with the player's area of intended *stance* or swing, or
- Is on or close to the *line of play* such that, given the player's intended *stroke*, there is a reasonable chance the player's ball in motion could hit that ball, or
- Is close enough to distract the player in making a *stroke*.

A player who believes that his or her own ball might interfere with another player's play must not lift the ball under this Rule without being required to do so by the other player (**except** when lifting the ball on the *putting green* under Rule 13.1a).

**PENALTY FOR PLAYER LIFTING BALL OR CLEANING LIFTED BALL WHEN NOT ALLOWED UNDER THIS RULE: One *penalty stroke*.**

## c. Ball-Marker Helping or Interfering with Play

If a *ball-marker* might help or interfere with play, a player may:

- Move the *ball-marker* out of the way if it is his or her own, or
- If the *ball-marker* belongs to another player, require that player to move the *ball-marker* out of the way, for the same reasons as he or she may require a ball to be lifted under Rules 15.3a and 15.3b.

The *ball-marker* must be moved out of the way to a new spot measured from its original spot, such as by using one or more clubhead-lengths.

Either the ball or a *ball-marker* must be *replaced* on its original spot.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 15.3: General *Penalty*.**

## Rule 16 – Relief from Abnormal Course Conditions (Including Immovable Obstructions), Dangerous Animal Situations, Embedded Ball

**Purpose of Rule 16:** Rule 16 covers relief from interference by **abnormal course conditions** and **dangerous animal situations**.

- Because such conditions and situations are not considered part of the challenge of playing the game, relief without penalty is normally allowed when they interfere with a ball that lies anywhere on the course except in a **penalty area**.
- The player normally takes relief by **dropping** a ball in and playing it from a **relief area** based on the **nearest point of complete relief**, so that the player is completely free of the interference.

The Rule also allows free relief when the player's ball is **embedded** in its own pitch mark in the general area.

### 16.1 Abnormal Course Conditions (Including Immovable Obstructions)

This Rule covers relief from interference by *animal holes, ground under repair, immovable obstructions or temporary water*.

These are collectively called *abnormal course conditions*, but each of them has a separate Definition.

#### a. When Relief Is Allowed

(1) Meaning of Interference by Abnormal Course Condition. Interference exists when:

- The player's ball touches or lies in or on an *abnormal course condition*, or
- An *abnormal course condition* interferes with the player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing, or
- Only when the ball is on the *putting green*, an *abnormal course condition* on or off the *putting green* intervenes on the *line of play*.

When the ball is off the *putting green*, intervention on the *line of play* is not interference under this Rule.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The Committee may adopt a Local Rule denying relief from an *abnormal course condition* that only interferes with the area of intended stance.

(2) Relief Allowed Anywhere on Course Except Penalty Area. Relief from interference by an *abnormal course condition* is allowed under Rule 16.1 only when both:

- The *abnormal course condition* is on the *course*, and
- The ball lies anywhere on the *course*, **except** in a *penalty area*.

For a ball in a *penalty area*, the player's only relief is under Rule 17.

(3) No Relief Where Clearly Unreasonable to Play Ball. There is no relief under Rule 16.1:

- When playing the ball as it lies would be clearly **unreasonable** for a reason other than the interference (which could be the case, for example, when a ball is at rest in a bush and the player would be unable to make a *stroke* because of the bush), or
- When interference exists only because the player chooses a club, type of *stance* or swing or direction of play that is clearly **unreasonable** under the circumstances.

**Handbook** \_\_: Guidance on meaning of "clearly unreasonable."

**Committee Procedures**, \_\_: The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule allowing relief without penalty for interference by *temporary immovable obstructions* on or off the *course*.

## b. Relief for Ball in General Area

If the player's ball is in the *general area* and there is interference by an *abnormal course condition* on the *course*, **without penalty** the player may drop the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and play it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: The nearest point of complete relief in the *general area*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - Must be in the *general area*,
  - Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
  - There must be complete relief from all interference by the *abnormal course condition*.



### c. Relief for Ball in Bunker

If the player's ball is in a *bunker* and there is interference by an *abnormal course condition* on the course, the player may take relief **either without penalty or with penalty**:

(1) Relief Without Penalty: Playing from Bunker. The player may take relief **without penalty** under Rule 16.1b, **except** that the *nearest point of complete relief* and the *relief area* must be in the *bunker*.

If there is no such *nearest point of complete relief* in the *bunker*, the player may still take this relief, by using the *point of maximum available relief* in the *bunker* as the reference point for the *relief area*.

(2) Relief With Penalty: Playing from Behind Bunker Using Back-On-A-Line Relief Procedure. **For one penalty stroke**, the player may drop the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and play it from this *relief area* behind the *bunker*:

- Reference Line for Relief Area: Line from the *hole* through the spot where the original ball came to rest.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Line: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) on either side of the reference line, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - May be in any *area of the course*,
  - Must be behind the *bunker* where the ball came to rest, and
  - No limit to how far back the ball may be *dropped*.

### d. Relief for Ball on Putting Green

If the player's ball is on the *putting green* and there is interference by an *abnormal course condition* on the course, the player may take relief **without penalty** by placing the original ball or a *substituted ball* on the spot of the *nearest point of complete relief*, using the procedures for *replacing* a ball under Rule 14.2.

- The *nearest point of complete relief* must be either on the *putting green* or in the *general area*.
- If there is no such *nearest point of complete relief*, the player may still take this relief by using the *point of maximum available relief* that is either on the *putting green* or in the *general area*.



**e. Relief for Ball in Abnormal Course Condition But Not Found**

If the player's ball has not been found but is *known or virtually certain* to have come to rest in an *abnormal course condition*:

- The player may take relief under Rules 16.1b, c or d above, using the estimated point where the ball last crossed the edge of the *abnormal course condition* as the spot of the ball for purposes of finding the *nearest point of complete relief*.
- **But** if it is not *known or virtually certain* that the ball came to rest in an *abnormal course condition*, the player must play under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.2).

**f. Relief Must Be Taken from Interference by No Play Zone in Abnormal Course Condition**

(1) When Ball Lies in No Play Zone. If a ball lies in a *no play zone* in an *abnormal course condition*, the player must not play the ball as it lies. Instead:

- No Play Zone in General Area. The player must take relief **without penalty** under Rule 16.1b.
- No Play Zone in Bunker. The player must take relief **without penalty or with penalty** under Rules 16.1c(1) or (2).
- No Play Zone on Putting Green. The player must take relief **without penalty** under Rule 16.1d.

If the ball has not been found but is *known or virtually certain* to be in a *no play zone* in an *abnormal course condition*, the player must take relief either under Rule 16.1e or by playing under penalty of *stroke and distance* under Rule 18.1.

(2) No Play Zone Interferes with Player's Stance or Swing. If a player's ball lies outside a *no play zone*, but a *no play zone* in an *abnormal course condition* or anything growing in it interferes with the player's area of intended stance or swing, the player must not play the ball as it lies.

Instead, the player must take relief in one of two ways:

- The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b, c or d above, depending on whether the ball lies in the *general area*, in a *bunker* or on the *putting green*, or
- The player may take unplayable ball relief under Rule 19.2.

**PENALTY FOR MAKING STROKE IN BREACH OF RULE 16.1f:** The player has played from a *wrong place* and gets the **general penalty** for breach of Rule 14.7.

## 16.2 Dangerous Animal Situation

### a. When Relief Is Allowed

A “dangerous *animal* situation” exists when a dangerous *animal* (such as rattlesnakes, stinging bees, alligators, fire ants or bears) near a ball could seriously endanger the player if the ball were played as it lies.

A player may take relief without penalty from a dangerous *animal* situation:

- No matter where a ball lies on the *course*, **but**:
- Relief is not allowed if playing the ball would be clearly unreasonable for either of the reasons stated in Rule 16.1a(3).

**Handbook** \_\_: Guidance on *animal* situations that are treated as dangerous under this Rule.

### b. How Relief May be Taken

If there is interference by a dangerous *animal* situation:

(1) When Ball Lies Anywhere Other Than Penalty Area. The player may take relief **without penalty** under Rules 16.1b, c or d, depending on whether the ball lies in the *general area*, in a *bunker* or on the *putting green*.

(2) When Ball Lies in Penalty Area. The player has two relief options:

- Relief without Penalty: Playing from Penalty Area. The player may take relief **without penalty** under Rule 16.1b, **except** that the *nearest point of complete relief* and the *relief area* must be in the *penalty area*.
- Relief with Penalty: Playing from Outside Penalty Area.
  - The player may take relief **with one penalty stroke** under Rule 17.1.
  - If there is interference by a dangerous *animal* situation where the ball would be played in taking this relief outside the *penalty area*, the player may take further relief without penalty under (1) above.

For this Rule, the *nearest point of complete relief* means the nearest point (not nearer the hole) where the dangerous *animal* situation does not exist.

## 16.3 Embedded Ball

### a. When Relief Is Allowed

(1) Meaning of Embedded.

- A ball is “*embedded*” when it is in its own pitch-mark made after the *stroke* and part of the ball is below the level of the ground.
- A ball does not necessarily have to touch the soil to be *embedded* (for example, grass and *loose impediments* may be between the ball and the soil).

A player’s ball at rest that is pushed into the ground (such as when someone accidentally steps on it) is covered by Rule 14.2d (*replacing a moved ball when lie altered*), not by this Rule.

(2) Ball Must Be Embedded in General Area. Relief is allowed under Rule 16.3b below only when a ball is *embedded* in the *general area*.

- If a ball is *embedded* anywhere other than the *general area*, the player is not entitled to relief under this Rule.
- **But** if the ball is *embedded* on the *putting green*, the player may *mark*, lift and clean the ball, repair the damage caused by its impact, and *replace* the ball on the *marked spot* (see Rule 13.1b).

### b. How to Take Relief for Ball Embedded

If a player’s ball is *embedded* in the *general area*, the player may take relief **without penalty** by *dropping* the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and playing it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: Spot right behind where the ball is *embedded*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - Must be in the *general area*, and
  - Not nearer the *hole* than the reference point.

**Exceptions – Relief Not Allowed for Ball Embedded in General Area in Two Situations:**

- The ball is *embedded* in sand in a part of the *general area* that is not cut to fairway height or less, or
- Interference by anything other than the ball being *embedded* makes the *stroke* clearly unreasonable (which could be the case, for example, when a ball is *embedded* below a bush and the player would be unable to make a *stroke* because of the bush).

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule allowing relief only for a ball *embedded* in an area cut to fairway height or less.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULES 16.1a-e, 16.2, 16.3: General Penalty.**

**16.4 Lifting Ball to See If It Lies in Condition Where Relief Allowed**

If a player reasonably believes that his or her ball lies in a condition where relief without penalty is allowed under Rules 15 or 16, but cannot decide that without lifting the ball:

- The player may lift the ball **without penalty** to see if relief is allowed, **but:**
- The ball's spot must be *marked* first and the lifted ball must not be cleaned.

If relief is allowed and the player takes relief, **there is no penalty** even if the player failed to *mark* the ball before lifting it or cleaned the lifted ball.

If relief is not allowed, or if the player chooses not to take relief that is allowed, the ball must be *replaced* on the *marked* spot.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 16.4:**

- If relief is not allowed or the player chooses not to take relief, the player must add **one penalty stroke** if he or she breached the Rule in one or more of these ways: (1) did not *mark* the ball before lifting it, (2) cleaned the lifted ball, or (3) lifted the ball without a reasonable belief that it was in a condition where relief without penalty is allowed.
- **But** in *stroke play*, the player gets only **two penalty strokes in total** (and the one-stroke penalty does not apply) if he or she also gets a related **general penalty** for (1) playing the ball from a *wrong place* (see Rule 14.7), or (2) playing a *substituted ball* when not allowed to do so (see Rule 6.3).

## **VII. Relief With Penalty (Rules 17-19)**

### **Rule 17 – Ball in Penalty Area**

***Purpose of Rule 17:** Rule 17 is a specific Rule for **penalty areas**. A penalty area is an area of the course that is a body of water or that has been defined by the Committee. Players are given special relief options (each with a one-stroke penalty) because it is likely that a ball coming to rest in a penalty area will be lost or, if found, will be unplayable.*

#### **17.1 Options for Ball in Penalty Area**

Penalty areas are defined as either red or yellow. This affects the player's relief options (see Rule 17.1c(3)).

##### **a. Player May Play Ball as It Lies or Take Relief**

A ball is in a *penalty area* if it lies in, touches any part of or overhangs the edge of the *penalty area*.

The player may either:

- Play the ball as it lies without penalty, under the same Rules that apply to a ball in the *general area* (that is, there are no special Rules limiting how a ball may be played from a *penalty area*); or
- Play a ball from outside the *penalty area* by taking relief with penalty under Rules 17.1c or 17.2.

**Exception – Relief Must Be Taken for Interference from No Play Zone in Penalty Area (see Rule 17.1d).**

##### **b. Ball in Penalty Area but Not Found**

If the player's ball has not been found but is *known or virtually certain* to have come to rest in a *penalty area*:

- The player may take relief **with penalty** under Rules 17.1c or 17.2.
- **But** if it is not *known or virtually certain* that the ball came to rest in a *penalty area*, the player must play under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.2).

### c. Relief for Ball in Penalty Area

If the player's ball is in a *penalty area*, including when it is *known or virtually* certain to be in a *penalty area* even though not found, the player has these three relief options, each **for one penalty stroke**:

(1) Stroke-And-Distance Relief. The player may play the original ball or a *substituted ball* from where the previous *stroke* was made (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).

(2) Back-On-A-Line Relief. The player may *drop* the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and play it from this *relief area* behind the *penalty area*:

- Reference Line for Relief Area: Line from the *hole* through the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the *penalty area*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Line: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) on either side of the reference line, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - May be in any *area of the course*,
  - Must be behind the *penalty area* where the ball came to rest, and
  - No limit to how far back the ball may be *dropped*.

(3) Lateral Relief (Only for Red Penalty Area). When the ball last crossed the edge of a red *penalty area*, the player may *drop* the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and play it from this *lateral relief area*:

- Reference Point: Estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the red *penalty area*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 80 inches (203.2 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - May be in any area on the *course* **except** the same *penalty area*, and
  - Must not be nearer the *hole*.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_**: The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule allowing lateral relief on the opposite side of a red *penalty area* at an equal distance from the *hole*.

**d. Relief Must be Taken for Interference by No Play Zone in Penalty Area**

In each of these situations, the player must not play the ball as it lies.

(1) When Ball Lies in No Play Zone in Penalty Area. The player must take relief **with penalty** under Rule 17.1.

(2) No Play Zone Interferes with Stance or Swing for Ball in Penalty Area. If a player's ball lies in a *penalty area* but outside a *no play zone* in the *penalty area*, and the *no play zone* or anything growing in it interferes with his or her area of intended *stance* or *swing*, the player must not play the ball as it lies.

Instead, the player must either:

- Take relief **with penalty** outside the *penalty area* under Rule 17.1, or
- If the *no play zone* is only one part of the *penalty area*, take relief **without penalty** **by** dropping the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and playing it from this *relief area* in the *penalty area*:
  - Reference Point: The *nearest point of complete relief* from the *no play zone*.
  - Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
  - Limits on Location of Relief Area:
    - Must be in the same *penalty area* where the ball lies, and
    - Must not be nearer the *hole*.

(3) No Play Zone Interferes with Player's Stance or Swing for Ball Outside Penalty Area. If a player's ball lies outside a *penalty area* but a *no play zone* in the *penalty area* or anything growing in the *no play zone* interferes with his or her area of intended *stance* or *swing*, the player must not play the ball as it lies.

Instead, the player must either:

- Treat the interference from the *no play zone* the same as interference from an *abnormal course condition* and take relief under Rule 16.1b, c or d above, depending on where the ball lies, or
- Take unplayable ball relief under Rule 19.2.

But there is no relief **without penalty** under (2) or (3) above if for some other reason it is clearly unreasonable to play the ball as it lies or if the player chooses a club, type of *stance* or swing, or direction of play that is clearly unreasonable under the circumstances.

**PENALTY FOR MAKING STROKE IN BREACH OF RULE 17.1d:** The player has played from a *wrong place* and gets the **general penalty** for breach of Rule 14.7.

## 17.2 Relief Options after Playing Ball From Penalty Area

### a. When Ball Played from Penalty Area Comes to Rest in Same or Another Penalty Area

If a ball played from a *penalty area* comes to rest in the same *penalty area* or another *penalty area*, the player may play the ball as it lies **without penalty** (see Rule 17.1a).

Or, **for one penalty stroke**, the player may take relief under any of these options:

(1) Normal Relief Options. The player may take *stroke-and-distance* relief or back-on-a-line relief under Rules 17.1c(1) or (2) or, for a red *penalty area*, lateral relief under Rule 17.1c(3).

Under (2) or (3), the reference point or reference line is found by using the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the *penalty area* where the ball now lies.

If the player takes *stroke-and-distance* relief by *dropping* a ball in the *penalty area* and then decides not to play the *dropped* ball from where it lies:

- The player may take further relief by playing the original ball or a *substituted ball* from outside the *penalty area* under Rule 17.1c(2) or, if it applies, (3) or under Rule 17.1a(2).
- If the player does so, **he or she must add one extra penalty stroke, for a total of two penalty strokes: one stroke for taking stroke-and-distance relief, and one extra stroke for taking relief outside the penalty area under Rule 17.2a(1) or (2).**

(2) Extra Relief Option: Playing from Where Last Stroke Made Outside a Penalty Area. Instead of using one of the normal *penalty area* relief options, the player may choose to play the original ball or a *substituted ball* from where he or she made the last *stroke* from outside a *penalty area* (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).



## **b. When Ball Played from Penalty Area Is Lost, Out of Bounds or Unplayable Outside Penalty Area**

After playing a ball from a *penalty area*, a player may sometimes need or choose to take *stroke and distance* relief because the original ball is either:

- *Out of bounds* or *lost* outside the *penalty area* (see Rule 18.2), or
- Unplayable outside the *penalty area* (see Rule 19.2a).

In that situation, **the player must add one penalty stroke** and drop and play the original ball or a *substituted ball* from where the previous stroke was made in the *penalty area* (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).

If the player then decides not to play the *dropped* ball from where it lies in the *penalty area*:

- The player may take further relief by playing the original ball or a *substituted ball* from outside the *penalty area* under Rules 17.2a(1) or (2).
- If the player does so, **he or she must add one extra penalty stroke, for a total of two penalty strokes**: one stroke for taking *stroke-and-distance* relief under Rules 18.2 or 19.2a, and one extra stroke for taking relief outside the *penalty area* under Rules 17.2a(1) or (2).
- The player may directly take such relief outside the *penalty area* without first *dropping* a ball where the previous stroke was made in the *penalty area*, but **still must add a total of two penalty strokes**.

## **17.3 No Relief under Other Rules for Ball in Penalty Area**

When a player's ball is in a *penalty area*, there is no relief for:

- Interference by an *abnormal course condition* (see Rule 16.1),
- An *embedded* ball (see Rule 16.3), or
- An unplayable ball (see Rule 19).

In these situations, the player's only relief option is to play the original ball or a *substituted ball* from outside the *penalty area* under Rule 17, **adding one penalty stroke**.

**But** when a dangerous *animal* situation interferes with the play of a ball in a *penalty area*, the player may take relief under Rules 16.2 or Rule 17.

## **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 17: General Penalty.**

## Rule 18 – Stroke and Distance Relief, Ball Lost or Out of Bounds; Provisional Ball

**Purpose of Rule 18:** Rule 18 requires the player to take relief under **penalty of stroke and distance for a ball lost (outside a penalty area) or out of bounds**. The progression of playing from the teeing area until the ball is holed is broken when a ball cannot be found or came to rest off the course. The player must resume that progression by playing again from where the previous stroke was made.

To save time when uncertain whether the ball stayed in bounds or will be found outside a penalty area, the player may play a **provisional ball** but must announce this before making the stroke. The Rule covers how the provisional ball becomes the ball in play or when it must be abandoned.

### 18.1 Relief under Penalty of Stroke and Distance Allowed at any Time

At any time, a player may take stroke-and-distance relief by **adding one penalty stroke** and playing the original ball or a substituted ball from where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).

Once the player puts a ball into play under penalty of stroke and distance:

- The original ball is no longer in play and must not be played.
- This is true even if it is then found on the course before the end of the three-minute search time (see Rule 6.3c).

**Exception – Playing a Ball from Where Previous Stroke was Made Is Not Playing Under Penalty of Stroke and Distance When the Player:**

- Announces that he or she is playing a *provisional ball* (see Rule 18.3b),
- Is playing a second ball under Rules 14.7c or 20.1c(3) in *stroke play*, or
- Is playing again after a canceled stroke under any Rule.

### 18.2 Ball Lost or Out of Bounds: Stroke and Distance Relief Must Be Taken

#### a. When Ball Is Lost or Out of Bounds

(1) When Ball Is Lost. A ball is lost if not found in three minutes after the player or his or her caddie begin to search for it.

If a ball is found in that time but it is uncertain if it is the player's ball:

- The player must promptly attempt to identify the ball (see Rule 7.2).

- If the player is not where the ball is found, he or she is allowed a reasonable time to get to the ball to try to identify it, even if that happens after the three-minute search time has ended.
- If the player does not identify his or her ball in that time, the ball is *lost*.

(2) When Ball Is Out of Bounds.

- A ball is *out of bounds* only when all of it lies *out of bounds*.
- It is in bounds if any part of the ball touches or overhangs the *course*.

A player may stand *out of bounds* to play a ball on the *course*.

**b. What to Do when Ball Is Lost or Out of Bounds**

If a ball is *lost* or *out of bounds*, the player must take *stroke-and-distance* relief by **adding one penalty stroke** and playing the original ball or a *substituted ball* from where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).

**Exception –Taking Relief under Another Rule Where It Is Known or Virtually Certain What Happened to Ball:** The player has an extra option when his or her ball has not been found but it is *known or virtually certain* that it came to rest on the *course* and:

- Was moved by an *outside influence* (see Rule 9.4), or
- Is in or on a *movable obstruction* (see Rule 15.2b) or an *abnormal course condition* (see Rule 16.1e), or
- Is in a *penalty area* (see Rule 17.1b).

In those situations, the player may choose either to take relief under the Rule that applies, or to take relief **under penalty of stroke and distance**.

## **18.3 Provisional Ball**

**a. When Provisional Ball Is Allowed**

If a ball might be *lost* outside a *penalty area* or be *out of bounds*, to save time the player may play another ball provisionally under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 14.6 for what to do). This applies:

- When the original ball has not been found or identified and is not yet *lost*, and
- When a ball might be *lost* in a *penalty area* but also might be *lost* somewhere else on the *course*.

**But** a *provisional ball* is not allowed if the only possible place the original ball could be *lost* is in a *penalty area*.

If a *provisional ball* itself might be *lost* outside a *penalty area* or be *out of bounds*:

- The player may play another *provisional ball*.
- That *provisional ball* then has the same relationship to the first *provisional ball* as the first one has to the original ball.

#### **b. Announcing Play of Provisional Ball**

Before the *stroke* is made:

- The player must tell the *opponent* in *match play* or the *marker* or another player in the group in *stroke play* that he or she is playing a *provisional ball*.
- It is not enough for the player only to say that he or she is playing another ball or is playing again.

If the player does not announce this (even if he or she intended to play a *provisional ball*) and plays a ball from where the previous *stroke* was made, that ball is the player's *ball in play* under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.1).

#### **c. When Provisional Ball Becomes Player's Ball in Play**

(1) *When Original Ball Is Lost Outside a Penalty Area or Is Out of Bounds*. The *provisional ball* becomes the *ball in play* **under penalty of stroke and distance**.

**Exception – Taking Relief Under Another Rule Where It Is Known or Virtually Certain What Happened to Ball:** The player has an extra option when his or her ball has not been found but it is *known or virtually certain* that it came to rest on the course and:

- Was moved by an *outside influence* (see Rule 9.4), or
- Is in a *movable obstruction* (see Rule 15.2b) or an *abnormal course condition* (see Rule 16.1f).

In those situations, the player may choose either to take relief under the Rule that applies, or to play the *provisional ball* as his or her *ball in play* **under penalty of stroke and distance**.

(2) When Provisional Ball Is Played from Nearer the Hole than Where Original Ball Is Estimated to Be.

- The *provisional ball* becomes the *ball in play* **under penalty of stroke and distance.**
- The original ball is no longer *in play* and must not be played, even if it is then found on the *course* before the end of the three-minute search time or is found nearer the *hole* than it was estimated to be from the *hole*.

Until the original ball is found or lost:

- A *provisional ball* is still a *provisional ball* if played again from a spot farther from the *hole* than where the original ball is estimated to be.
- This is true even if the *provisional ball* is played multiple times.

**d. When Provisional Ball Must Be Abandoned**

(1) When Original Ball Is Found On Course Before Becoming Lost. The player must abandon the *provisional ball* and continue playing the original ball.

(2) When Original Ball Is Found in Penalty Area or Is Known or Virtually Certain to be in Penalty Area. The player must abandon the *provisional ball* and either play the original ball as it lies or take *penalty area* relief under Rule 17.1c.

**e. Effect of Abandoning Provisional Ball**

If a *provisional ball* is abandoned under Rule 18.3d:

- The player must not make any more *strokes* at the *provisional ball* (see Rule 6.3c), and
- All *strokes* made in playing that ball before it was abandoned and all penalties the player got solely by playing it are disregarded.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 18: General Penalty.**

## Rule 19 – Ball Unplayable

**Purpose of Rule 19:** Rule 19 sets out the player's several relief options for an **unplayable ball** anywhere on the course (except in a penalty area). This allows the player to choose which option to use – with one penalty stroke – to get out of a difficult situation where it may be inadvisable or impossible to play the ball. The relief options for a ball in a bunker are different, as they normally require the player to play the ball from inside the bunker if taking relief under the back-on-a-line or lateral relief options.

### 19.1 Player May Decide to Take Unplayable Ball Relief Anywhere Except Penalty Area

The player is the only person who may decide to treat his or her ball as unplayable by taking relief with penalty under Rules 19.2 or 19.3.

- Unplayable ball relief is allowed anywhere on the course, **except** in a penalty area.
- If a ball is unplayable in a penalty area, the player's only relief options are penalty area relief under Rule 17.

### 19.2 Relief Options for Unplayable Ball in General Area or on Putting Green

The player may take unplayable ball relief under one of these three options and **add one penalty stroke**:

#### a. Stroke-And-Distance Relief

The player may play the original ball or a substituted ball from where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 for what to do).

#### b. Back-On-A-Line Relief

The player may drop the original ball or a substituted ball in and play it from this relief area behind the spot of the ball:

- Reference Line for Relief Area: Line from the hole through the spot where the original ball came to rest.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Line: The entire area within 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) on either side of the reference line, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - May be in any area of the course,
  - Must be behind the spot where the original ball was at rest, and
  - No limit to how far back the ball may be dropped.

### c. Lateral Relief

The player may *drop* the original ball or a *substituted ball* in and play it from this lateral relief area:

- Reference Point: Spot where the original ball came to rest.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within 80 inches (203.2 centimeters) from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
  - Must not be nearer the *hole*, and
  - May be in any *area of the course*.

## 19.3 Relief Options for Unplayable Ball in Bunker

### a. Normal Relief Options

When a player's ball is in a *bunker*:

- The player may take unplayable ball relief **for one penalty stroke under any of the options in Rule 19.2, except that:**
- The ball must be *dropped* in and played from a *relief area* in the *bunker* if the player takes either back-on-a-line relief (see Rule 19.2b) or lateral relief (see Rule 19.2c).

### b. Extra Relief Option

As an extra relief option when a player's ball is in a *bunker*, **for a total of two penalty strokes:**

- The player may play the original ball or a *substituted ball* from outside the *bunker* using the back-on-a-line relief procedure in Rule 19.2b.
- Such a ball may be played from any *area of the course*.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 19: General Penalty.**

## **VIII. Procedures for Players and Committee in Applying the Rules (Rule 20)**

### **Rule 20 – Resolving Rules Issues During Round; Rulings by Referee and Committee**

**Purpose of Rule 20:** Rule 20 informs players how to proceed when they have questions about applying the Rules during a round.

- When no referee is available, **the player must decide what to do and play on.**
- The Rule also sets out procedures (which differ in match play and stroke play) allowing the player to protect his or her right to get a ruling at a later time.

**The Committee may appoint referees to decide questions of fact and apply the Rules, and rulings from a referee or the Committee are binding on all players.**

#### **20.1 Resolving Rules Issues During Round**

##### **a. Players Must Avoid Unreasonable Delay**

Players must not unreasonably delay play when seeking help with the Rules during a round:

- If a referee or Committee member is not reasonably available to help with a Rules issue, the player must decide what to do and play on.
- The player may protect his or her rights by asking for a ruling in *match play* (see Rule 20.1b) or playing two balls in *stroke play* (see Rule 20.1c).

##### **b. Rules Issues in Match Play**

(1) Deciding Issues by Agreement. During a round:

- The players in a match may agree how to decide a Rules issue.
- That agreement is conclusive even if it turns out to have been wrong under the Rules, so long as the players did not deliberately agree to waive the Rules in breach of Rule 1.3a.

**Exception – When Referee Is with Match:** A referee who is assigned to a match must rule on any issue brought to his or her attention and the players must follow that ruling.



(2) Requesting Ruling. A player may get a ruling from a referee or the Committee only if the player both:

- Tells the *opponent* about the ruling request, and
- Makes the request in time (see Rule 20.1b(3), (4) and (5) for when a request is made in time during a match, after the match ends and after the result is announced).

If the player fails to do so, a ruling will not be given. The result of the hole or holes in question will stand even if the Rules were applied in the wrong way.

(3) When Player Requests Ruling during Match. A referee or the Committee will give the player a ruling only if the request is made in time.

A request for a ruling during the match is made in time if, upon discovering the facts creating the Rules issue, the player tells the *opponent* about the request:

- Before any player in the match plays from the next *teeing area*, or
- For the final hole of the match, before all players in the match leave the *putting green*.

If a player requests a ruling about an earlier hole, a ruling will be given only if all three of these apply:

- The request is based on facts the player previously did not know,
- The *opponent* breached Rule 3.2c by giving the player the wrong *number of strokes taken* or failing to tell the player about a penalty, and
- The player makes the request in time (as set out above).

(4) When Player Requests Ruling After Match Has Ended but before Result of Match Is Announced. A referee or the Committee will give the player a ruling only if all three of these apply:

- The request is based on facts the player discovered only after all players in the match had left the *putting green* of the final hole,
- The *opponent* breached Rule 3.2c by giving the player the wrong *number of strokes taken* or failing to tell the player about a penalty, and
- The player tells the *opponent* about the request before the result of the match is announced.

(5) When Player Requests Ruling after Result of Match Is Announced. A referee or the Committee will give the player a ruling only if both of these apply:

- The request is based on facts the player discovered only after the result was announced, and
- The *opponent* knew, before the result was announced, that he or she had given the player the wrong *number of strokes taken* or did not tell the player about a penalty.

There is no time limit on giving a ruling that meets these criteria.

(6) No Right to Play Two Balls. A player who is uncertain about the right procedure in a match is not allowed to play out the hole with two balls. That procedure applies only in *stroke play* (see Rule 20.1c).

### c. Rules Issues in Stroke Play

(1) No Right to Decide Rules Issues by Agreement. When a referee or Committee member is not reasonably available in *stroke play*:

- The players are encouraged to help each other with how to apply the Rules, but they have no right to decide a Rules issue by agreement.
- Any such agreement they may reach does not need to be followed by the players, a referee or the Committee.
- A player should raise any Rules issues with the Committee before returning his or her *score card*.

(2) Players Should Protect the Field. To protect the interests of all players in the field:

- If a player knows or believes it possible that another player has breached the Rules, and the other player does not recognize or is ignoring this, the player should tell the other player, the player's *marker*, a *referee* or the *Committee*.
- This should be done promptly, and in all cases before the other player returns his or her score card unless it is not possible to do so.

(3) Playing Two Balls When Uncertain What to Do. A player who is uncertain about the right procedure while playing a hole may complete the hole with two balls **without penalty**:

- The player must decide to play two balls after the uncertain situation arises and before making a *stroke*.

## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

- If the player wishes to choose which ball should count if the Rules allow the procedure used for that ball, the player should announce that choice to his or her *marker* or to another player before making a *stroke*.
- If the player does not choose in time, the ball played first is treated as the ball chosen by default.
- The player must report the facts of the situation to the *Committee* before returning the *score card*, even if the player scores the same with both balls. **The player is disqualified if he or she fails to do so.**
- If the player made a *stroke* before deciding to play two balls:
  - This Rule does not apply at all and the score with the ball the player made a *stroke* at counts.
  - **But the player gets no penalty for playing the second ball.**

A second ball played under this Rule is not the same as a *provisional ball* under Rule 18.3.

(4) *Committee Decision on Score for Hole*. When a player plays two balls under (3), the *Committee* will decide the player's score for the hole in this way:

- The score with the ball chosen (whether by the player or by default) counts if the Rules allow the procedure used for that ball.
- If the Rules do not allow the procedure used for that ball, the score with the other ball played counts if the Rules allow the procedure used for that other ball.
- If the Rules do not allow the procedure used for both balls, the score with the ball chosen (whether by the player or by default) counts unless there was a *serious breach* in playing that ball from a *wrong place*, in which case the score with the other ball counts.
- If there was a *serious breach* in playing from a *wrong place* with both balls, **the player is disqualified.**
- *Strokes* made with the ball ruled not to count, and any *penalty strokes* the player got solely by playing that ball, are disregarded.

“Rules allow the procedure used” means that either: (a) the original ball was played as it lies and play was allowed from there, or (b) the ball that was played was put *in play* under an allowed procedure and in the right way and right place under the Rules.

## 20.2 Rulings on Issues under the Rules

### a. Rulings by Referee

A *referee* is someone named by the *Committee* to decide questions of fact and apply the Rules.

A *referee's* ruling on the facts or how the Rules apply must be followed by the player:

- A player has no right to appeal a *referee's* ruling to the *Committee*.
- The *referee* may seek the *Committee's* guidance before making a ruling or refer a ruling to the *Committee* for review, but does not need to do so.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** Guidance on scope of a *referee's* authority.

### b. Rulings by Committee

When there is no *referee* to give a ruling or when a *referee* refers a ruling to the *Committee*:

- The ruling will be given by the *Committee*, and
- The *Committee's* ruling is final.

If the *Committee* cannot reach a decision, it may refer the issue to the Rules of Golf Committee of The R&A or the USGA, whose decision is final.

### c. When Wrong Rulings will be Corrected

If a ruling by a *referee* or the *Committee* is found to be wrong:

- The ruling will be corrected if possible under the Rules.
- If it is too late to do so, the wrong ruling stands.

**Handbook \_\_:** Guidance on situations involving wrong rulings and administrative mistakes.

### d. Disqualifying Players after Outcome of Match or Competition Is Decided

(1) *Match Play*. There is no time limit on disqualifying a player under Rule 1.2 (serious misconduct) or Rule 1.3a (deliberately agreeing to ignore any Rule or to waive any penalty).

This may be done even after the result of the match has been announced.

(2) *Stroke Play*. Normally, a penalty must not be waived, altered or added after a *stroke play* competition has closed, which is when the *Committee* has announced the result or, in

*stroke play* qualifying followed by *match play*, when the player has teed off in his or her first match.

**But** a player must be disqualified even after the competition is closed if he or she:

- Deliberately agreed to ignore any Rule or waive any penalty in breach of Rule 1.3a;
- Knew before the competition had closed that the returned *score card* showed a handicap that was higher than the actual handicap, and this affected the number of handicap strokes used to adjust the player's score (see Rule 3.3b(5));
- Returned a score for any hole lower than actually taken for any reason other than failing to include one or more *penalty strokes* that, before the competition closed, the player did not know that he or she had (see Rule 3.3b(4)); or
- Knew before the competition had closed that he or she was in breach of any other Rule with a penalty of disqualification.

The *Committee* may also disqualify a player under Rule 1.2 (serious misconduct) after the competition has closed.

## 20.3 Situations Not Covered by the Rules

Any situation not covered by the Rules should be decided by:

- Considering all the circumstances, and
- Treating the situation in a way that is reasonable, fair and consistent with how similar situations are treated under the Rules.

## **IX. Other Forms of Play (Rules 21-24)**

### **Rule 21 – Other Forms of Individual Stroke Play and Match Play**

**Purpose of Rule 21:** *Rule 21 covers four other forms of individual play.*

- Three are forms of stroke play where **holing out is not required** and different scoring methods apply: **Stableford** (scoring by points awarded on each hole); **Maximum Score** (the score for any hole is capped at a maximum); and **Par/Bogey** (match play scoring used on a hole by hole basis).
- The fourth is **Three-Ball Match Play** (in which each of three individual players plays a separate match against the other two players).

#### **21.1 Stableford**

##### **a. Overview of Stableford**

*Stableford is a form of stroke play where:*

- A player's or side's score for a hole is based on points awarded by comparing the player's or side's strokes on the hole (including penalty strokes) to a fixed score for the hole set by the Committee.
- The competition is won by the player or side who completes all rounds with the most points.

The normal Rules for *stroke play* in Rules 1-20 apply, but as modified by these specific Rules. Rule 21.1 is written:

- For gross-score competitions, but can be adapted for net-score competitions as well, and
- For individual play, but can be adapted for competitions involving *partners* (*Foursomes, Threesomes, Four-Ball and Best-Ball*), as modified by Rules 22-23, and for team competitions, as modified by Rule 24.

**b. Scoring in Stableford**

(1) How Points Are Awarded. Points are awarded to a player for each hole by comparing the player's number of strokes (including *penalty strokes*) to a fixed score for the hole (such as par):

Hole Played In	Points
More than one over fixed score or no score returned	0
One over fixed score	1
Fixed score	2
One under fixed score	3
Two under fixed score	4
Three under fixed score	5
Four under fixed score	6

A player who does not *hole out* correctly under the Rules for any reason gets zero points for the hole.

To help pace of play, players are encouraged to stop playing a hole when their score will be zero points.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The conditions of the competition may set a different method of awarding points, such as the Modified Stableford scoring method.

(2) Score Entered for Each Hole. To meet the requirements in Rule 3.3b for entering hole scores on the score card:

- If Hole Is Correctly Completed.
  - When Actual Number of Strokes (including Penalty Strokes) Is Lower than Two over Fixed Score. The score card must show the actual number of strokes.
  - When Actual Number of Strokes (including Penalty Strokes) Is Two or More over Fixed Score. The score card may show either no score or any number of strokes that results in zero points being awarded.
- If Hole Is Not Correctly Completed. If the player does not *hole out* correctly under the Rules, the score card may show either no score or any number of strokes that results in zero points being awarded.

The Committee is responsible for deciding how many points the player gets on each hole.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** In the conditions of the competition, the Committee may encourage players to also enter the point score for each hole on the score card.

### c. Penalties in Stableford

(1) Penalties Other Than Disqualification. All *penalty strokes* are added to the player's score for the hole where the breach happened, **but** there are four **exceptions**:

**Exception 1 – Excess Clubs:** If a player breaches Rule 4.1b (Maximum of 14 Clubs), the player's score for the *round* is revised by **deducting two or four points under Rule 4.1b from the total points for the round**.

**Exception 2 – Time of Starting:** If a player breaches Rule 5.3a by (1) arriving late but within five minutes after the starting time or (2) starting early but within five minutes of the starting time (see Rule 5.3 Penalty Statement, Exceptions 1 and 2), the *Committee* will **deduct two points from the total points score for the round**.

**Exception 3 – Unreasonable Delay or Breach of Pace of Play Policy:** If a player gets the *general penalty* for breach of Rule 5.6a or for breach of a Pace of Play Policy, the *Committee* will **deduct two points from the total points scored for the round**. For repeated breaches of Rule 5.6, see Rule 21.1c(2).

**For Exceptions 1-3**, the player must report the facts about the breach to the *Committee* before returning the *score card* so that the *Committee* may apply the penalty. If the player fails to do this, **the player is disqualified**.

**Exception 4 – Wrong Score by Failing to Include Penalty Player Did Not Know About:** If a player gets the extra two-stroke penalty under the Exception to Rule 3.3b(4):

- The *Committee* will apply that extra penalty by **deducting two points from the total points score for the round**.
- **The penalty that the player failed to include is applied to the hole where the breach happened.**
- **But neither penalty applies** when a breach of Rule 3.3b(4) does not affect the result of the hole because the player had zero points for the hole.

**Handbook, \_\_:** Guidance on applying penalty exceptions in *Stableford*.

(2) Disqualification Penalties. A player who breaches any of these Rules is **not disqualified from the competition but gets zero points** for the hole where the breach happened:

- Failure to *hole out* under Rule 3.3c,
- Failure to correct mistake of playing from outside *the teeing area* in starting a hole (see Rule 6.1b(2)),
- Failure to correct mistake of playing a *wrong ball* (see Rule 6.3c), or



- Failure to correct mistake of playing from a *wrong place* when there is a *serious breach* (see Rule 14.7c).

If the player breaches any other Rule with a penalty of disqualification, **the player is disqualified from the competition.**

#### d. Order of Play in Net-Score Stableford Competition

In net-score *Stableford* competitions, Rule 6.4b(1) is modified so that the player with the lowest net score at a hole has the *honor* at the next *teeing area*.

### 21.2 Maximum Score

#### a. Overview of Maximum Score

*Maximum Score* is a form of *stroke play* where a player's or *side's* score for a hole is capped at a maximum number of strokes set by the *Committee*, such as two times par, a fixed number (6, 8, 10, etc.) or net double bogey.

The normal Rules for *stroke play* in Rules 1-20 apply, but as modified by these specific Rules. Rule 21.2 is written

- For gross-score competitions, but can be adapted for net-score competitions as well, and
- For individual play, but can be adapted for competitions involving *partners* (*Foursomes*, *Threesomes*, *Four-Ball* and *Best-Ball*), as modified by Rules 22-23, and for team competitions, as modified by Rule 24.

#### b. Scoring in Maximum Score

(1) *Player's Score on Hole*. A player's score for a hole is based on the number of strokes actually taken (including *penalty strokes*), **except** that the player will get only the maximum score even if the actual number of strokes exceeds the maximum.

A player who does not *hole out* correctly under the Rules for any reason gets the maximum score for the hole.

To help pace of play, players are encouraged to stop playing a hole when their score has reached the maximum.

(2) Score Entered for Each Hole. To meet the requirements in Rule 3.3b for entering hole scores on the score card:

- If Hole Is Correctly Completed.
  - When Actual Number of Strokes (including Penalty Strokes) Is Lower than Maximum. The score card must show the actual number of strokes.
  - When Actual Number of Strokes (including Penalty Strokes) Is Same as or Higher than Maximum. The score card may show either no score or any number of strokes at or above the maximum.
- If Hole Is Not Completed Correctly. If the player does not *hole out* correctly under the Rules, the score card may show either no score or any number of strokes at or above the maximum.

The Committee is responsible for adjusting the player's score for any hole where the maximum applies.

### c. Penalties in Maximum Score

All penalties that apply in *stroke play* apply in *Maximum Score*, **except** that a player who breaches any of these four Rules is **not disqualified from the competition but gets the maximum score** for the hole where the breach happened:

- Failure to *hole out* under Rule 3.3c,
- Failure to correct mistake of playing from outside *the teeing area* in starting a hole (see Rule 6.1b(2)),
- Failure to correct mistake of playing a *wrong ball* (see Rule 6.3c), or
- Failure to correct mistake of playing from a *wrong place* when there is a *serious breach* (see Rule 14.7c).

If the player breaches any other Rule with a penalty of disqualification, **the player is disqualified from the competition**.

After applying any *penalty strokes*, the player's score for a hole may not exceed the maximum score set by the Committee.

## 21.3 Par/Bogey

### a. Overview of Par/Bogey

*Par/Bogey* is a form of *stroke play* that uses scoring as in *match play*:

- A player or *side* wins or loses a hole by completing the hole in fewer *strokes* or more *strokes* (including *penalty strokes*) than a fixed target score for that hole set by the *Committee*.
- The competition is won by the player or *side* with the highest total of holes won versus holes lost (that is, adding up the holes won and deducting the holes lost).

The normal Rules for *stroke play* in Rules 1-20 apply, but as modified by these specific Rules. Rule 21.3 is written:

- For gross-score competitions, but can be adapted for net-score competitions as well, and
- For individual play, but can be adapted for competitions involving *partners* (*Foursomes*, *Threesomes*, *Four-Ball* and *Best-Ball*), as modified by Rules 22-23, and for team competitions, as modified by Rule 24.

### b. Scoring in Par/Bogey

(1) *How Holes Won or Lost*. Scoring is done as in *match play*, with holes being won or lost by reference to the fixed score (typically par or bogey) set by the *Committee*:

- If a player scores lower than the fixed score, the player wins the hole.
- If the player scores the same as the fixed score, the hole is tied.
- If the player scores higher than the fixed score, or returns no score for the hole, the player loses the hole.

A player who does not *hole out* correctly under the Rules for any reason loses the hole.

To help pace of play, players are encouraged to stop playing a hole when their score exceeds the fixed score (as they have lost the hole).

(2) Score Entered for Each Hole. To meet the requirements in Rule 3.3b for entering hole scores on the score card:

- If Hole Is Correctly Completed.
  - When Actual Number of Strokes (including Penalty Strokes) Is Equal to or Lower than Fixed Score. The score card must show the actual number of strokes.
  - When Actual Number of Strokes (including Penalty Strokes) Is More than Fixed Score. The score card may show either no score or any number of strokes that results in the hole being lost.
- If Hole Is Not Completed Correctly. If the player does not *hole out* correctly under the Rules, the score card may show either no score or any number of strokes that results in the hole being lost.

The Committee is responsible for deciding whether the player won, lost or tied (halved) each hole.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** In the conditions of the competition, the Committee may encourage players to enter whether the hole was won, lost or tied.

### c. Penalties in Par/Bogey

(1) Penalties Other Than Disqualification. All penalty strokes are added to the player's score for the hole where the breach happened, **but** there are four **exceptions**:

**Exception 1 – Excess Clubs:** If a player breaches Rule 4.1b (Maximum of 14 Clubs), the player's score for the round is revised by **deducting one hole or two holes under Rule 4.1b**.

**Exception 2 – Time of Starting:** If a player breaches Rule 5.3a by (1) arriving late but within five minutes after the starting time or (2) starting early but within five minutes of the starting time (see Rule 5.3 Penalty Statement, Exceptions 1 and 2), the Committee will **deduct one hole from the total holes won versus holes lost**.

**Exception 3 – Unreasonable Delay or Breach of Pace of Play Policy:** If a player gets the general penalty for breach of Rule 5.6, the Committee will **deduct one hole from the total of holes won versus holes lost**. For repeated breaches of Rule 5.6, see Rule 21.3c(2).

**For Exceptions 1-3**, the player must report the facts about the breach to the Committee before returning the score card so that the Committee may apply the penalty. If the player fails to do this, the player is **disqualified**.

**Exception 4 – Wrong Score by Failing to Include Penalty Player Did Not Know About:** If a player gets the extra two-stroke penalty under the Exception to Rule 3.3(4):

- The Committee will apply that extra penalty by **deducting one hole** from the **total of holes won versus holes lost**.
- The penalty that the player failed to include is applied to the hole where the breach happened.
- **But neither penalty applies** when a breach of Rule 3.3(4) does not affect the result of the hole (because the player already had lost the hole).

(2) *Disqualification Penalties.* A player who breaches any of these Rules is **not disqualified from the competition but loses the hole** where the breach happened:

- Failure to *hole out* under Rule 3.3c,
- Failure to correct mistake of playing from outside *the teeing area* in starting a hole (see Rule 6.1b(2)),
- Failure to correct mistake of playing a *wrong ball* (see Rule 6.3c), or
- Failure to correct mistake of playing from a *wrong place* when there is a *serious breach* (see Rule 14.7c).

If the player breaches any other Rule under which the penalty is disqualification, **the player is disqualified from the competition**.

**Handbook, \_\_:** Guidance on applying penalty exceptions in Par/Bogey.

#### **d. Order of Play in Net-Score Par/Bogey Competition**

In net-score *Par/Bogey* competitions, Rule 6.4b(1) is modified so that the player with the lowest net score at a hole has the *honor* at the next *teeing area*.

### **21.4 Three-Ball Match Play**

#### **a. Overview of Three-Ball Match Play**

In *Three-Ball Match Play*,

- Each of three players plays an individual match against the other two players at the same time.
- Each player plays one ball that is used in both of his or her matches.

The normal Rules for *match play* in Rules 1-20 apply to all three individual matches, **except** that these specific Rules apply in two situations where applying the normal Rules in one match might conflict with applying them in another match.

#### b. Playing Out of Turn

If a player plays out of turn in any match, the *opponent* who should have played first may promptly cancel the *stroke* under Rule 6.4a(2):

If the player played out of turn in both matches:

- Each *opponent* may choose whether to cancel the *stroke* in his or her match with the player.
- If a player's *stroke* is canceled only in one match, the player must continue play with the original ball in the other match.
- This means the player must complete the hole by playing a separate ball in each match.

#### c. Ball or Ball-Marker Lifted or Moved by One Opponent

If an *opponent* gets **one penalty stroke** for lifting or moving a player's ball or *ball-marker* under Rules 9.5b or 9.7, that penalty applies **only** in the match with that player.

The *opponent* gets **no penalty** in his or her match with the other player.

### 21.5 Other Forms of Playing Golf

Although only certain forms of play are specifically addressed in Rules 3, 21, 22 and 23, golf can be and often is played in many other forms, such as scrambles, greensomes, Chapman and shamble.

The Rules can be adapted to govern play in these and other forms of play.

**Handbook, \_\_:** Recommended ways to adapt the Rules for other common forms of play.

## Rule 22 – Foursomes and Threesomes

**Purpose of Rule 22:** Rule 22 covers **Foursomes** and **Threesomes** – which are also known as **Alternate Shot** – where two **partners** compete together as a **side** by making alternating strokes at a single ball.

- One partner tees off on all odd holes in the round while the other partner tees off on all even holes.
- After each tee shot, they play out the hole in alternating order.
- Since the side plays one ball, the Rules for Alternate Shot are otherwise largely the same as in individual play.

### 22.1 Overview of Foursomes and Threesomes

This Rule discusses *Foursomes* and *Threesomes*, which are also known as *Alternate Shot* forms of play:

- **Foursomes** – A form of *match play* or *stroke play* where two *partners* compete as a *side* by playing one ball in alternating order on each hole. *Foursomes* may be played as a *match play* competition between one *side* of two *partners* and another *side* of two *partners* or as a *stroke play* competition involving multiple *sides*.
- **Threesomes** – A form of *match play* between one *side* of two *partners* and one individual player. The *side* competes by playing one ball in alternating order on each hole.

Rules 1-20 apply to these alternate shot forms of play, but as modified by these specific Rules.

### 22.2 Either Partner Acts for Side

As both *partners* compete as one *side* playing only one ball:

- Either *partner* may take any allowed action for the *side*, such as to *mark*, *lift*, *replace* or *drop* a ball, and
- Any breach of the Rules by either *partner* applies to the *side*.

In *stroke play*, only one of the *partners* needs to certify the *side's* score card (see Rule 3.3b).

### 22.3 Side Must Alternate in Making Strokes

On each hole, the *partners* must make each *stroke* for the *side* in alternating order:

- One *partner* must play from *the teeing area* of all odd numbered holes, while the other *partner* must play from *the teeing area* of all even numbered holes.
- After the first *stroke* from *the teeing area* of a hole, the *partners* must alternate *strokes* for the rest of the hole.

Any *penalty strokes* that the *side* gets do not affect the *partners'* alternating order of play.

### **PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 22.3:**

- **Match Play:** If a *partner* makes a *stroke* in the wrong order, the *side* **loses the hole**.
- **Stroke Play** – If a *partner* or *partners* make a *stroke* or *strokes* in the wrong order, the *side* must add **two penalty strokes** and correct the mistake:
  - The right *partner* must make a *stroke* from where the *side* made the first *stroke* in the wrong order.
  - The first *stroke* made in the wrong order and all later *strokes* until the mistake is corrected are canceled, along with any *penalty strokes* in making those *strokes*.
  - If the *side* makes a *stroke* from the next *teeing area* without first correcting the mistake or, for the last hole of the *round*, both *partners* on the *side* leave the *putting green* without either *partner* first announcing that he or she will correct the mistake, the *side* is **disqualified**.

## **22.4 Starting the Round**

### **a. Partner to Play First**

The *side* may choose which player plays from the first *teeing area* in starting the *round*.

The *side's round* begins when the first player makes his or her *stroke* in that *round*.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The conditions of the competition may say which *partner* on a *side* must play from the first *teeing area*.

### **b. Starting Time and Starting Point**

Rule 5.3a applies differently to each *partner* based on who will play first for the *side*:

- The *partner* who will play first must be ready to play at the starting time and starting point, and must start at (and not before) the starting time.



## Full Draft Text of New Rules 1-24 and Definitions

- The *partner* who will play second must be present at the starting time either at the starting point or on the hole near where the ball played from *the teeing area* is expected to come to rest.

If either *partner* is not present in this way, **the side gets the penalty for breach of Rule 5.3a.**

DRAFT

## Rule 23 – Four-Ball and Best-Ball

**Purpose of Rule 23:** Rule 23 covers **Four-Ball** and **Best-Ball**, which are forms of **partner** play that may be played either in match play or stroke play.

- Partners compete as a **side**, each playing a separate ball.
- The side's score for a hole is the lower score of the partners on that hole.
- The Rule also covers what happens when one partner takes actions regarding the other partner's ball and when penalties apply only to one partner or to the side.

### 23.1 Overview of Four-Ball and Best-Ball

*Four-Ball* and *Best-Ball* are forms of play (in either *match play* or *stroke play*) involving *partners*:

**Four-Ball** – A form of play where two *partners* compete together as a *side*, with each player playing his or her own ball. A *side's* score for a hole is the lower score of the two *partners* on that hole.

**Best-Ball** – A form of *match play* where an individual player competes against a *side* of two or three *partners*, with each *partner* playing his or her own ball. The *side's* score for a hole is the low score of the two or three *partners* on that hole.

Rules 1-20 apply to these forms of play, but as modified by these specific Rules.

Rule 23 is written for *Four-Ball* or *Best-Ball* played with two *partners* on a *side*. It applies as well for *Best-Ball* with three *partners* on a *side*, with each reference to the other *partner* meaning the other two *partners*.

### 23.2 Scoring in Four-Ball and Best-Ball

#### a. Side's Score for Hole in Match Play and Stroke Play

- Both Partners Hole Out Correctly Under the Rules. The lower score is the *side's* score for the hole.
- Only One Partner Holes Out Correctly Under the Rules. His or her score is the *side's* score for the hole. The other *partner* does not need to *hole out*.
- No Partner Holes Out Correctly Under the Rules. The *side* does not have a score for that hole, which means:
  - In *match play*, the *side* **loses the hole**, unless the opposing *side* already had failed to *hole out* correctly under the Rules on that hole.

- In *stroke play*, the *side* is **disqualified from the competition** unless the mistake is corrected in time under Rule 3.3c.

## b. Side's Score Card in Stroke Play

(1) Side's Responsibility. The *side's* gross scores for each hole must be entered on a single *score card*. Only one *partner* needs to certify the *score card* for the *side* under Rule 3.3b(3).

For each hole:

- The gross score of at least one *partner* must be entered on the *score card*.
- **There is no penalty** for entering more than one *partner's* score on the *score card*.
- Each score on the *score card* must be clearly attributable to the individual *partner* who made that score; if this is not done, **the side is disqualified**.
- It is not enough to attribute a score to the *side* in general.

(2) Committee's Responsibility. The *Committee* is responsible for deciding which score is to count for the *side* on each hole, including applying any handicaps in a net-score competition:

- If only one score is entered for a hole, that score will count for the *side*.
- If multiple scores are entered for a hole, the lowest (gross or net) score for that hole will count for the *side*.
- If the score to count for the *side* is lower than actually made or is not clearly attributed to the individual *partner* who made the score, the *side* **is disqualified**.

## 23.3 Player's Actions Affecting Play of Partner's Ball

### a. Player Allowed to Take Any Actions Regarding Partner's Ball that Partner May Take

Although each player on a *side* plays his or her own ball:

- A player may take any action regarding the *partner's* ball that the *partner* is allowed to take before making a *stroke*, such as to *mark*, *lift*, *replace* or *drop* a ball.
- A player may also ask his or her *partner* for *advice* and give *advice* to the *partner*.

**b. Any Actions Taken by Player Regarding Partner's Ball are Treated as Having Been Taken by the Partner**

If the player's actions regarding the *partner's* ball would breach a Rule if taken by the *partner*:

- The *partner* is in breach of the Rule and gets the resulting penalty (see Rule 23.6a(3)).
- Examples of this are when the player breaches the Rules by *improving the conditions affecting the stroke* to be made by the *partner*, by lifting or accidentally *moving* the *partner's* ball or by failing to *mark* the *partner's* ball before lifting it.

For the situation where a player's actions affects the play of both his or her own ball and the *partner's* ball, see Rule 23.6a(2), Exceptions 1 and 2 to find out when there is a penalty for both *partners*.

**23.4 One Or Both Partners May Represent the Side**

A *side's* round starts when either *partner* makes his or her first *stroke*, and ends when the result of the match is decided in *match play* or when the *side* completes the final hole in *stroke play*.

The *side* may be represented by one *partner* during all or any part of a *round*. All *partners* need not be present.

An absent *partner* may join in playing for the *side* only between the play of two holes, which means:

(1) Match Play – Absent Partner May Join Only Before Any Player in Match Starts Hole. If any player on either *side* in a match has started play of a hole, an absent *partner* may not join until the next hole.

(2) Stroke Play – Absent Partner May Join Only Before Other Partner Starts Hole. If his or her *partner* has started play of a hole, an absent *partner* may not join until the next hole.

A player may give advice to a *partner* on a hole even if not allowed to join the *side* in playing that hole.

## 23.5 Side's Order of Play

*Partners* may play in the order the *side* considers best.

This means that when it is a player's turn to play under Rule 6.4a (*match play*) or 6.4b (*stroke play*), either the player or his *partner* may play next.

### Exception – Continuing Play of Hole After Stroke Conceded in Match Play:

- A player must not continue play of a hole after the player's next *stroke* has been conceded if this would help his or her *partner*.
- If the player does so, his or her score for the hole stands, but **the *partner's* score for the hole cannot count for the side.**

## 23.6 When Penalty Applies to One Partner Only or Applies to Side

When a player gets a penalty for breach of a Rule, the penalty may apply either to that player alone or to the *side* (that is, to both *partners*). This depends on the penalty and the form of play:

### a. Penalties Other than Disqualification

(1) Penalty Normally Applies Only to Player, not Partner. When a player gets a penalty other than disqualification, that penalty normally applies only to the player and not his or her *partner*, **except** in the situations covered in (2) below.

- Any *penalty strokes* are added only to the player's score, not to the *partner's* score.
- In *match play*, a player who gets a loss of hole penalty (the *general penalty*) has no score that can count for the *side* on that hole; but this penalty has no effect on the *partner*, who may continue to play for the *side* on that hole.

(2) Three Situations Where Player's Penalty Also Applies to Partner.

- When Player Breaches Rule 4.1b (Maximum of 14 Clubs). In *match play* the *side* gets the penalty, and in *stroke play* the *partner* gets the **same penalty** as the player.
- When Player's Breach Helps Partner's Play. In either *match play* or *stroke play*, the *partner* gets the **same penalty** as the player.
- In Match Play, When Player's Breach Hurts Opponent's Play. The player's *partner* gets the **same penalty** as the player.

**Exception – Player Who Makes Stroke at Wrong Ball Is Never Treated as Having Helped a Partner or Hurt an Opponent:**

- Only the player (not the *partner*) gets the *general penalty* for breach of Rule 6.3c.
- This is true whether the ball played as a *wrong ball* belongs to the *partner* or to anyone else.

**b. Disqualification Penalties**

(1) When Breach by One Partner Means Side Is Disqualified. A side is disqualified from the competition if either *partner* gets a penalty of disqualification under any of these Rules:

- Rule 1.2      Playing in the Spirit of the Game
- Rule 1.3      Player Responsibility for the Rules
- Rule 4.1a      Club Allowed in Making a Stroke
- Rule 4.1c      Declaring Excess Clubs Out of Play
- Rule 4.2a      Balls Allowed in Making a Stroke
- Rule 4.3      Use of Equipment
- Rule 5.6a      Unreasonable Delay of Play
- Rule 5.7b      Procedure When Play Suspended
- Rule 6.2b      Specific Rules when Playing Ball from Teeing Area
- Local Rules      [List]

Match Play Only:

- Rule 3.2b      Applying Handicaps in Net-Score Match

Stroke Play Only:

- Rule 3.3b(3)      Player's Responsibility: Certifying and Returning Score Card
- Rule 3.3b(4)      Wrong Score for Hole
- Rule 3.3b(5)      Scoring in a Net-Score Competition
- Rule 23.2b      Scoring in Stroke Play

(2) When Breach by Both Partners Means Side Is Disqualified. A side is disqualified from the competition if both *partners* get a penalty of disqualification under any of these Rules:

- Rule 5.3      Time of Starting
- Rule 5.4      Playing in Groups
- Rule 5.7a      Stopping Play

Stroke Play Only:

A side is **disqualified from the competition** if, at the same hole, both *partners* get penalties of disqualification under any combination of these Rules:

- Rule 3.3c Failure to Hole Out
- Rule 6.1b Playing from Outside Teeing Area in Starting Hole,
- Rule 6.3 Playing Wrong Ball, or
- Rule 14.7b Serious Breach of Playing from Wrong Place.

(3) When Breach by One Player Means Only that He or She Has No Valid Score for Hole. In all other situations where a player breaches a Rule with a penalty of disqualification, the player is **not disqualified from the competition** but his or her score on the hole where the breach happened cannot count for the *side*.

In *match play*, if both *partners* breach such a Rule on the same hole, **the side loses the hole**.

DRAFT

## Rule 24 – Team Competitions

**Purpose of Rule 24:** Rule 24 covers **team competitions**, where multiple players or sides compete as a team with the results of their rounds or matches combined to produce an overall team score. Any form of match play or stroke play may be used, and the team competition may be combined with other competitions (such as individual stroke play) that take place at the same time.

### 24.1 Overview of Team Competitions

- A “team” is a group of players who play as individuals or as sides to compete against other teams.
- Their play in the team event may also be part of another competition (such as individual stroke play) that takes place at the same time.

Rules 1-24 apply in a team competition, but as modified by these specific Rules.

### 24.2 Conditions of Competition in Team Play

The Committee decides the form of play, how a team’s overall score is to be calculated and other conditions of the competition, such as:

- In match play, the number of points awarded for winning or tying a match.
- In stroke play, the number of scores to count in each team’s total score.
- Whether the competition may end in a tie and, if not, how the tie will be decided.

### 24.3 Team Captain

Each team may name a team captain to lead the team and make decisions for it, such as which players on the team will play in which rounds or matches, in what order they will play and who will play together as partners.

The team captain may be a player in the competition.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The Committee may adopt a Local Rule setting limits on who may serve as a team captain and on the conduct of the team captain and any advice givers under Rule 24.4a.



## 24.4 Advice

### a. Person Allowed to Give Advice to Team (Advice Giver)

The *Committee* may allow each team to name one person (an “advice giver”) who may give *advice* to players on the team during a *round* and who may be asked for *advice* by players on the team:

- The advice giver may be the team captain, a team coach or other person (including a team member playing in the competition).
- The advice giver must be identified to the *Committee* before giving *advice*.
- The *Committee* may allow a team’s advice giver to change during a *round* or during the competition.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** The *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule allowing each team to name two advice givers (for example, in a team competition where *caddies* are not permitted).

### b. Restriction on Advice Giver While Playing

If a team’s advice giver is a player on the team,

- He or she is not allowed to act in that role while playing in the competition.
- This means that, while playing a *round*, such an advice giver must not give *advice* to anyone other than his or her *partner*.

### c. No Advice Between Teammates Other Than Partners

Except when playing together as *partners* on a *side*:

- A player must not ask for *advice* from or give *advice* to a teammate playing on the *course*.
- This applies whether the teammate is playing in the same group or in another group on the *course*.

**Committee Procedures, \_\_:** For a *stroke play* team competition where a player’s score for the *round* counts only as part of the team’s score, the *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule allowing team members playing in the same group to give each other *advice* even if they are not *partners*.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 24.4: General penalty** for a breach of Rule 10.2.

## Definitions

### ***Abnormal Course Condition***

Any of these four defined conditions:

- *Animal Hole*,
- *Ground Under Repair*,
- *Immovable Obstruction*, or
- *Temporary Water*.

### ***Advice***

Any verbal comment or deliberate action (such as showing what club was just used to make a stroke) that is intended to influence a player in:

- Choosing a club,
- Making a *stroke*, or
- Deciding how to play during a hole or *round*.

**But** *advice* does not include information on the Rules, distance or other public matters, such as the location of the *hole*, the *putting green*, the fairway, *penalty areas*, *bunkers* or another player's ball.

### ***Animal***

Any living member of the animal kingdom (other than humans), including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates (insects, spiders, worms, crustaceans, etc.)

### ***Animal Hole***

Any hole dug by an *animal* (**except** when the hole has been dug by *animals* that are *loose impediments*, such as worms and insects), and the material removed or damage caused in digging the hole.

## **Areas of the Course**

The five areas that make up the *course*:

- The *general area*,
- The *teeing area* of the hole being played,
- All *bunkers*,
- All *penalty areas*, and
- The *putting green* of the hole being played.

## **Attend**

A *flagstick* is *attended* if, when the player makes a *stroke*, any person is:

- Touching the *flagstick* in the *hole* or standing close enough to touch it, or
- Holding the *flagstick* above the *hole* to show where the *hole* is.

That person is the *flagstick* attendant until the ball comes to rest.

## **Ball in Play**

The ball a player is playing on a hole:

- A ball is first *in play* on a hole:
  - When the player makes a *stroke* at it from inside the *teeing area*, or
  - In *match play*, a ball is also *in play* when a *stroke* is made at it from outside the *teeing area* unless the *opponent* cancels the *stroke* under Rule 6.1b.
- That ball remains *in play* until it is *holed*, **except** that it is no longer *in play*:
  - When it is lifted from the *course*,
  - When it is *lost* or *out of bounds*, or
  - When another ball has been *substituted* for it, even if not allowed by a Rule.

When a player uses a *ball-marker* to *mark* the spot of a *ball in play*:

- A ball that is *marked* but not lifted is still *in play*.
- A ball that has been *marked*, lifted and *replaced* is *in play* even if the *ball-marker* has not been removed.

### **Ball-Marker**

An artificial object that is used to *mark* the spot of a ball to be lifted, such as a tee, a coin, an object made to be a *ball-marker* or another item of *equipment*.

When a Rule refers to a *ball-marker* being moved, this means a *ball-marker* in place on the *course* to *mark* the spot of a ball that has been lifted and not yet *replaced*.

### **Best-Ball**

A form of *match play* in which an individual player competes against a *side* of two or three *partners*, with each *partner* playing his or her own ball. The *side's* score for a hole is the low score of the two or three *partners* on that hole.

### **Bunker**

*Bunkers* are one of the five defined *areas of the course*. A *bunker* is all sand inside the edge of a specially prepared area, which is often a hollow from which turf or soil was removed and replaced with sand.

These are not part of a *bunker*:

- Sand that has spilled over or is outside the edge of the prepared area.
- A lip, wall or face at the edge of the prepared area and consisting of earth, grass or turf.
- Any growing thing inside the prepared area such as grass, bushes or trees.

The word “sand” as used in this Definition and Rule 12 includes any material similar to sand.

## **Caddie**

Someone who helps a player during a *round* in these ways:

- *Carrying or Handling Clubs*: A person who carries or handles a player's clubs during play is the player's *caddie* even if not named as a *caddie* by the player, except when only taking a casual act to help out (such as getting a club the player left behind or moving the player's bag or cart out of the way).
- *Advice*: A player's *caddie* is the only person (other than a *partner* or a *partner's caddie*) a player may ask for *advice*.

When the player has a *caddie*:

- Other people may carry other items (such as a rain-suit, umbrella or food and drink) for the player and take casual acts to help the player.
- Such a person is not the player's *caddie* unless named as such or unless he or she carries or handles the player's clubs.

## **Committee**

The person or group in charge of the competition or the *course*. The role of the *Committee* is explained in the *Committee Procedures*.

## **Conditions Affecting the Stroke**

The lie of the player's ball at rest, the area of intended *stance* or swing, the *line of play*, or the *relief area* where the player will *drop* or place a ball.

These terms mean:

- *Lie* of a ball, *line of play* and *relief area* are defined terms.
- The "area of intended *stance*" includes not only where the player will place his or her feet, but the entire area that might reasonably affect how and where the player's body is positioned in preparing for and making the intended *stroke*.
- The "area of intended swing" includes the entire area that might reasonably affect any part of the backswing, the downswing or the completion of the swing for the intended *stroke*.

## Course

The entire area of play within the edge of any boundaries set by the *Committee*:

- All areas inside the boundary edge are in bounds and part of the *course*.
- All areas on or outside the boundary edge are *out of bounds* and not part of the *course*.
- The boundary edge extends both up above the ground and down below the ground.

The *course* is made up of the five defined *areas of the course*.

## Drop

When a player:

- Holds a ball above the ground without it touching any growing thing or other natural or artificial object, and
- Lets go of the ball so that it falls through the air before coming to rest.

To avoid any doubt, it is recommended that the ball be *dropped* from a height of at least one inch above the ground, including any growing thing or natural object.

The purpose of a *drop* is for there to be a degree of randomness in where the ball will come to rest.

If the player lets go of a ball without intending it to be *in play*, the ball has not been *dropped* and is not *in play*.

## Embedded

A ball that is at rest in its own pitch-mark made after a *stroke* and where part of the ball is below the level of the ground.

A ball does not necessarily have to touch the soil to be *embedded* (for example, grass and loose *impediments* may be between the ball and the soil).

## Equipment

Anything used, worn, held or carried by the player or the player's *caddie*. Objects used for the care of the *course*, such as rakes, are *equipment* only while they are being held or carried by the player or *caddie*.

## **Flagstick**

A movable pole (usually with a flag attached) that is placed in the hole to show where the hole is:

- It must be circular in cross-section.
- It may have a flag or other material attached to it.
- It must not have padding or other shock absorbent material attached that might influence the movement of the ball.

## **Four-Ball**

A form of play where *sides* of two *partners* compete, with each player playing his or her own ball. A *side's* score for a hole is the lower score of the two *partners* on that hole.

*Four-Ball* may be played as a *match play* competition between one *side* of two *partners* and another *side* of two *partners* or a *stroke play* competition involving multiple *sides* of *partners*.

## **Foursomes**

A form of *match play* or *stroke play* in which two *partners* compete as a *side* by playing one ball in alternating order on each hole.

*Foursomes* may be played as a *match play* competition between one *side* of two *partners* and another *side* of two *partners* or a *stroke play* competition involving multiple *sides* of *partners*.

## **General Area**

The *area of the course* that covers all parts of the *course* **except** for the other four defined areas: (1) *the teeing area* of the hole being played, (2) all *bunkers* on the *course*, (3) all *penalty areas* on the *course*, and (4) *the putting green* of the hole being played.

The *general area* includes:

- All *teeing areas* other than *the teeing area* of the hole being played.
- All *wrong putting greens*, which means all *putting greens* other than *the putting green* of the hole being played.

## General Penalty

Loss of hole in *match play* or two *penalty strokes* in *stroke play*.

## Ground Under Repair

Any part of the *course* the *Committee* marks or declares to be *ground under repair*, including all ground and any grass, bush, tree or other growing or attached natural object in the *ground under repair*.

*Ground under repair* also includes all of the following things, even if the *Committee* does not mark or declare them as such:

- Any hole made by the *Committee* or greenkeeping staff in setting up the *course* (such as a hole where a stake has been removed or a *hole* on a *putting green* being used for another *hole* such as in the case of a double green) or in maintaining the *course* (such as a hole made in removing turf or a tree stump, laying pipelines, etc., **but not** aeration holes)
- Material piled for later removal. **But** grass cuttings and other material left on the *course* and not intended to be removed are not *ground under repair* unless marked or declared as such.
- Any *animal* habitat (such as a bird's nest) that is near a player's ball such that the player's *stroke* would damage or destroy it.

The edge of *ground under repair* extends down below the ground but not up above the ground. It should be defined by stakes, lines or physical features:

- Stakes: When defined by stakes, the edge of the *ground under repair* is defined by the farthest outside points of the stakes at ground level, and the stakes are inside the *ground under repair*.
- Lines: When defined by a painted line on the ground, the edge of the *ground under repair* is the outside edge of the line, and the line itself is in the *ground under repair*.
- Physical Features: When defined by physical features (such as a flower bed or a turf nursery), the *Committee* should define the edge of the *ground under repair*.

When the edge of *ground under repair* is defined by lines or physical features, stakes may be used to show where the *ground under repair* is, but they have no other meaning.



## **Hole**

The *hole* on the *putting green* is the finishing point for the hole being played. The *hole* must be 4 ¼ inches (108 mm) in diameter and at least 4 inches (101.6 mm) deep.

If a lining is used, its outer diameter must not exceed 4 ¼ inches (108 mm). The lining must be sunk at least 1 inch (25.4 mm) below the *putting green* surface, unless the nature of the soil requires that it be closer to the surface.

## **Holed Out**

When a ball is *holed* on the hole being played.

## **Holed**

When a ball is at rest in the *hole* and the entire ball is below the surface of the *putting green*.

## **Honor**

The right of a player to play first from the *teeing area* (see Rule 6.4).

## **Immovable Obstruction**

Any *obstruction* that is fixed rather than *movable*.

## **Improve**

To change one or more of the *conditions affecting the stroke* or other physical conditions affecting play so that the player gains a potential advantage for a *stroke*.

## **Integral Part of the Course**

An artificial object that is treated as an integral part of the challenge of playing the *course* and not as an *obstruction* from which relief may be allowed.

*Integral parts of the course* are:

- Objects defining or showing *out of bounds*, such as walls, fences, stakes and railings; and
- Any other object the *Committee* defines as an *integral part of the course*.

## ***Known or Virtually Certain***

The standard for deciding what happened to a player's ball – for example, whether the ball *moved*, whether the player or some other person or thing caused it to *move* or whether it came to rest in a *penalty area*.

*Known or virtually certain* means more than just possible or probable. It means that the player knows or is almost sure that the event in question happened to his or her ball because either:

- There is conclusive evidence of it, such as when the player or other witnesses saw it happen, or
- Although there is a very small degree of doubt, all reasonably available information shows that it is at least 95% likely that it happened.

“All reasonably available information” includes all information the player knows or should know, or can get with reasonable efforts and without *unreasonable delay*.

## ***Lie***

The “*lie*” of a ball is the surface on which it rests and any growing or attached natural objects or fixed artificial objects touching it or right next to it.

*Loose impediments* and *movable obstructions* are not part of the *lie* of a ball.

## ***Line of Play***

The line on which the player intends his or her ball to go after a *stroke*, including an extension of that line up above the ground and a reasonable distance on either side of that line.

## ***Loose Impediment***

Any unattached natural object such as:

- Stones, loose grass, leaves, branches, sticks, etc.;
- Dead *animals* and *animal waste*; and
- Worms, insects and similar *animals* that can be removed with ease, and the material they remove from holes or otherwise leave on the ground (such as worm casts and ant hills).

Such natural objects are not loose if they are:

- Attached or growing,
- Solidly embedded in the ground (that is, cannot be picked out with ease), or
- Sticking to the ball.

Special cases:

- Loose Sand and Loose Soil are not *loose impediments*. (Loose lumps of earth or plugs of compacted soil such as aeration plugs are not “loose soil” and are *loose impediments* wherever they are found.)
- Dew, Frost and Water are not *loose impediments*.
- Snow and Natural Ice, other than frost, are either *temporary water* or *loose impediments*, at the player’s option.

### **Lost Ball**

A ball that is not found in three minutes after the player or his or her *caddie* or *partner* begins to search for it. Time spent in playing a *wrong ball* does not count in this three-minute period.

### **Mark**

To show the spot of a ball at rest by:

- Placing a *ball-marker* behind or to the side of the ball, or
- Holding a club on the ground behind or to the side of the ball.

### **Marker**

In *stroke play*, the person with the responsibility to enter a player’s score on the player’s *score card* and to certify that *score card*. The *marker* may be another player, but not a *partner*.

The *Committee* may choose the player’s *marker* or tell the players how they may choose a *marker*.

## **Match Play**

A form of play in which a player or *side* plays directly against an *opponent* or opposing *side* in a head-to-head match of one or more *rounds* in which:

- A player or *side* wins a hole in the match by completing the hole in the fewest *strokes*, and
- The match is won when a player or *side* leads the *opponent* or opposing *side* by more holes than remain to be played.

*Match play* can be played as a singles match, a *Three-Ball* match or a match involving *sides* of partners (*Four-Ball*, *Best-Ball*, *Foursomes* and *Threesomes*).

## **Maximum Score**

A form of *stroke play* in which a player's or *side's* score for a hole is capped at a maximum number of *strokes* set by the *Committee*, such as two times par, a fixed number (6, 8, 10, etc.) or net double bogey.

## **Movable Obstruction**

An *obstruction* that can be moved readily and without damaging the *obstruction* or the *course*.

Even when an *obstruction* is movable, the *Committee* may define it to be an *immovable obstruction*.

## **Move**

When a ball leaves its spot and comes to rest on any other spot, and this can be seen by the naked eye (whether or not anyone actually sees it).

## **Natural Forces**

The effects of nature such as wind, water or earthquakes, or when something happens for no apparent reason because of the effects of gravity.

### ***Nearest Point of Complete Relief***

The reference point for taking relief without penalty from interference by an *abnormal course condition* (Rule 16.1), a dangerous animal situation (Rule 16.2), or a *wrong putting green* (Rule 13.1e).

It is the estimated point in the required *area of the course*:

- Nearest to where the ball came to rest, but not nearer the *hole*, and
- Where that condition or situation does not interfere with the *stroke* the player would have made (including choice of club, *stance*, swing and *line of play*) from the ball's original spot if the condition or situation did not exist.

Although the *nearest point of complete relief* is based on how this *stroke* would be made:

- In taking relief the player need not actually simulate that *stroke*.
- What matters is that the player plays the ball from the right place defined by reference to the *nearest point of complete relief* and to any other limits stated in the Rule being used to take relief.

### ***No Play Zone***

A part of the *course* where the *Committee* has prohibited play. A *no play zone* must be either part of an *abnormal course condition* or in a *penalty area*.

The *Committee* may use *no play zones* for any reason, such as:

- Protecting wildlife, animal habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas,
- Preventing damage to young trees, flower beds, turf nurseries, re-turfed areas or other planted areas,
- Protecting players from danger, and
- Preserving sites of historical or cultural interest.

The *Committee* should define the edge of a *no play zone* with a line or stakes, and the line or stakes (or the tops of those stakes) should be a distinctive color.

## Number of Strokes Taken

In *match play*, the number of strokes a player has taken:

- At any point during play of the current hole, or
- In completing that hole.

This includes any *penalty strokes* on the hole, even if the player did not know about those *penalty strokes*.

## Obstruction

Any artificial object **except** for *integral parts of the course*.

Examples of *obstructions*:

- Artificially surfaced roads and paths, including their artificial borders (such as curbs),
- Buildings, tents and rain shelters,
- Sprinkler heads, drains and irrigation or control boxes,
- Stakes, walls, railings and fences (**but** not when they define the boundary edge of the *course*, in which case they are *integral parts of the course*).
- Golf carts, mowers, cars and other vehicles,
- Waste containers, signposts and benches, and
- Player *equipment*, *flagsticks* and rakes.

An *obstruction* is either a *movable obstruction* or an *immovable obstruction*.

## Opponent

A player against whom a player competes in a match. The term *opponent* applies only in *match play*.

## Outside Influence

Any of these people or things that can affect what happens to a ball at rest or in motion:

- Any person (including another player), **except** the player or his or her *caddie* or the player's *partner* or *opponent* or any of their *caddies*,
- Any *animal*, and
- Any natural or artificial object or anything else (including another ball in motion after a *stroke*), except for *natural forces*.

## Out of Bounds

All areas outside the boundary edge of the *course* as defined by the *Committee*. All areas on or inside that edge are in bounds.

The boundary edge of the *course* extends both up above the ground and down below the ground and should be defined by objects or lines:

- Objects: When defined by stakes or a fence, the boundary edge is defined by the nearest inside points of the stakes or fence posts at ground level (excluding angled supports), and those stakes or fence posts are *out of bounds*.

When defined by other objects such as a wall or a curb, the *Committee* should define the boundary edge.

- Lines: When defined by a painted line on the ground, the boundary edge is the inside edge of the line, and the line itself is *out of bounds*.

When a line on the ground defines the boundary edge, stakes may be used to show where the boundary edge is, but they have no other meaning.

Boundary stakes or lines should be white.

## Par/Bogey

A form of *stroke play* that uses scoring as in *match play*:

- A player or *side* wins or loses a hole by completing the hole in fewer *strokes* or more *strokes* than a fixed target score for that hole set by the *Committee*.
- The competition is won by the player or *side* with the highest total of holes won versus holes lost (that is, adding up the holes won and subtracting the holes lost).

## Partner

A player who competes together with another player as a *side*, in either *match play* or *stroke play*.

## Penalty Area

A *penalty area* is one of the five defined *areas of the course* and includes:

- Any body of water on the *course* (whether or not marked by the *Committee*), including a sea, lake, pond, river, ditch, surface drainage ditch or other open water *course* (even if not containing water), and
- Any other part of the *course* the *Committee* defines as a *penalty area*.

There are two different types of *penalty area*, distinguished by the color used to mark them:

- Yellow *penalty areas* (marked with yellow lines or yellow stakes) have two relief options for the player (Rule 17.1a, b).
- Red *penalty areas* (marked with red lines or red stakes) have an extra lateral relief option for the player (Rule 17.1c), in addition to the two available for yellow *penalty areas*.

If the color of a *penalty area* has not been marked or indicated by the *Committee*, it is treated as a red *penalty area*.

The edge of a *penalty area* extends both up above the ground and down below the ground and should be defined by stakes, lines or physical features:

- Stakes: When defined by stakes, the edge of the *penalty area* is defined by the farthest outside points of the stakes at ground level, and the stakes are inside the *penalty area*.
- Lines: When defined by a painted line on the ground, the edge of the *penalty area* is the outside edge of the line, and the line itself is in the *penalty area*.
- Physical Features: When defined by physical features (such as a beach or desert area or a retaining wall), the *Committee* should define the edge of the *penalty area*.

When the edge of a *penalty area* is defined by lines or by physical features, stakes may be used to show where the *penalty area* is, but they have no other meaning.



## **Penalty Stroke**

A stroke added to the score of a player or side under a Rule.

## **Point of Maximum Available Relief**

The reference point for taking relief without penalty from an *abnormal course condition* in a bunker (Rule 16.1c(1)) or on the *putting green* (Rule 16.1d) when there is no *nearest point of complete relief*.

It is the estimated point in the required *area of the course*:

- Nearest to where the ball came to rest, but not nearer the *hole*, and
- Where that *abnormal course condition* least interferes with the *stroke* the player would have made from the ball's original spot if the condition did not exist.

The *point of maximum available relief* is found by comparing the amount of interference with the *lie* of the ball, the player's *area of intended stance or swing* and, on the *putting green*, the *line of play*. For example, when taking relief from *temporary water*:

- The *point of maximum available relief* may be where the ball will be in shallower water than where the player will stand, or vice versa, or where the player's intended swing will be affected less than the *stance*, or vice versa.
- On the *putting green*, the *point of maximum available relief* may be based on the *line of play* where the ball will need to go through the shallowest or shortest stretch of *temporary water*.

## **Provisional Ball**

Another ball played in case the player's *ball in play* may be:

- *Out of bounds*, or
- *Lost* outside a *penalty area*.

A *provisional ball* is not the player's *ball in play*, unless it becomes the *ball in play* under Rule 18.3c.

## Putting Green

An *area* that is specially prepared for putting or that the *Committee* has defined as a *putting green*.

*Putting greens* fall into two categories based on the *hole* the player is playing:

- The *putting green* is the *putting green* of the *hole* being played, which is one of the five defined *areas of the course*. It contains the *hole* into which the player intends to play a ball.
- A *wrong putting green* is any *putting green* on the *course* other than the *putting green* of the *hole* being played.

*Wrong putting greens* include practice greens for putting or pitching, unless the *Committee* excludes them by Local Rule (meaning that those practice greens would be part of the *general area*).

## Referee

Someone the *Committee* has authorized to decide questions of fact and apply the Rules.

## Relief Area

The area in which a player must *drop* and play a ball when taking relief under a Rule. Each relief Rule requires the player to use a specific *relief area* whose size and location are based on these three factors:

- Reference Point or Reference Line for Relief Area: Each *relief area* is based on either (1) a reference point, or (2) a reference line from the *hole* through a particular point.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point or Reference Line: The *relief area* is the entire area either 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) or 80 inches (203.2 centimeters) from the reference point or 20 inches from the reference line, but with certain limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area: The location of the *relief area* may be limited in one or more ways so that:
  - It is only in certain defined *areas of the course*, such as only in the *general area*, not in a *bunker* or a *penalty area*, or

- It is not nearer to the *hole* than the reference point or must be behind a *penalty area* or a *bunker* from which relief is being taken, or
- There is no interference from the condition or situation from which relief is being taken.

## **Replace**

To place a ball by hand on the spot from which it was lifted or *moved* by setting the ball down and letting it go, with the intent for it to stay on that spot and to be *in play*.

## **Round**

18 or fewer holes played in the order set by the *Committee*.

## **Score Card**

The document on which a player's hole scores are entered in *stroke play*.

The *score card* may be in any paper or electronic form that allows entry of hole-by-hole scores and allows the *marker* and the player to certify the scores, either by physical signature on a paper *score card* or by a method of electronic certification approved by the *Committee*.

## **Serious Breach**

When a player has gained a significant advantage by playing from a *wrong place* in *stroke play*, taking account of factors such as the difficulty of the *stroke*, the distance of the ball from the *hole*, the presence of obstacles on the *line of play* and the *conditions affecting the stroke*.

The concept of a *serious breach* does not apply in *match play*, because a player loses the hole if he or she plays from a *wrong place*.

## **Side**

Two or more *partners* competing as a single unit in a *round* in *match play* or *stroke play*. Each set of *partners* is a *side*, whether each *partner* plays his or her own ball (*Four-Ball* or *Best-Ball*) or the *partners* play one ball (*Foursomes* or *Threesomes*).

A *side* is not the same as a team. In a team competition, each team consists of players competing as individuals or as *sides*.

## **Stableford**

A form of *stroke play* in which:

- A player's or *side's* score for a hole is based on points awarded by comparing the player's or *side's* *strokes* on the hole to a fixed score for the hole set by the *Committee*.
- The competition is won by the player or *side* who completes all *rounds* with the most points.

## **Stance**

The position of a player's feet and body in preparing for or making a *stroke*.

## **Stroke**

The forward movement of the club made to strike the ball.

**But** a *stroke* has not been made if a player decides during the downswing not to strike the ball and avoids doing so:

- By deliberately stopping the clubhead before it reaches the ball or,
- If unable to stop, by deliberately missing the ball.

The player's score for a hole or a *round* is described as a number of "strokes," adding up the number of *strokes* the player made with the club at the ball and any *penalty strokes*. (See Rule 3.1c.)

## **Stroke and Distance**

The procedure and penalty under Rules 17.1c(1), 18.1 or 19.2a when a player makes a *stroke* from where the previous *stroke* was made (see Rule 14.5 for what to do).

The term *stroke and distance* means that the player both:

- Gets one *penalty stroke*, and
- Loses the benefit of any gain of distance towards the *hole* from the last *stroke*.

## **Stroke Play**

A form of play in which a player or *side* competes against all other players or *sides* in the competition:

- A player's or *side's* score for a *round* is the total number of strokes taken (including all *penalty strokes*) by the player or *side* on each hole.
- The winner is the player or *side* who completes all *rounds* in the fewest total strokes.

Other forms of *stroke play* with different scoring methods are *Stableford*, *Maximum Score* and *Par/Bogey* (see Rule 21).

## **Substituted Ball**

A ball that a player puts *in play* instead of his or her original ball that was:

- *In play*,
- Lifted from the *course*, or
- *Lost* or *out of bounds*.

A *substituted ball* becomes the *ball in play* when it has been *replaced*, *dropped*, or *placed* (see Rule 14.4), even if the *substitution* is not allowed under the Rules.

## **Tee**

An object used to raise a ball above the ground to play from *the teeing area*. It must be no longer than four inches and conform with Equipment Rule \_\_\_\_.

## ***Teeing Area***

The player's starting place for the hole to be played:

- *The teeing area* is a rectangular area 80 inches (203.2 centimeters) deep.
- Its front and sides are defined by the outside edges of two tee-markers, as set by the Committee.

*The teeing area* is one of the five defined areas of the course.

But when determining the location of a *relief area* under a Rule that requires a ball to be dropped, the *teeing area* is treated as part of the *general area*.

## ***Temporary Water***

Any temporary accumulation of water on the surface of the ground (such as puddles of water from rain or an overflow from a body of water) that is not in a *penalty area* and can be seen before or after the player takes a stance.

Special cases:

- *Dew and Frost* are not *temporary water*.
- *Snow and Natural Ice*, other than frost, are either *temporary water* or *loose impediments*, at the player's option.
- *Manufactured Ice* is an *obstruction*.

## ***Three-Ball***

A form of *match play* in which each of three players plays an individual match against the other two players at the same time. Each player plays one ball that is used in both of his or her matches.

## ***Threesomes***

A form of *match play* between one side of two partners and one individual player. The side competes by playing one ball in alternating order on each hole.

## Wrong Ball

Any ball **other than** the player's:

- *Ball in play* (whether the original ball or a *substituted ball*),
- *Provisional ball*, or
- Second ball in *stroke play* played under Rule 14.7c or Rule 20.1c.

Examples of a *wrong ball* are:

- Another player's *ball in play*.
- A stray ball at rest on the ground.
- The player's own ball that is *out of bounds* or has been lifted and not yet put back *in play*.

## Wrong Place

Any place on the *course* other than where the player is required or allowed to play his or her ball under the Rules.

Examples of playing from a *wrong place* are:

- Playing a lifted or *moved* ball without *replacing* it or after *replacing* it on the wrong spot, when a Rule required the lifted or *moved* ball to be *replaced* on its original spot.
- Playing a *dropped* ball from outside the required *relief area*.
- Taking relief under a wrong Rule, so that the ball is *dropped* in and played from a place not allowed under the Rules.
- Playing a ball from a *no play zone* or when there is interference by a *no play zone*.

Playing a ball from outside the *teeing area* in starting play of a hole or in trying to correct that mistake is not playing from a *wrong place*, but rather is covered by Rule 6.1.

## Wrong Putting Green

See Definition of **Putting Green**.