

Clarifications of the 2019 Rules of Golf

Updated December 18, 2018

RULES

Rule 1:

Rule 1.3c(4):

1. Playing From a Wrong Place Is Related to Causing the Ball to Move:

If a player moves his or her ball in play in breach of Rule 9.4 and plays it from its new location rather than replacing it, the player gets only the general penalty under Rule 14.7 for playing from a wrong place. The act of moving the ball in breach of Rule 9.4 is related to playing from a wrong place in breach of Rule 14.7. (Added 12/2018)

Rule 4:

Rule 4.1c:

1. Club Taken Out of Play Must Not Be Used During That Round:

If an extra club was taken out of play before a round and carried during the round, or a club was taken out of play during the round, it must not be used for the remainder of that round. This includes a situation where a player is allowed to replace a club, and is an additional restriction in Rule 4.1b(4). (Added 12/2018)

Rule 5:

Rule 5.2:

1. First Breach Happens When First Stroke Made:

The penalty for the first breach of Rule 5.2 applies when a player commits a single act (such as making a stroke). The disqualification penalty for the second breach applies when that player commits any subsequent act that is not allowed (such as rolling a ball or making another stroke). These are not treated as related acts under Rule 1.3c(4). (Added 12/2018)

Rule 10:

Rule 10.3b(2):

1. Caddie May Lift Ball When Player Will Take Relief:

So long as it is reasonable to conclude that the player is taking relief under a Rule, his or her caddie is treated as being given authorization to lift the ball and may do so without penalty. (Added 12/2018)



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Rule 11:

Rule 11.1b:

1. How To Apply Exception 2 to Rule 11.1b:

Exception 2 to Rule 11.1b is to be applied using the “known or virtually certain” standard. Therefore, if there is knowledge or conclusive evidence that the ball played from the putting green accidentally hit a person, animal or movable obstruction on the putting green, the stroke does not count. (Added 12/2018)

2. Living Insects Are Animals:

Exception 2 to Rule 11.1b applies to living insects since they are animals. (Added 12/2018)

Rule 13:

Rule 13.1c(2):

1. Status of Damage From Hail:

Damage on the putting green caused by hail may be repaired. (Added 12/2018)

Rule 14:

Rule 14.3b(2):

1. Tee Is Player’s Equipment:

A tee that is being used by the player, or is being carried by the player or his or her caddie, is the player’s equipment (such as a tee marking the reference point). (Added 12/2018)

Rule 14.3d:

1. Penalty for Deliberately Deflecting or Stopping Dropped Ball Always Applies:

If a player drops a ball in the right way and deliberately deflects that ball before it comes to rest in breach of Rule 14.3d, the player must drop a ball again.

When doing so, the player is not considered to be correcting a mistake under Rule 14.5b(3) and gets the general penalty under Rule 14.3d. (Added 12/2018)

Rule 14.5c:

1. Player Not Penalized When Improvement Has No Effect on Relief Area Ball Played From:

If a player improves the relief area but drops the ball in a wrong way, the player would get no penalty under Rule 8.1a if he or she dropped in the right way in a different relief area so long as the improvement did not also improve the relief area that the player played from. (Added 12/2018)

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Rule 16:

Rule 16.1a(3):

1. Meaning of “Clearly Unreasonable to Play Ball” When Deciding If Relief Is Allowed:

The purpose of Rule 16.1a(3) is to prevent a player from obtaining free relief when it is clearly unreasonable for him or her to make a stroke because of interference by something from which free relief is not available. But it does not apply, for example, if a player’s ball is embedded in the general area and he or she is standing on an immovable obstruction. In this case, the player may take relief from either condition unless relief is unreasonable because of something other than either condition. (Added 12/2018)

Rule 16.3b:

1. Player Not Always Allowed to Take Embedded Ball Relief:

If a player’s ball is embedded in the general area but neither the reference point nor any part of the course within one club-length of the reference point is in the general area, the player is not allowed to take free relief under Rule 16.3b.

For example, free relief is not allowed if:

- a ball is embedded at the very base of the lip, wall or face above a bunker,
- the spot right behind the ball is in the bunker and
- within one club-length of and not nearer the hole from that reference point, there is no part of the relief area that is in the general area. (Added 12/2018)

Rule 24:

Rule 24.4b:

1. Advice Giver Must Not Deliberately Stand Behind Player:

If an advice giver deliberately stands behind a player from when he or she starts to take a stance, if the player asks or authorizes the advice giver to do this, he or she gets the general penalty under Rule 10.2b(4) – see Rule 1.3c(1), first bullet point.

If the player did not ask or authorize the advice giver to stand in that location but knows that this is not allowed and does not take reasonable steps to object or stop it from happening, the player gets the general penalty under Rule 10.2b(4) – see Rule 1.3c(1), second bullet point. (Added 12/2018)



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DEFINITIONS

Club-Length:

1. Meaning of “Club-Length” When Playing with Partner:

In partner forms of play, either partner’s longest club, except a putter, may be used for defining the teeing area or determining the size of a relief area. *(Added 12/2018)*

Relief Area:

1. Determining Whether Ball in Relief Area:

When determining whether a ball has come to rest within a relief area (i.e. either one or two club-lengths from the reference point depending on the Rule being applied), the ball is in the relief area if any part of the ball is within the one or two club-length measurement. However, a ball is not in a relief area if any part of the ball is nearer the hole than the reference point or when any part of the ball has interference from the condition from which free relief is taken. *(Added 12/2018)*

COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Model Local Rule B-2:

1. Point on Opposite Edge Must Not Cross Another Area of the Course:

With the Model Local Rule in use, if the straight line from the edge where the ball last crossed into the penalty area to the other edge that is an equal distance from the hole crosses outside the penalty area, the player is not allowed to use that opposite point. *(Added 12/2018)*

Model Local Rule F-5:

1. Immovable Obstruction Is Not Required to Be in General Area:

In relation to the location of the immovable obstruction, the term “within two club-lengths of the putting green” includes an immovable obstruction that is on the putting green. *(Added 12/2018)*