

REVISED 2023 RULES of GOLF - BRIEF SUMMARY and OVERVIEW



Note: This document has been edited from a publication on [The Roving Official](#)

- Modified rules for **players with disabilities** has been incorporated into the Rule [Rule: [25](#)]
- The Interpretations (2019) are now called [Clarifications](#)
- New added Clarifications are called **Additional Clarifications**
- The penalty for playing an incorrectly substituted ball is now **1 penalty stroke** [Rule: [6.3b\(3\)](#)]
- A player may repair or replace a damaged club unless the damage was caused by abuse [Rule: [4.1a\(2\)](#)]
- After a ball is dropped or replaced and is moved by natural forces into **another area** of the course, the ball is replaced without penalty [Rule: [9.3 Exception 2](#)]
Note: Includes a ball moved (by natural forces) out of bounds
- When taking back-on-the-line relief the player **must** drop the ball **on the line** [Rule: [14.3b\(3\)](#)]
and
- When taking back-on-the-line relief the dropped ball may roll 1 club-length in **any direction (including forward)** after hitting the ground [Rules: [16.1c\(2\)](#), [17.1d\(2\)](#), [19.2b](#)]
- When a ball played from the putting green hits the player, the player's putter, or an insect (or similar) the stroke counts [Rule: [11.1b\(2\)](#)]
- If a player fails to replay a stroke when required, the penalty is the general penalty **not** a wrong place penalty which could be subject to disqualification [Rules: [11.1b](#), [11.2c](#) and Definition: [Wrong Place](#)]
- When there is not a spot in the general area immediately **behind** an embedded ball to use as a reference point for taking relief, the player may find a reference point at the nearest location (no closer to the hole) in the general area [Clarification: [16.3b/1](#)]
- The Committee (**not the player**) is responsible for including the player's handicap on the player's scorecard [[3.3b\(4\)](#)]
Note: a MLR may be introduced to place responsibility with the player [[MLR L-2](#)]
- A player is not allowed to set anything down on the course to assist in determining the line of play, even if the object is lifted prior to the stroke [Rules: [10.2b\(1\)](#) and [10.2b\(2\)](#)]
- When multiple penalties occur (including different penalties), a player is only penalised for the larger of the multiple penalties **unless** an intervening event takes place (**a stroke or the player becomes aware of the breach**) [Rule: [1.3c\(4\)](#)]
- A player is disqualified for giving any information to an opponent which results in a player getting too few strokes or giving too many strokes [Clarification: [3.2c\(1\)/2](#)]
- Multiple markers do not need to certify the hole scores on the scorecard if one marker sees the player play all of the holes [Rule: [3.3b\(1\)](#)]
- After a round has commenced, a player is permitted to remove an external attachment on a club without penalty, **provided the club has not been used for a stroke that counts** [Rule: [4.1a\(3\)](#)]
- A player must not build a club from parts carried **by anyone** on the course [Rule: [4.1b\(4\)](#)]
- The limitations on green reading material only applies to strokes made on the putting green [Clarification: [4.3a/1](#)]
- A player is allowed to practice on any holes **not** being played on the day of the competition [Clarification: [5.2/1](#)]

- If players **agree** to play out of turn to gain an advantage, **those players** are penalised (General Penalty) if **one of the players makes a stroke out of turn** [Rule: [6.4b\(1\)](#)]
- The conditions affecting the stroke that are worsened by a referee may be restored [Rule: [8.1d\(2\)](#)]
- The area behind the player while the player is taking their stance is referred to as the "**Restricted Area**" [Rule: [10.2b\(4\)](#)]
- A player's caddie may stand in the "**Restricted Area**" prior to the player making their stroke if they are not assisting the player with aim [Rule: [10.2b\(4\)](#)]
- A player is not allowed to set a self-standing putter down to help with alignment. This change has been **delayed** until January 2025 [Clarifications: [10.2b/1](#) and [10.2b\(3\)/2](#)]
- When attempting to correct playing from a wrong place, a player is only required to report the facts to the Committee when the player plays 2 balls [Rule: [14.7b\(2\)](#)]
- An additional minute is the amount of time a player has to identify their ball after it has been found within **and** close to the 3 minute search time allowed [Clarification: [18.2a\(1\)/3](#)].

IMPORTANT MODEL LOCAL RULE CHANGES

- When a player does not replay a stroke that hits a power line, the stroke counts and the player gets the general penalty [[MLR E-11](#)]
- The Committee may allow relief from immovable obstructions in a penalty area [[MLR F-24](#)]
- The penalty for a breach of the one-ball rule is 1 stroke (was 2 strokes) [[MLR G-4](#)]
- The Committee may restrict the damage to a club before it can be replaced [[MLR G-9](#)]
- The Committee can prohibit the use of green reading material on the putting green [[MLR G-12](#)]
- The Committee can prohibit practice on practice putting greens [[MLR I-1](#)]
- Bad times can be carried over to subsequent rounds in stroke play competition [[MLR K-2](#)]
- The Committee may modify the penalty for a non-certified score card to 2 penalty strokes rather than a disqualification [[MLR L-1](#)].

