

Manual 2- Rules Handout

Rule 1. The Game

- Golf is playing a ball from the teeing ground into the hole by a stroke or strokes
- You must always play by the 'Rules'. You are not allowed to change them
- Play the ball as it lies
- Fairly strike the ball

Rule 2. Match Play

- In match play, each hole is a separate contest. If you win the first hole you are "one up"; if you lose it you are "one down"; if you tie / share it you are "all square"
- You win the match when you are more 'holes up' than there are holes to play, for example you are "three up" and only two holes left to play
- Anyone you are playing against is your "opponent"

Rule 3. Stroke Play

- In stroke play; the competitor with the lowest total of strokes in a round is the winner
- You must always play the ball into the hole before starting the next hole. No "gimmies"

Rule 4 & 5. Clubs and the Ball

- You may carry no more than 14 clubs
- Normally you may not change the ball during play of a hole
- If your ball is damaged or cut you may change it after first telling your opponent or fellow competitor

Rule 6. Things a Player should do

- Read the notices given to you by the Committee in charge of a competition
 - Always use your proper handicap
 - Know your tee time or starting time
 - Make sure you play your own ball (put a mark on the ball in case some other player is using an identical ball)
 - In stroke play make sure your score for each hole is correct before handing in your card
 - Keep playing unless there is lightning, you are ill or officials tell you to stop
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Rule 7. Practice

- You may not hit a practice shot during play of a hole or from a hazard (bunker or water hazard)
- Always read the Local Rules about practice

Rule 8. Advice on How to Play

- During a round, you may not ask anyone except your partner or caddie for advice on how to play
- You may ask about Rules or the position of hazards
- You may not give advice to your opponent or fellow-competitor

Rule 9. Advising Opponent on Strokes Taken

- In Match Play you must tell your opponent the number of strokes you have taken if you are asked

Rule 10. When to Play a Shot (Honour)

- The player with the lowest number of strokes at a hole has the right to play first at the next hole. This is called the “honour”
- During play of a hole, the player whose ball is furthest from the hole plays first
- If you play out of turn in match play your opponent may make you replay, but this is not so in stroke play

Rule 11. Teeing Ground

- Tee your ball between the tee markers and a little behind them. You may go behind them as much as two club-lengths
- If your ball accidentally falls off the tee, you may replace it without penalty

Rule 12. Finding ball in Hazard – Identifying Ball

- A hazard is any bunker (area of sand) or water hazard (lake, pond, stream etc.)
 - In a hazard if your ball is covered by sand or leaves you may remove enough sand or leaves to be able to identify your ball
 - You may lift your ball anywhere except in a hazard. You must tell your opponent or fellow-competitor before you lift your ball to identify it
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Rule 13. Playing the Ball ‘as it lies’ and the course ‘as you find it’

- You must play the ball as it lies
- You may not improve your lie by pressing down behind the ball. The club may be grounded only lightly behind the ball
- You may not improve the area of your intended swing or line of play by bending breaking anything growing, such as branches, shrubs or weeds
- In a hazard you may not touch any sand, ground or water with the club before or during your backswing
- In a hazard you may not remove any loose impediments (natural things such as grass, leaves or twigs) but you may remove obstructions (artificial or man-made objects such as bottles or rakes)

Rule 14. Striking the Ball

- You must fairly strike the ball with the head of the club. You may not push, scrape or rake the ball
- You must not hit the ball when it is moving

Rule 15. Playing a Wrong Ball

- In match play, if you play a ball that is not yours, you lose the hole unless the wrong ball is played in a hazard
- If you play a wrong ball in a hazard you must then play the correct ball
- In stroke play if you play a wrong ball you must take a two stroke penalty unless the wrong ball was played in a hazard. You must then play out the hole with your own ball. If you do not do so you are disqualified

Rule 16. The Putting Green

- If any part of the ball is touching the green, it is on the green
 - When your ball is on the green you may brush away leaves and other ‘loose impediments’ on your line of putt with your hand or a club
 - You may repair marks or old plug holes but you may not repair marks made by spikes or shoes if they are on your line of putt
 - You may not test the surface of the green by rolling a ball or scraping the surface
 - Always mark your ball by putting a marker behind it when you want to pick it up to clean it or get it out of another player’s way
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Rule 17. The Flagstick

- If your ball is off the green there is no penalty if your ball strikes the flagstick, provided no one is holding/attending the flagstick
- If your ball is on the green, do not putt with the flagstick in the hole
- Either take the flagstick out or ask another player to hold it when you play your ball
- When you putt from the green and your ball strikes the flagstick when it is in the hole; in match play you lose the hole; in stroke play you add a two stroke penalty to your score for the hole

Rule 18. Moving the Ball

- If you or your partner accidentally or on purpose move either of your balls add a penalty stroke to your score for the hole; replace and play it
- If your ball is moved by another person or something other than you or your partner, there is no penalty but you must replace it
- If the ball is moved by wind or water there is no penalty and you must play it as it lies
- Once you address the ball and the ball moves add a penalty stroke and replace the ball
- Other than on the putting green if you move a loose impediment and the ball moves add a penalty stroke to your score for the hole, replace the ball; on the putting green there is no penalty but you must replace the ball

Rule 19. Ball in Motion Deflected or Stopped

If your ball hits a rake, tree, bird, etc. there is no penalty and the ball is played as it lies – “ rub of the green”

<p>“rub of the green” Play the ball as it lies</p>	<p>Hit you, partner, caddie or equipment you lose the hole or 2 stroke penalty</p>	<p>Hit your opponent, caddie or equipment you may replay the shot</p>	<p>Hit fellow competitor, caddie or equipment in stroke play no penalty and the ball is played as it lies</p>	<p>Your ball hits another ball and moves it, you play your ball as it lies; the owner of the other ball must replace it. If your ball is on the green when you play and the “hit2 ball is also on the green you are penalised two strokes in stroke play</p>
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Rule 20. Lifting, Dropping and Placing the Ball

- If you are lifting your ball under a rule and the rule requires the ball to be replaced you must put a ball-marker behind the ball before you lift it
- When you drop a ball, stand erect, hold your arm out straight and drop it
- If a dropped ball hits the ground and rolls
 - out of bounds
 - into a hazard
 - out of a hazard
 - more than two clublengths
 - nearer the hole
 - rolls onto a putting green
 - back into an obstruction or ground under repair
 - the ball must be re-dropped

Rule 21. Cleaning the Ball

- You may usually clean your ball when you are allowed to lift it
- Except on the green you may not clean it when you lift it for identification, because it interferes with another ball or to confirm if it is unfit for play or damaged

Rule 22. Ball Interfering with or Assisting Play

- If another ball interferes with your swing or is in your line of putt, you may ask the owner to lift it
- If your ball is near the hole and might serve as a back-stop for another player, you may lift your ball

Rule 23. Loose Impediments

- Loose Impediments are natural objects that are not growing or fixed such as leaves, twigs, branches, worms, and insects
- You may remove a loose impediment except when your ball and the loose impediment lie in or touch the same bunker or water hazard

Rule 24. Obstructions

- Obstructions are man-made or artificial objects
 - Objects such as bottles, rakes, tin cans etc. are 'Movable Obstructions'
 - Sprinkler heads, shelter houses, cart paths etc. are 'Immovable Obstructions'
 - Movable Obstructions anywhere on the course may be removed. If the ball moves it must be replaced without penalty
 - You may drop your ball away from an Immovable Obstruction if it interferes with your stance or swing
 - Find the nearest point of relief and drop the ball within one club-length of that point, not nearer the hole
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Rule 25. Casual Water; Ground Under Repair; Burrowing Animal Holes

- Casual water is any temporary puddle of water caused by rain or over-watering
- Ground Under Repair is any damaged area which the Committee has marked as Ground Under Repair
- If your ball or stance is in casual water, ground under repair or a burrowing animal hole you may either
 - play the ball as it lies or
 - find the nearest point
 - not nearer the hole which gives you relief and
 - drop the ball within one club-length of that point
- If your ball is in casual water etc. and you cannot find it, determine/establish the point where the ball entered the area and drop a ball within one club-length of that place without penalty
- If your ball is on a wrong green find the nearest place off the green which is not nearer the hole and drop the ball within one club-length of that place

Rule 26. Water Hazards

- Water Hazards margins are identified/marked by yellow stakes or lines
- Lateral Water Hazards margins are identified/marked by red stakes or lines
- If your ball is in a water hazard you may play it as it lies
- If you cannot find it or do not wish to play it as it lies add a penalty stroke and drop and play another ball from where you last played or drop a ball behind the water hazard as far back as you like(suggest diagram)

Rule 27. Ball Lost or Out of Bounds

- A ball is Lost if it is not found and identified within five minutes after you first begin to search
 - A ball is Out of Bounds when all of it lies beyond the inside line of objects marking the out of bounds such as a white stakes, a fence or wall that marks the playing area of the course
 - If your ball is lost or out of bounds you must
 - add a penalty stroke and
 - play another ball from where you last played your last shot
 - If you think your ball may be lost or out of bounds you may play another ball (a provisional ball) from the place your first ball was last played
 - You must tell your opponent or fellow-competitor that you are playing a provisional ball and play it before you look for your first ball
 - If you cannot find your first ball or it is out of bounds you play out the hole with the provisional ball
 - If you find the first ball you pick up the provisional ball and continue playing with the first ball
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Rule 28. Ball Unplayable

- If your ball is under a tree or in some other bad situation and you decide that you cannot play it, add a penalty stroke and do one of the following
 - Go back to where you played the last shot and play another ball from there or
 - Measure two club-lengths from the unplayable lie and play the ball from there or
 - Keep the unplayable lie between you and the hole. Go back as far as you wish on a straight line and drop and play the ball
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