

Abnormal Ground Conditions

An abnormal ground condition is any casual water, ground under repair, or hole, cast or runway on the course made by a burrowing animal, a reptile, or a bird.

Addressing the Ball

A player has "addressed the ball" when he/she has taken his/her stance and has grounded his/her club, however it is not necessary to ground the ball in a hazard.

Advice

"Advice is any counsel or suggestion which could influence a player in determining his/her play, choice of a club or in the method of making a stroke.

Information on the Rules or on matters of public information, such as the

objects, such as white stakes, on a fence or wall, that mark the boundary

position of hazards or the flagstick on the putting green, is not advice.

Ball Deemed to Move

See "'Move or Moved."

Ball Holed

See Holed.

Ball Lost

See Lost Ball

Ball in Play

A ball is "'in play'" as soon as the player has made a stroke on the teeing ground. It remains in play until holed out, except when it is lost, out of bounds, lifted, or another ball has been substituted under an applicable rule. Where rules permit substitution, a ball so substituted becomes the ball in play.

Bunker

A "'bunker'" is a hazard consisting of a prepared area of ground, often a hollow, from which turf or soil has been removed and replaced with sand or the like. Grass-covered ground bordering or within a bunker is not part of the bunker. A ball is in the bunker when it lies in or any part of it touches the bunker.

Caddie

A caddie is a person who carries or handles a player's clubs during play and otherwise assists him/her in accordance with the rules. When one caddie is employed by more than one player, he/she is always deemed to be the caddie of the player whose ball is involved, and equipment carried by him is deemed to be that player's equipment, except when the caddie acts upon specific directions of another player, in which case he/she is considered to be that other player's caddie.

Casual Water

"Casual water" is any temporary accumulation of water on the course which is visible before or after the player takes his/her stance and is not a water hazard. Snow and natural ice, other than frost, are either casual water or loose impediments, at the option of the player. Manufactured ice

is an obstruction. Dew and frost are not casual water.

Committee

The "Committee" is the committee in charge of the competition or, the committee in charge of the course.

Competitor

A "competitor" is a player in a stroke competition. A "fellow-competitor" is any person with whom the competitor plays. Neither is partner of the other.

Course

The course is the whole area within which play is permitted.

Equipment

"Equipment" is anything used, worn or carried by or for the player. Exceptions include: any ball he/she has played at the current hole, and any small object, such as a coin or a tee, when used to mark the position of a ball or the extent of an area in which a ball is to be dropped. Equipment includes a golf cart, whether or not motorized. If such a cart is shared by more than one player, its status under the Rules is the same as that of a caddie employed by more than one player.

Fellow Competitor

See Competitor.

Flagstick

The "flagstick" is a moveable straight indicator, with or without bunting or other material attached, centered in the hole to show its position. It shall be circular in cross-section.

Forecaddie

A forecaddie is one who is employed by the Committee to indicate to players the position of balls during play. He/she is an outside agency.

Ground Under Repair

"Ground under repair" is any portion of the course so marked by the Committee or so declared by its authorized representative. It includes

material piled for removal and a hole made by golf course maintenance even if not so marked. Stakes and lines defining ground under repair are obstructions. The margin of ground under repair extends vertically downwards but not upwards. A ball is in ground under repair when it lies in or any part of it touches the ground under repair.

Note 1: Grass cuttings and other material left on the course which have been abandoned and are not intended to be removed are not ground under repair unless so marked.

Note 2: The Committee may make a Local Rule prohibiting play from ground under repair or an environmentally sensitive area which has been defined as ground under repair.

Hazards

A hazard is any bunker or water hazard.

Hole

The hole shall be 4 1/4 inches (108mm) in diameter and at least 4 inches (100mm) deep. If a lining is used, it shall be sunk at least 1 inch (25mm) below the putting green surface unless the nature of the soil makes it impractical to do so; its outer diameter shall not exceed 4 1/4 inches (108mm).

Holed

The ball is holed when it is at rest with the circumference of the hole and all of it is below the level of the lip of the hole.

Honor

The player entitled to play first from the teeing ground is said to have the honor.

Lateral Water Hazard

A lateral water hazard is a water hazard or that part of a water hazard so situated that it is not possible or is deemed by the Committee to be impractical to drop a ball behind the water hazard in accordance with Rule 26-1b. That part of the water hazard to be played as lateral water hazard should be distinctly marked.

Note 1: Lateral water hazards should be defined by red stakes or lines.

Note 2: The Committee may make a Local Rule prohibiting play from an environmentally-sensitive area which has been defined as a lateral water hazard.

Note 3: The Committee may define a lateral water hazard as a water hazard.

Line of Play

The line of play is the direction which the player wishes his ball to take after a stroke, plus a reasonable distance on either side of the intended direction. The line of play extends vertically upwards from the ground, but does not extend beyond the hole.

Loose Impediments

"Loose impediments" are natural objects, such as stones, leaves, twigs, branches, dung, worms, insects and casts or heaps made by them, provided they are not fixed or growing, are not solidly embedded and do not adhere to the ball. Sand and loose soil are loose impediments on the putting green, but not elsewhere.

Snow and natural ice, other than frost, are either casual water or loose impediments, at the option of the player. Manufactured ice is an obstruction. Dew is not a loose impediments.

Lost Ball

A ball is "lost" if:

- a. It is not found or identified by the player within five minutes after the players side or his or their caddies have begun to search for it; or
- b. The player has put another ball into play under the rules, even though he/she may not have searched for the original ball; or
- c. The player has played any stroke with a provisional ball from the place where the original ball is likely to be or from a point nearer the hole than that place, where-upon the provisional ball becomes the ball in play. Time spent in playing a wrong ball is not counted in the five-minute period allowed for search

Marker

A marker is one who is appointed by the Committee to record a competitor's score in stroke play. He/she may be a fellow competitor. He/she is not a referee.

Matches

See Sides and Matches.

Move or Moved

A ball is deemed to have moved if it leaves its position and comes to rest in any other place.

Nearest Point of Relief

The nearest point of relief is the reference point for taking relief without penalty from interference by an immovable obstruction (Rule 24-2), an abnormal ground condition (Rule 25-1) or a wrong putting green (Rule 25-3).

It is the point on the course nearest to where the ball lies, which is not nearer the hole and at which, if the ball were so positioned, no interference (as defined) would exist.

Observer

An observer" is one who is appointed by the Committee to assist a referee to decide questions of fact and to report to him any breach of a rule. An observer should not attend the flagstick, stand at or mark the position of the hole, or lift the ball or mark its position.

Obstructions

An obstruction" is anything artificial, including artificial surfaces, sides of roads, paths, and manufactured ice, except:

- a. Objects defining out of bounds, such as walls, fences, stakes and railings;
- b. Any part of an immovable artificial object which is out of bounds; and
- c. Any construction declared by the Committee to be an integral part of the course.

Out of Bounds

Out of bounds is ground on which play is prohibited. When out of bounds is defined by reference to stakes or a fence or as being beyond stakes or a fence, the out of bounds line is determined by the nearest point of the stakes or fence posts at ground level excluding angled supports.

When out of bounds is determined by a line on the ground, the line itself

is out of bounds.

The out of bounds line extends vertically upwards and downwards.

A ball is out of bounds when all of it lies out off bounds.

A player may stand out of bounds to play a ball lying within bounds.

Outside Agency

An "'outside agency'" is an agency not part of the match or, in stroke play, not part of a competitor's side, and includes a referee, a marker, an observer or a forecaddie. Neither wind nor water is an outside agency.

Partner

A "partner" is a player associated with another player on the same side.

In a threesome, foursome, best-ball or four-ball match, where the context so admits, the word "player" includes his/her partner or partners.

Penalty Stroke

A "'penalty stroke" is one added to the score of a player or side under certain rules. In a threesome or foursome, penalty strokes do affect the order of play.

Provisional Ball

A "provisional ball" is played under Rule 27-2 for a ball which may be lost outside a water hazard or may be out of bounds.

Putting Green

The putting green is all the ground of the hole being played which is specially prepared for putting or other wise defined as such by the Committee. A ball is on the putting green when any part of it touches the putting green.

Referee

A referee is one who is appointed by the Committee to accompany players to decide questions of fact and apply the Rules of Golf. He/she shall act on any breach of a rule which he/she observes or is reported to him.

A referee should not attend the flagstick, stand or mark the position of

the hole, or lift the ball or mark its position.

Rub of the Green

A rub of the green occurs when a ball in motion is accidentally deflected or stopped by any outside agency (see Rule 19-1).

Rule

The term Rule includes Local Rules made by the Committee.

Sides and Matches

Side: A player, or two or more players who are partners

Single: A match in which one plays against another.

Threesome: A match in which one plays against two and each side plays one ball.

Three-Ball: A match play competition in which three play against one another, each playing his/her own ball. Each player is playing two distinct matches.

Best-Ball: A match in which one plays against the better ball of two or the best ball of three players.

Four-Ball: A match in which two play their better ball against the better ball of two other players.

Stance

Taking the "stance" consists in a player placing his /her feet in position preparatory to making a stroke.

Stipulated Round

The "stipulated round consists of playing the holes of the course in their correct sequence unless otherwise authorized by the Committee. The number of holes in a stipulated round is 18 unless a smaller number is authorized by the Committee. As to extension of stipulated round in match play, see Rule 2-3.

Stroke

A "stroke" is the forward movement of the club made with the intention of fairly striking the ball, but if a player checks his/her downswing voluntarily before it reaches the ball he/she is deemed not to have made a stroke.

Teeing Ground

The teeing ground is the starting place for the hole to be played. It is a rectangular area two club-lengths in depth, the front and sides of which are defined by the outside limits of two tee-markers. A ball is outside the teeing ground when all of it lies outside the teeing ground.

Through the Green

Through the green is the whole area of the course except:

- a. the teeing ground and putting green of the hole being played; and
- b. all hazards on the course.

Water Hazard

A water hazard is any sea, lake, pond, river, ditch, surface drainage ditch or other open water (whether or not it contains water). All ground or water within the margin of a water hazard is part of the water hazard. The margin of a water hazard extends vertically upwards and downwards. Stakes and lines defining the margins of water hazards are in the hazards. Such stakes are obstructions. A ball is in a water hazard when it lies in or touches the water hazard.

Note 1: Water hazards (other than lateral water hazards) should be defined by yellow stakes or lines.

Note 2: The Committee may make a Local Rule prohibiting play from an environmentally-sensitive area which has been defined as a water hazard.

Wrong Ball

A wrong ball is any ball other than the player's:

- a. Ball in play, or
- b. Provisional ball, or
- c. In stroke play, a second ball played under Rule 3-3 or Rule 20-7b.

Note: Ball in play includes a ball substituted for the ball in play, whether or not such substitution is permitted.

Wrong Putting Green

A wrong putting green

is any putting green other than that of the hole being played. Unless otherwise prescribed by the Committee, this term includes a practice putting green or pitching green on the course.

Local Rules Example

In accordance with the Rules of Golf, Golf Course Management or Tournament Committees may establish several Local Rules relative to the course or conditions of play. Here is an example of a set of Local Rules submitted to participants in a Unified League Competition in Rhode Island. Local Rules may also be printed on the Golf Course scorecard.