



Golf Rules Many Golfers Get Wrong

PENALTY AREA (WATER HAZARD) - Yellow Stakes or Yellow Painted Line (painted line prevails over stakes)

Option 1 - Play it from the hazard

Option 2 - Replay the shot from the original position, incurring a stroke and distance penalty

Option 3 - Draw a line from the hole to where the ball last crossed the margin of the hazard and drop anywhere behind that point keeping the point between you and the hole, incurring a one-shot penalty.

PENALTY AREA (WATER HAZARD) - Red Stakes or Red Painted Line (painted line prevails over stakes)

Option 1 - Play it from the hazard

Option 2 - Replay the shot from the original position, incurring a stroke and distance penalty

Option 3 - Drop a ball within two club lengths of where the ball last crossed the margin of the hazard. May also drop on the opposite side of the Lateral Water Hazard "equal distance" from the hole.

Option 4: Draw a line from the hole to where the ball last crossed the margin of the hazard and drop anywhere behind that point keeping the point between you and the hole, incurring a one-shot penalty.

LOST BALL OR OUT-OF-BOUNDS

You may put an optional Provisional Ball in Play (must declare intentions BEFORE hitting a Provisional Ball). You may hit the Provisional Ball up to the point where the original ball may be lost or out of bounds.

After looking for a maximum of THREE (3) minutes, you must put the Provisional Ball in play counting all shots to that point. If no Provisional Ball is hit.....go back to from where the shot was originally played and replay, incurring a stroke and distance penalty.

NEW LOCAL RULE: This option allows the player to drop a ball in the large area between the point where the ball is estimated to come to rest or out of bounds and the edge of the fairway of the hole being played that is not nearer the hole. The player gets two penalty strokes when using this relief option.

UNPLAYABLE LIE

Option 1 - Take two (2) club lengths relief, no closer to the hole and assess a one-stroke penalty

Option 2 - Replay the shot from the original position, incurring a stroke and distance penalty

Option 3 - Take the ball back as far as you want, keeping the point where the ball lays between you and the hole, incurring a one-shot penalty

IMPROVING YOUR SWING PATH

You cannot bend, break, or hack anything growing or fixed if it improves your lie, your stance, or your area of intended swing. The penalty for doing so is loss of hole in Match Play or a two-shot penalty in Stroke Play.

UNPLAYABLE LIE IN A BUNKER

Option 1 - Take a drop of no more than two (2) club lengths no closer to the hole, but still in the bunker, incurring a one-shot penalty

Option 2 - Replay the shot from the original position, incurring a stroke and distance penalty

Option 3 - Go back as far as you like in the bunker and drop, keeping that spot where your ball laid between you and the hole. This incurs a one-shot penalty.

REMOVING OBJECTS IN A BUNKER

You may remove any **loose impediments** anywhere on the golf course, including in hazards like bunkers and penalty areas without penalty. For example, you may remove a **candy wrapper** and a pine cone or tree branch. You must ensure that removing the loose impediment does not cause your ball to move. If your ball moves, when you remove a loose impediment, you must replace it and incur a one-stroke penalty unless the ball is on the putting green, in which case there is no penalty.

NUMBER OF ALLOWED CLUBS

You are only allowed to carry 14 clubs in your bag. The penalty for carrying more than 14 clubs in Match Play is loss of hole (maximum of two holes). In Stroke Play, the penalty is two (2) strokes per hole (maximum of two holes/four shots).

CASUAL WATER

#1 - To qualify as Casual Water.....you must see water when taking a "normal" stance. Mud does not count. Find your **nearest point of relief**, no closer to the hole where neither you or your ball lie in water that can be seen without pressing your feet up and down. You may then drop your ball within **one (1) club length** from that point, no nearer to the hole at no penalty.

GROUNDING YOUR CLUB IN A HAZARD

YES - Practice swings may be taken inside a hazard and you may ground your club in a hazard.

GROUNDING YOUR CLUB IN A BUNKER

NO – You are not allowed to ground your club in a bunker. The Rules of Golf prohibit touching the sand in the bunker with your club directly in front of or behind your ball, during a practice swing or during your backswing. Doing so incurs a penalty.

ACCIDENTALLY MOVING YOUR BALL

There is a one-stroke penalty for accidentally moving your ball and it must be replaced in its original position before hitting. There is another one-stroke penalty for hitting the ball from the wrong place if it is not replaced. There is no penalty for accidentally moving the ball when on the tee.

REMOVING LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS

If, in moving loose impediments, you accidentally move your ball, you must return the ball to its original position and penalize yourself one (1) stroke.

ASKING FOR ADVICE

It is against the rules of golf to ask an opponent what club they have hit. The penalty for this breach is loss of hole in Match Play, or a two-shot penalty in stroke play.

BALL ON an Artificially Covered CART PATH

You are entitled to free relief.

Step #1 - Determine the “nearest point of relief”. This is the point where the ball would lay affording the player both swing and stance from the cart path.

Step #2 - You are entitled to one (1) club length relief from the point where the ball would lie once full relief is taken.

Step #3 - After dropping, the ball may roll up to two (2) club lengths no closer to the hole.

Note: The nearest point of relief for a right handed player and a left handed player is usually a different.

CHANGING CLUB CHARACTERISTICS

Clubs may not be altered in any way once play has begun. If a club is altered during the normal course of play, such as bending it after hitting a tree while attempting to hit the ball, the club may be taken to the shop for immediate repair and a replacement club may be used until the original club is repaired. If the club is modified outside the normal course of play, such as breaking or bending it in a fit of anger, it must be taken out of play for the remainder of the match. Should it be used again, the penalty is disqualification, whether Match or Stroke Play.

HOW TO DROP THE BALL

After determining the nearest point of relief, you may stand outside the drop area, no closer to the hole, and drop the ball from knee height in the designated relief area. The ball may roll up to two (2) club lengths no closer to the hole. If the ball rolls farther than that, you must re-drop. If, after dropping two times, the ball continues to roll past two (2) club lengths, you must place the ball where it first touched the ground.

REPAIRING THE LINE OF YOUR PUTT

You may repair any ball marks in your line and remove any pebbles or foreign objects in your line, provided you do it with your hand or club. You may tap down spike marks. You may fan the ground with a towel or cap to remove sand or foreign objects.

HITTING THE WRONG BALL

The penalty for hitting the wrong ball in Match Play is loss of hole. If both players hit the wrong ball, only the first player to do so would be penalized as that would be the end of the hole. The penalty for hitting the wrong ball in Stroke Play for either player is two (2) strokes and the original ball must be replayed from its original position.

Note: Players are to mark their ball with their own design of identification.....and point this out to all players on the starting hole.

Due to possible changes in the USGA Rules of Golf, of which the IRGF may not be familiar, please notify the IRGF of these revisions in the rules. .

For additional information on **USGA Rules of Golf**, contact:

Roger Van Dyke, Founder/President
Indian River Golf Foundation
rogervandykeirgf@gmail.com
(772) 713-9593