

Important Changes to the Rules of Golf

Effective January 1, 2019

1. The search time for a lost ball is reduced to 3 minutes from 5.
2. A ball moved during a search may be replaced without penalty.
3. Players are entitled to free relief for an embedded ball except in sand-filled bunkers.
4. Use your longest club, except a putter, to measure a drop.
5. A ball may be dropped from knee height instead of shoulder height.
6. Players may not take a stance on a wrong green.
7. A ball hitting a player or equipment is not subject to a penalty.
8. An accidental double hit counts as one stroke; there is no penalty.
9. Incidental touching of sand in a bunker is not penalized.
10. Loose impediments anywhere on the course can be moved.
11. A ball may be dropped outside a bunker with a 2-stroke penalty.
12. Water hazards are considered penalty areas.
13. Touching the ground in water or penalty areas is permitted.
14. If a ball moves on the green after it is marked, it is replaced without penalty.
15. If a ball is moved accidentally on a green, it is replaced without penalty.
16. All damage on greens may be repaired.
17. Positioning a club for alignment is not permitted.
18. Caddie assistance with alignment is not permitted.
19. A ball hitting a flagstick in the hole is not penalized.
20. A ball wedged against the side of the hole and the flagstick is deemed to be holed.