

TOP TEN TIPS FOR THE "RULES" OF GOLF (updated for rule changes January 2019)

1. When you are marking someone's card you have a responsibility to ALL the players in the competition to ensure it is fair and accurate. If you see something you are not sure about then bring it into the open and discuss it amongst yourselves. If in doubt ask the pros after the game.

2. You should not touch your ball whilst it is in play anywhere on the course, except on the putting green, without checking with your playing partner first.

3. Before lifting a ball for dropping you should mark its position and also mark the nearest point of relief. You should drop the ball from knee height, and not nearer the hole.

4. If a ball is in a penalty area (rule 17) then you have some choices as follows:

If it is a **Yellow stake** penalty area then you have 3 choices...

- play it as it lies,
- play a new shot from the original position under a one shot penalty,
- drop a ball, under a one shot penalty, any distance from the penalty area keeping a straight line from the point of entry and the flag.

If it is a **Red stake** penalty area then the following applies:

- You can do all of the options associated with a yellow stake
- plus you can drop a ball, under a one shot penalty, within 2 club lengths of the point where the ball crossed the penalty area, but not nearer the hole

Generally, penalty areas include water and can now include any area such as rough that the club wishes to mark in order to speed up play. If you are playing a ball in a penalty area you may ground your club and remove any loose impediments.

5. On the putting green (rule 13) if the ball moves after being replaced (maybe due to wind) then replace in the original position with no penalty. If you accidentally move the ball before putting then replace with no penalty.

6. You may leave the flag stick in the hole. There is no penalty for hitting the flag stick.

7. There is no penalty if the ball hits you, or for accidentally hitting your golf equipment (trolley). Also, there is no penalty for an accidental double hit.

8. An embedded ball (rule 16) in any general area of the golf course may be lifted and dropped with no penalty. (Note the general area does **not** include tees, greens, bunkers or penalty areas).

9. You now have only 3 minutes to search for a lost ball. If you accidentally move the ball whilst searching then simply replace exactly as it lay with no penalty

10. Read the local rules on your scorecard.