

NEW FOR MATCH PLAY

1) It's no longer a penalty if a player accidentally moves an opponent's ball or ball-marker on the green. The ball or ball-marker must be replaced. (R 13.1d1)

2) It's no longer a penalty if a player's ball accidentally hits an opponent or their equipment. Normally, the ball must be played as it lies. (R11.1a)

On the putting green, if a player's ball accidentally hits an opponent or their equipment, there is no penalty, but the stroke is canceled and must be replayed. (R11.1b, Exception 2)

3) It's no longer a penalty for stopping an opponent's ball in motion so long as there is no reasonable chance the ball could go in the hole. Their next stroke is considered to have been conceded. (R11.2a, Exception)

MATCH PLAY PENALTIES

4) A one-stroke penalty that applies to the same Rules breaches or penalty relief situation penalties as in stroke play.

A loss of hole penalty that is the equivalent of the two-stroke general penalty in stroke play.

A two-stroke penalty that applies to Rule 19.3b, Extra Relief Option, the fourth relief option for an unplayable ball in a bunker. (And, maybe E-5, if that's in effect.)

A match adjustment penalty for a breach of the Rule 4.1b, Limit of 14 Clubs.

A disqualification penalty that applies to many of the same Rules breaches as in stroke play.

MATCH PLAY CONCESSIONS

5) **AN OPPONENT'S NEXT STROKE, A HOLE OR THE MATCH MAY BE CONCEDED AT ANY TIME** A concession is final and cannot be declined or withdrawn. (R3.2b2)

☛ Players may not agree in advance to concede certain strokes, such as all putts "inside the leather." (R3.2b1)

☛ Players may not agree to tie a hole until after at least one of them has started play of that hole. (R3.2a2)

☛ Players may not agree to concede holes to each other to deliberately shorten the match. (Interpretation 3.2b1/1)

6) HOW A PLAYER SHOULD PROCEED WHEN THEY ARE UNCERTAIN ABOUT A RULE OR PROCEDURE

During their match, a player and their opponent may agree on how to decide a Rules issue. The agreed outcome is conclusive even if it turns out to have been wrong under the Rules, so long as the players did not deliberately agree to ignore any Rule or penalty.

If an agreement cannot be reached, the player must decide what to do and play on. If the opponent disagrees and wishes to request a ruling, usually they must express their intention to do so before starting the next hole.

Similarly, if a player doesn't agree with what their opponent is doing, usually they must express their intention to request a ruling before starting the next hole.

In either case, the Committee will resolve it later. (R20.1b)

☛ In match play only, a player may not play a "second ball." If they do, they will automatically lose the hole. (20.1b4)

In stroke play only, if a player is uncertain about a Rule or procedure they may play a "second ball." (R20.1c3)

7) PLAYER SEES AN OPPONENT BREAK A RULE

A player may silently ignore the breach and must not discuss it with them until after starting the next hole. (R3.2d4)

Or, the player must express their intention to request a ruling before starting the next hole.

The Committee will resolve it later. (R20.1b)

☛ Players may not agree to disregard a Rules breach or waive a penalty. (R1.3b1)

In stroke play, a player may not ignore another player's breach of a Rule. (R20.1c2)

HOW MATCH PLAY DIFFERS FROM STROKE PLAY

8) PLAYER PLAYS A WRONG BALL

The player loses the hole. (Definition of Wrong Ball & R6.3c1)

In stroke play, the penalty is two strokes. The player must correct the mistake. (R6.3c1)

9) PLAYER PLAYS FROM A WRONG PLACE

The player loses the hole. (Definition of Wrong Place & R14.7a)

In stroke play, the penalty is two strokes. The player must play out the hole with the ball played from the wrong place unless they've committed a serious breach. (R14.7b)

10) DID THE PLAYER PLAY FROM OUTSIDE THE TEEING AREA OR FROM THE WRONG TEES? The opponent may immediately recall the stroke and require that the player play from the correct teeing area. Otherwise, the ball is played as it lies without penalty. (R6.1b1)

In stroke play, the penalty is two strokes. The player must correct the mistake. (R6.1b2)

11) DID THE PLAYER PLAY OUT OF TURN? The opponent may immediately recall the stroke and require that the player play in the proper order. Otherwise, the ball is played as it lies without penalty. (R6.4a2)

However, when done solely for the purpose of saving time, a player whose turn it is to play may invite an opponent to play first. The opponent is not obligated to accept the offer. (R6.4a2, Exception)

☛ In match play, players may not agree in advance to play “ready golf.” (R1.3b)

In stroke play, “ready golf” is encouraged. (R6.4b2)

12) DID THE PLAYER DELIBERATELY MOVE AN OPPONENT’S BALL WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION? The opponent’s ball must be replaced. **The player incurs a one-stroke penalty.** (R9.5b)

In stroke play, there is no penalty for anyone. (R9.6)

13) DID A PLAYER’S BALL ACCIDENTALLY HIT AN OPPONENT’S BALL? The player must play their ball as it lies. The moved ball must be replaced. No penalty for either player anywhere on the course. (R9.6 & R11.1)

In stroke play, if both balls are on the putting green when this happens, there is a two-stroke penalty for the player whose putt hit the other ball. (R11.1a, Exception)

14) DID THE PLAYER BREACH ANY OF THE “RELIEF” RULES SUCH AS THOSE ON LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS, MOVABLE OBSTRUCTIONS, ABNORMAL COURSE CONDITIONS, PENALTY AREAS, BALL LOST OR BALL OUT OF BOUNDS, OR BALL UNPLAYABLE? **The player may incur a one-stroke penalty or they may lose the hole.** (Refer to R15, R16, R17, R18 & R19)

In stroke play, the penalty may be either one or two strokes.

15) DID A PLAYER GIVE WRONG INFORMATION TO AN OPPONENT? If it’s about the number of strokes they have taken or of any penalty strokes they have incurred, **the player may lose the hole** unless corrected in time. (See R3.2d for the details)

In stroke play, corrections to a player’s score can be made up until the scorecard has been “returned.” (R3.3b2)

A REFEREE’S DUTIES AND AUTHORITY IN MATCH PLAY DEPEND ON THE REFEREE’S ASSIGNMENT

WHEN ASSIGNED TO ONE MATCH FOR THE ENTIRE ROUND The “assigned” referee will be with the match to its conclusion and is responsible for acting on any breach of the Rules that they see or are told about. (Committee Procedures, 6C1)

Three suggestions:

- 1) Keep a scorecard and take notes.
- 2) When giving a ruling invite the opponent to listen in on the conversation.
- 3) At each hole, when the match reaches the green, get out of your cart and stand near the green so that you can hear concessions, confirm scores with the players and be in position to make the state-of-the-match announcement.

WHEN TASKED TO MONITOR MULTIPLE MATCHES OR CERTAIN HOLES OR SECTIONS OF THE COURSE

A “roving” referee has only limited authority to intervene in play and should avoid becoming involved in a match unless:

- 1) a player asks for help with the Rules, or
- 2) a player may be in breach of a Code of Conduct provision, or
- 3) a player or players may be in breach of Rule 1.3b, Players Agreeing to Ignore a Rule or Penalty, or
- 4) a player may be in breach of Rule 5.6, Unreasonable Delay of Play, Prompt Pace of Play, or
- 5) a player arrives late to the tee for their starting time, or
- 6) a player’s search for a ball reaches three minutes. (Committee Procedures, 6C1)

The “roving” referee who sees a player about to breach a Rule should not intervene. And, if the player does breach the Rule, the “roving” referee should not try to apply a penalty without the opponent requesting a ruling. (Committee Procedures, 6C5)

☛ Both “assigned” and “roving” referees should time any ball searches that they come upon. And, unless an opponent objects, both “assigned” and “roving” referees should assist with any ball search. (CGA & AJGA Rev. January 20, 2021)