

Rules of Golf

All rules of golf may be found at [Rules and Clarifications](#) . Click link at left (Rules and Clarifications) to open the USGA Rules of Golf.

The following rules have been further defined as noted below as questions come up with our members. Contact Happy Buonanno (buonanno82@cox.net or happybuonanno@gmail.com if you have any questions or need further guidance on a golf rule.

Rule 1 – The Game, Player Conduct and the Rules

Rule 2 – The Course

Rule 3 - The Competition

Rule 4 – The Player’s Equipment

Rule 5 – Playing the Round

Rule 6 – Playing the Hole

Question: Where can you place the ball when you tee up in the teeing area?

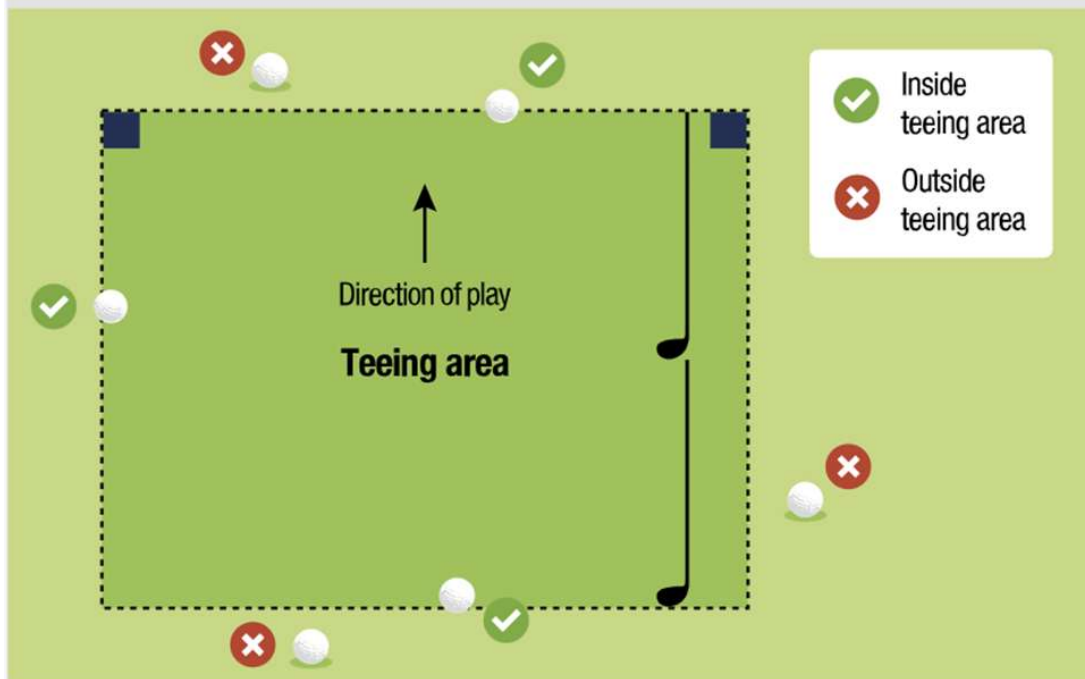
Answer: Rule 6.2b addresses this question. Please see the information and diagram below for information.

NOTE: Your ball does NOT have to be behind the tee markers. You may tee up at the very front of the markers as noted in the information and diagram below. Also, you may tee up within two club lengths in back of the tee markers. This is also noted in the diagram below. In the diagram the blue boxes are the tee markers.

b. Teeing Area Rules

Your ball is in the teeing area when any part of the ball touches or is above any part of the teeing area. You may stand outside the teeing area in making the stroke at a ball in the teeing area. You may play the ball from a tee placed on the ground or from the ground itself.

DIAGRAM 6.2b: WHEN BALL IS IN TEEING AREA



The dotted line defines the outside edges of the teeing area (see Definition of Teeing Area). A ball is in the teeing area when any part of the ball touches or is above part of the teeing area.

Rule 7 – Ball Search: Finding and Identifying Ball

Rule 8 – Course Played as It Is Found

Interference from Boundary Objects – See link below

https://www.usga.org/RulesFAQ/rules_answer.asp?FAQidx=186&Rule=0&Topic=1

Rule 9 – Ball Played as It Lies; Ball at Rest Lifted or Moved

Rule 10 – Preparing for and Making a Stroke; Advice and Help; Caddies

Rule 11 – Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Person, Animal or Object; Deliberate Actions to Affect Ball in Motion

Rule 12 - Bunkers

Rule 13 – Putting Greens

Rule 13.1c(2) allows repair of almost any damage on the green:

“Damage on the putting green” is defined to include all types of damage (such as ball-marks, shoe damage, indentations from a club or flagstick, animal damage, etc.), except aeration holes, natural surface imperfections or natural wear of the hole.

Reasons for Change:

Because putting greens are specially prepared for playing the ball along the ground, the Rules allow the player to do things on the green that are not allowed anywhere else:

The player may mark, lift and clean a ball on the green at any time, remove sand and loose soil on the green and repair old hole plugs and ball-marks on the green.

Given this philosophy of allowing players to try to have a smooth surface for rolling the ball, there is no conceptual reason for prohibiting repair of other types of damage (whether made by players, animals, maintenance staff, etc.).

This Rule change eliminates the frequent question among players and referees about whether a particular area of damage on the green is a ball-mark that may be repaired or is a shoe mark or other damage that must not be repaired.

The concern has been noted that allowing repair of all damage on the putting green could slow down play if players try to repair too many areas; but we believe this is unlikely to be true for most players and that the Rule against unreasonable delay (as well as a Committee’s pace of play policy) can be used to address situations where a player seeks to make excessive repairs.

Based on the above a player may not tap/pat down the green unless it is actual damaged as listed in this rule. See video for more information:

<https://youtu.be/pILFpwr7Jas?si=gHqjni5lwwjvl -3>

Rule 14 – Procedures for Ball; Marking, Lifting, and Cleaning; Replacing on Spot; Dropping in Relief Area; Playing from Wrong Place

Rule 15 - Relief from Loose Impediments and Movable Obstructions (including Ball or Ball-Marker Helping or Interfering with Play)

Can you remove stakes or chains on the golf course without penalty?

Question: If my ball lands in a penalty area (i.e. either staked or painted red or yellow), can I remove any stakes or chains that may be in my swing, stance, or ball flight if I choose to hit my ball where it lies in the penalty area?

Answer: Yes. From within a penalty area, you are allowed to remove any removable objects. This would include any stakes or chains – if they are removable. If they are not removable you must play the ball as it lies or take a penalty and follow the drop rules available to you.

Rule 16 - Relief from Abnormal Course Conditions (Including Immovable Obstructions), Dangerous Animal Condition, Embedded Ball

Cart Path Ball:

- The good news is you don't have to play a shot in which your stance or swing is interfered with by an artificial cart path. The rules permit you to drop within one club-length of the nearest point of relief that allows you to stand and swing freely without interference from the path. The nearest point and drop zone can't be closer to the hole, and it's recommended that the spot be determined by using the club, stance, direction and swing you would have used if the obstruction had not been there. Sounds simple, but keep in mind the drop zone could be in a different place depending on whether you intend to swing left-handed or right-handed. Here is a video that provides three different circumstances.
- One more thing to keep in mind. Our courses do not allow us relief when we hit in the rocks. If the closest point of relief is in the rocks, then the person will need to decide to either hit from the cart path, hit from the rocks, or take a penalty and go back along their ball flight to drop the ball and hit from there.
- See video link below:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejixOGLGIXY>

Rule 17 – Penalty Areas

Rule 17 is a specific Rule for penalty areas, which are bodies of water or other areas defined by the Committee where a ball is often lost or unable to be played. For one penalty stroke, players may use specific relief options to play a ball from outside the penalty area.

- Penalty areas are one of the five defined areas of the course and can be marked as either red or yellow. When your ball lies in a penalty area, you can play it as it lies or take relief outside the penalty area for one penalty stroke. For either red or yellow penalty areas, you can play from where your last stroke was made (stroke and distance) or take back-on-the-line relief by going back as far as you'd like on the line between the hole and where your ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area. In a red penalty area, you have one additional relief option, which is to take lateral relief within two club-lengths of where your ball last crossed into the penalty area.
- When playing a shot from a penalty area, you can remove any detached natural or artificial object (known as loose impediments and movable obstructions), ground your club behind the ball, or take practice swings that touch the ground. However, there are a few restrictions. You can't deem your ball unplayable or take relief from abnormal course conditions (such as a bridge or sprinkler control box) when your ball lies in a penalty area. If you need relief, you can play under the penalty area relief options discussed above.
- See video link below:
<https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules-hub/topics/penalty-areas.html>

Rule 18 - Stroke and Distance Relief; Ball Lost or Out of Bounds; Provisional Ball

Out of Bounds/Lost Ball/Provisional =

The video link below (1) does not discuss what option is in effect if there is a local rule, which we have. There is more information on the local rule in the second video link below (2). For out of bounds or lost ball there are two options: Rule 18 or the local rule:

Rule 18 - Hit from original place where the player hit the ball for a one stroke penalty (stroke and distance) OR LOCAL RULE - drop within 2 club distance, in fairway, from where ball went out of bounds or was lost, at a 2-stroke penalty (see (2) video for this one)

Out of bounds or lost ball video link:
(1)=

<https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules-hub/topics/out-of-bounds-lost-ball-provisional.html>

Stroke and Distance: New Local Rule E-5
(2) =

<https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules-hub/rules-modernization/major-changes/golfs-new-rules-stroke-and-distance.html>

Rule 19 – Unplayable Ball

See video below (Also see Local Rules for Highland Falls, Hole #16):

<https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules-hub/topics/unplayable-ball.html>

Rule 20 - Resolving Rules Issues During Round; Rulings by Referee and Committee

Rule 21- Other Forms of Individual Stroke Play and Match Play

Rule 22 - Foursomes (Also Known as Alternate Shot)

Rule 23 - Four-Ball

Rule 24 - Team Competitions

Rule 25 - Modifications for Players with Disabilities