

WNHGA Rules Seminar 2022

Useful Publications:

Player's Edition – Covers most common occurrences on the golf course.

The Rules of Golf – The full text of the Rules of Golf, Definitions and an index.

The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf – Contains the full Rules, Interpretations and Committee Procedures.

All of these publications are available on the USGA app which you can download to your phone from your app store. There is a search function where you input the basic situation you are involved/interested in and it will give a list of possible rulings.

Go to **USGA.org** to review the videos we are going to play today along with other rules topics.

Define: "Nearest Point of Complete Relief"

The estimated point where the ball would lie that is:

1. nearest to the ball's original spot, but not nearer the hole,
2. in the required area of the course,
3. where the condition does not interfere with the stroke the player would have made from the original spot if the condition was not there.

Relief is given for lie of ball, area of intended swing and area of intended stance. Note that relief for the line of play is not included except on the putting green.

The Nearest Point of Relief applies only in these relief situations:

- Abnormal course conditions: Includes Animal Holes, GUR, Immovable Obstruction, Temporary Water (Rule 16.1)
- Dangerous Animal Conditions (Rule 16.2)
- Wrong Greens (Rule 13.1f)
- No Play Zones (Rules 16.1f and 17.1e)
- Local Rules like Flower Beds (Rule 16.1)

Rule 16: Relief from Abnormal Course Conditions (*free relief*)

- Immovable Obstructions
- Dangerous Animal Conditions
- Embedded Ball (Relief is immediately behind ball not NPR, one club-length)
- Ground Under Repair
- Cart Path (must consider both sides and take nearest point of relief)

Rule 17: Penalty Areas: A ball is in a penalty area when *any* part of the ball lies on or touches the ground inside the edge of the penalty area. The player may play the ball as it lies in the penalty area or take penalty relief (*one stroke penalty*).

- Relief for Yellow Penalty Area:
 - Stroke and Distance (return to place from which you last played).
 - Back on the line from where the ball last crossed the margin of the penalty area and the flagstick going back as far as you want to go.
- Relief for Red Penalty Area:
 - Stroke and Distance (return to place from which you last played).
 - Back on the line from where the ball last crossed the margin of the penalty area and the flagstick going back as far as you want to go.
 - Lateral relief (Two club-lengths from where the ball last crossed the margin of the penalty area). Relief on the opposite side of the penalty area is available only as a Local Rule.

Rule 19: Unplayable Ball (*one stroke penalty*). Note: You **must find** your ball to take Unplayable Ball relief. Otherwise, it is a Lost Ball under Rule 18.

This rule covers the player's relief options for an unplayable ball **outside of a Penalty Area**. This allows the player to choose which option to use – with *one penalty stroke*. The player is the only person who may decide to treat her ball as unplayable by taking penalty relief.

Unplayable Ball Options in the General Area:

- Stroke and Distance (return to the place from which you last played).
- Back on the line between where the ball lies and the flagstick going back as far as you want.
- Lateral relief (Two club-lengths from where the ball last crossed the margin of the penalty area).

All of the above applies to an unplayable ball in a bunker with the limitation that if you chose the back on the line relief, the ball must stay in the bunker. However, for a *two-stroke penalty*, the player may drop a ball on the line between where the ball lay in the bunker and the flagstick and go back as far as she wants outside of the bunker.

Rule 18: Ball Lost or Out of Bounds (*one stroke penalty*)

The OB line is itself out of bounds, and your ball must be completely out of bounds to apply this rule. If any part of the ball is in bounds, the entire ball is in bounds.

Your main option for a lost ball or a ball hit out of bounds is to take stroke and distance. You have 3 minutes to search for a ball and if not found within that time, the ball is considered to be lost. If your club has adopted the Local Rule allowing an alternative to stroke and distance for balls lost or out of bounds, you will be able to use that for two strokes and is only available if you have not hit a Provisional Ball.

Out of Bounds / Lost Ball (Optional Local Rule E5) (*two stroke penalty*).

Rules 18.3: Provisional Ball – If a ball might be lost outside a penalty area or be out of bounds, to save time the player may play another ball provisionally under penalty of stroke and distance. The player must announce they are playing a Provisional Ball prior to making the stroke. The provisional ball becomes the ball in play when the player makes a stroke at it from a place closer to the hole than where the original ball was most likely to be found.

Extra Credit:

A good practice is to always mark your ball when you lift your ball in play. This is **required** when lifting ball for interference with another player's line of play or to identify your ball.

Ball accidentally moved during a ball search. No penalty, replace the ball on the original location and if unknown, estimate the location.

Ball moved accidentally on the putting green. No penalty, replace the ball on the original location. If wind or gravity moves the ball on the putting green, what you do depends on whether you had marked, lifted and replaced your ball prior to the movement. If so, replace your ball in the original location. If not, play from the new location.

Ball moved accidentally elsewhere (other than the putting green) on the course. One stroke penalty, and the ball must be replaced in the original location.

USGA Videos not shown today but available through the USGA Rules App and USGA.org:

Putting Green

Loose Impediments

Playing the course as you find it

Flagstick

Moveable Obstructions

Bunkers