

2019 Rules Modernization - Archive Materials

This pack contains key documents explaining the Rules Modernization initiative that culminated in the 2019 Edition of the Rules of Golf.

The 2023 Edition of the Rules of Golf is effective from 1 January 2023 and so some of the Rules detailed in this pack have now changed.

Please reference the 2023 Rules of Golf for details of the current Rules of Golf.

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**OVERVIEW OF THE RULES MODERNIZATION INITIATIVE:
GOALS, CHANGES AND PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 2019
– MARCH 2018 UPDATE**

The R&A and the USGA are pleased to announce the final changes to the Rules of Golf for 2019. These changes result from our Rules Modernization Initiative that began in 2012 to bring the Rules up to date to fit the needs of the game today globally. This initiative had two guiding themes:

- Far-reaching Rule changes were open for discussion, but golf's essential principles and character must be preserved.
- Revisions were to be assessed with all golfers in mind, so that the Rules would be easier to understand and apply not only for professionals and elite amateurs, but also for beginners, high-handicappers and typical club and recreational golfers at all levels of play around the world.

We believe the changes to the Rules are a major step forward in achieving the following goals and objectives:

Overall Goals. We want the Rules of Golf to:

- Be more easily understood and applied by all golfers;
- Be more consistent, simple and fair; and
- Reinforce the game's longstanding principles and character.

Specific Objectives for Revising the Substance of the Rules. We want the new Rules to:

- Use concepts, procedures and outcomes that are more intuitive and easier to learn;
- Use a consistent approach for similar situations;
- Avoid unnecessary concepts and exceptions that may create 'penalty traps' for the player; and
- Support broader objectives for the game, such as pace of play and environmental stewardship.

Specific Objectives for How the Rules are Presented. We want the new Rules materials to:

- Be written in a modern, plain style that uses more common words, shorter sentences and explanatory headings, and that ends the use of male-only references;
- Be easier to translate into other languages;
- Make greater use of visual aids such as graphics, photos and videos;
- Clarify the purposes and principles underlying each of the main Rules;



- Include a version of the Rules that is written from the player’s perspective and focuses on what the typical golfer needs to know; and
- Use technology to make it easier to search and review the Rules, both on and off the course.

The new Rules will come into effect on 1 January 2019.

I. The Rules Modernization Initiative

a. How the Rules of Golf are Revised

Ever since the first known written Rules of Golf in 1744, continuous revision and updating of the Rules has been one of the enduring traditions in golf. (See our background paper [A Brief History of Revisions to the Rules of Golf: 1744 to 2016](#)) The USGA and The R&A became the governing bodies for the Rules in the 1890s, and since 1952 we have together produced a single set of Rules for golfers everywhere. Our individual Rules of Golf Committees and our Joint Rules Committee meet several times each year to consider changes. We normally revise the Rules of Golf every four years and the Decisions on the Rules of Golf (our interpretive guidance) every two years. The 2016 editions of the Rules and Decisions are now in effect and will continue to be in effect until 31 December 2018.

These regular processes tend to focus on individual issues, but there also are times when we step back to look at the Rules from a broader perspective. Such fundamental reviews led to the first consolidated Rules code in 1899, a major Rules revision in 1934, the first unified R&A/USGA Rules code in 1952, and a full reorganization of the Rules in 1984. Each fundamental review had its own motivations and goals, but the common thread was that the time had come for a major review and revision of the Rules. This is such a time.

b. Why We are Pursuing a Major Revision Now

Revising the Rules and Decisions in a regular cycle allows us to adapt them in response to the ongoing stream of Rules questions from golfers and officials across the game. But such incremental revisions tend to make the Rules and Decisions more and more complex, especially as concepts and exceptions are added in an effort to give a “fair” answer for every situation. We have heard various concerns about the current Rules, falling into two main categories:

(1) *The Rules are Complicated and Their Purpose isn’t Always Clear.* For example:

- The Rule book contains hundreds of rules and sub-rules, along with a 500+ page Decisions book with many “hidden rules” found in 1200 separate Decisions;
- Answers are sometimes hard to find, as they may be in any number of places, such as Definitions, Notes, Exceptions, Appendices or one or more Decisions;



- The Rule book language is dense and complex, which can make it difficult to understand and creates issues for translation into many languages;
- Some Rule procedures and outcomes are not straightforward or intuitive and their philosophy and approach can seem unclear or inconsistent; and
- Other Rule outcomes are seen as unfair or reflecting a hyper-technical or “hair splitting” approach that may result in penalties for no obvious purpose.

(2) *The Rules Have Limited Relevance to Many Typical Golfers.* These concerns include:

- Many golfers and other followers of the game do not know the Rules well and do not try to learn them in detail because of their complexity;
- The Rules can be intimidating or off-putting, especially to younger golfers and those who are not familiar with the game’s traditions;
- Golf is played all over the world in a wide range of conditions that are not necessarily contemplated or realistically covered by the Rules;
- The Rules are not as supportive as they could be of efforts to address important issues facing the game, such as pace of play.

We believe that the changes represent real progress in helping to address many of these concerns.

2. Summary of the Rule Changes

The Rules modernization changes are broad in scope. We looked at the entirety of the Rules, not just the larger issues or particular topics. Many small changes are also included to make things easier to understand, reduce inconsistencies or improve outcomes. The major changes along with the rationale for each change are detailed in [Explanation for Each Major Change in the Rules of Golf for 2019](#).

The major changes are also summarized here below, written in the style of the new Player’s Edition of the Rules – that is, with the focus on ‘you’, the player.

a. When Things Happen to Your Ball in Play

(1) *Ball at Rest Accidentally Moves*

- Accidentally moving your ball while searching for it: There is **no longer a penalty**.
- Accidentally moving your ball or ball-marker when it is on the putting green: There is **no longer a penalty**.

- New standard for deciding if you caused your ball to move: You will be found to have caused your ball to move only if that is **known or virtually certain** (that is, it is at least 95% likely that you were the cause).

(2) Replacing a Moved or Lifted Ball

- New procedure when you don't know the exact spot where your ball was at rest: You must **replace the ball on its estimated original spot** (rather than drop the ball at that spot); and if the estimated spot was on, under or against growing, attached or fixed objects (such as grass), you must **replace the ball on, under or against those objects**.

(3) Ball in Motion Accidentally Deflected

- Your ball in motion accidentally hits you, your equipment, your caddie, someone attending the flagstick for you or a removed or attended flagstick: There is **no longer a penalty** (such as when your ball bounces off a bunker face and hits you).

(4) Ball is Struck More Than Once

- Accidentally hitting your ball more than once during a stroke: There is **no longer a penalty**.

b. Taking Relief

(1) Dropping a Ball in a Defined Relief Area

- New dropping procedure: You must drop the ball from knee height.
- Defined relief area: The ball needs to be dropped in and played from a **single required relief area** (whereas today, although you are required to drop a ball in one area, it can roll outside that area and the Rules may require it to be played from outside the area).
- Longest club is used to measure the relief area: You use the longest club in your bag, other than a putter, to measure the relief area.

(2) Lost Ball

- Reduced time for ball search: A ball is lost if not found in **three minutes** (rather than the current five minutes) after you begin searching for it.

(3) Embedded Ball

- Relief for embedded ball in the general area: **You may take relief if your ball is embedded anywhere (except in sand) in the general area** (which is the new term for “through the green”), except where a Local Rule restricts relief to the fairway or similar areas (this reverses the default position in the current Rules).

(4) Ball to Use in Taking Relief

- Substituting another ball: You may continue to use the original ball or another ball, whenever you take **either free relief or penalty relief** under a Rule.

c. Specific Rules for Specific Areas of the Course

(1) Putting Green

- Putting with flagstick left in the hole: There is **no longer a penalty** if you play a ball from the putting green and it hits the unattended flagstick in the hole.
- Repairing damage on the putting green: You may repair **almost all damage (including shoe damage, such as spike marks, and animal damage)** on the putting green (rather than being limited to repairing only ball-marks or old hole plugs).
- Touching your line of putt or touching the putting green in pointing out target: There is **no longer a penalty** if you or your caddie does either of these things, so long as doing so does not improve the conditions affecting your stroke.
- Replacing your ball if it moves only after you had already marked, lifted and replaced it: Any time this happens on the putting green, you replace the ball on its spot – **even if it was blown by the wind or moved for no clear reason**.
- Your caddie marks and lifts your ball on the putting green: There is **no longer a penalty** if your caddie does this without your specific authorization to do so.

(2) Penalty Areas

- Penalty areas expanded beyond water hazards: Red- and yellow-marked “penalty areas” may now cover **areas the Committee decides to mark** for this purpose (such as **deserts, jungles, or lava rock fields**), in addition to areas of water.
- Expanded use of red penalty areas: Committees are given the discretion to **mark all penalty areas as red so that lateral relief is always allowed** (but they may still mark penalty areas as yellow where they consider it appropriate).
- Elimination of opposite side relief option: You are no longer allowed to take relief from a red penalty area on the **opposite side from where the ball last entered the penalty area** (unless a Committee adopts a Local Rule allowing it).
- Removal of all special restrictions on moving or touching things in a penalty area: There is **no longer a penalty** if you touch or move loose impediments (such as leaves, stones and sticks) or touch the ground or water with your hand or your club in a penalty area.

(3) Bunkers

- Removal of special restrictions on moving loose impediments: There is **no longer a penalty** if you touch or move loose impediments in a bunker.
- Relaxed restrictions on touching the sand with your hand or club when your ball is in a bunker: You are now prohibited only from touching the sand (1) with your hand or club to **test the condition of the bunker**, (2) with your club in **the area right behind or in front of the ball** or (3) when **making a practice swing or the backswing** for your stroke.
- New unplayable ball relief option: For **two penalty strokes**, you may take **relief outside the bunker** by dropping a ball back on the line from the hole through where your ball was at rest in the bunker.

d. Equipment You are Allowed to Use

(1) Damaged Clubs

- Use of damaged clubs: **You may keep using any club that is damaged** during the round, no matter how it happens (for example, even if you damaged it in anger).
- Replacement of damaged clubs: **You may not replace a damaged club**, unless you were not responsible for causing the damage.

(2) Damaged Ball

- Substituting another ball for a cut or cracked ball: You may substitute another ball if your ball in play on a hole has become cut or cracked while playing that hole; but you are **no longer allowed to change balls solely because the ball has become “out of shape”**.

(3) Distance-Measuring Devices

- DMDs allowed: **You may use DMDs** to measure distance, except when prohibited by Local Rule (this reverses the default position in the current Rules).

e. How You Prepare for and Make a Stroke

- Expanded restriction on caddie help with alignment: Your caddie is **not allowed to stand on a line behind you** from the time you begin taking your stance until you have made your stroke.

f. Promoting Faster Pace of Play

- Encouraging you to play promptly: It is recommended that you make each stroke in **no more than 40 seconds** – and **usually more quickly** than that – once it's your turn to play.



- Playing out of turn in stroke play (“ready golf”): This has always been allowed without penalty, and now you are **affirmatively encouraged** to do so in a **safe and responsible way for convenience or to save time**.
- New alternative form of stroke play: The Rules recognize a new “Maximum Score” form of stroke play, where **your score for a hole is capped at a maximum** (such as double par or triple bogey) set by the Committee, so that you can pick up and move to the next hole when your score will be at or above the maximum.
- Other changes to help pace of play: Reduced time to search for a ball, allowing committees to designate “penalty areas” (currently called water hazards) for areas that don’t contain water and to mark all penalty areas as red (so that lateral relief is always allowed) if they choose to do so, the simplified dropping procedure, and the option to leave the flagstick in the hole when putting.

g. Insisting on High Standards of Conduct and Trusting Player Integrity

- Playing in the spirit of the game: New provisions are added to reinforce the **high standards of conduct** expected from all players on the course and the Committee’s discretion to disqualify players for **serious misconduct**.
- Code of player conduct: Committees are given authority to adopt their own code of player conduct and to set **penalties for the breach of standards in that code**.
- Elimination of need to announce intent to lift ball: When you have good reason to lift your ball to identify it, to see if it is cut or cracked or to see if you are entitled to relief (such as to see if the ball is embedded), you are **no longer required first to announce** to another player or your marker that you intend to do so or to give that person an opportunity to observe the process.
- Reasonable judgment standard: When you need to **estimate or measure** a spot, point, line, area or other location under a Rule, **your reasonable judgment will not be second-guessed** based on later evidence (such as video review) **if you did all that could reasonably be expected under the circumstances** to estimate or measure accurately.

3. Limitations in Revising the Rules

Taken together, these and the other changes will help achieve our Rules Modernization goals and objectives by:

- Eliminating many restrictions (and thus eliminating many penalties) that have been perceived as unfair or unnecessary and/or that have required close and controversial judgments to be made;



- Making various procedures easier to use, such as how to take relief and what to do when a club is damaged during play;
- Using the Rules affirmatively to help address the pressing issue of pace of play; and
- Reinforcing the game’s traditional emphasis on both expecting high standards of conduct from all players and trusting them to act honestly and reasonably.

But we know that there are limits in trying to achieve all of our goals and objectives, especially at the same time. This is for two reasons. First, golf is an inherently complicated sport. It is played outdoors in all types of weather, on non-standardized fields of play found in almost every type of landscape and human environment on the planet, and with people, animals, vehicles and a great many other objects regularly in the way. The game’s bedrock principles are simple – you are to play a ball from the tee until it ends up in the hole, and to play the ball as it lies and the course as you find it. But the number and range of things that can happen to a golf ball and a golfer during play are almost infinite. The result is a need for many reasonable exceptions to these principles and for procedures telling the player what can or must be done in a wide range of situations that inevitably arise. This leads to longer and more detailed Rules, as players understandably expect answers to all such situations.

Second, there is often a tension between pursuing simplicity (which may lead towards having absolute rules that are easy to apply but may produce outcomes that sometimes seem wrong or unfair) versus trying to achieve “fair” and “right” results (which may lead towards having exceptions and more complicated doctrines so that slightly different factual scenarios can have different outcomes). Some changes (such as elimination of certain prohibitions and penalties) may help achieve both objectives, but other changes necessarily go in one direction or the other. Our overriding goals in balancing these considerations were to do what seems best from the standpoint of all golfers and to preserve the fundamental challenge and essence of the game.

4. Our New Approach to Writing and Presenting the Rules

We are also revising how the Rules are written and presented. This is described separately in [A Revised Approach to Writing and Presenting the Rules of Golf for 2019](#). To summarize:

a. New Writing Style and Format

In preparing the new Rules:

- We have used a plain writing style;
- We have tried to help golfers understand the Rules better by including a statement of each Rule’s purpose and adding examples to explain what key concepts mean and why they are in the Rules;



- We will make greater use of visual tools to explain key concepts and procedures; and
- We will further embrace technology by additional use of links, videos and search capabilities to give fast and efficient access to answers under the Rules.

b. Reorganizing the Rule Book

The revised Rule book has been changed in many respects, such as:

- The Rule book focuses on what the player needs to know, with Committee-related provisions being moved to a separate “Committee Procedures” document that will form part of “The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf”;
- The number of Rules has been reduced from 34 to 24, with the basic Rules for individual match play and individual stroke play covered in Rules 1-20;
- To address the problem of “hidden rules” that are found only in the Decisions book, we have moved the contents of more than 300 Decisions into the body of the new Rules. This will allow the reader to look for all Rule answers in a single document; and
- The Decisions book will be replaced with “The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf” that will include the following:
 - Interpretations: Statements of interpretive guidance rather than question and answer “decisions” on individual Rules issues being used as the sole means of giving guidance on applying the Rules.
 - Committee Procedures: This will guide the Committee in how to organize a competition and set up a course in a way that is consistent with the Rules of Golf. It will also include a full list of available Model Local Rules.
 - The Modified Rules of Golf for Players with Disabilities.

c. The Player’s Edition

There will be a shorter “Player’s Edition” of the Rules for use by golfers. A sample Rule in the style of the Player’s Edition is available to view – see [Draft Player’s Edition Rule 16 for 2019](#). It is written from the perspective of “you” the golfer. It will be an actual Rule book (not merely a summary) covering the most commonly used Rules while also telling you where to find any other answers in the full Rules of Golf publication when needed. This will be widely circulated to golfers worldwide, as is intended to be the version of the Rules that golfers use to find answers to the questions that arise on the course.



5. Our Process for Developing the New Rules

In 2012, a working group of USGA and R&A Rules staff, committee members, professional tour officials, and other Rules experts was set up to examine both the substance of the Rules and how they are written. (This review did not encompass specifications for clubs and balls, which are handled in our separate Equipment Standards process.) The final changes are the culmination of six years of work and have been approved by both of our Rules of Golf Committees and our respective boards.

As work progressed on this initiative, we talked with many different people and organizations to alert them and to get their preliminary reactions, including:

- Leaders and rules officials from organizations with key roles in professional or amateur golf, such as the PGA Tour, European Tour, LPGA, Ladies' European Tour, PGA of America, Augusta National Golf Club, and national, regional and state golf associations, and
- Golfers at all levels of the game (both individually and in focus groups), including professionals and elite amateurs, long-time regular golfers and beginners.

On 1 March 2017, details of the proposed changes, including a full draft of the proposed Rules of Golf were made public. This was the first time that the golfing public had been given the opportunity to provide views on proposed changes to the Rules of Golf, and they were encouraged to do so via a feedback survey.

Since 1 March 2017, we have listened to the feedback received, while refining the proposals and continuing to talk with leaders and rules officials from golfing organizations worldwide.

These discussions assisted us in finalizing the Rules of Golf for 2019.

6. Implementation of the New Rules in 2019

The new Rules will go into effect on 1 January 2019. The anticipated process and schedule between now and then is as follows:

- Publish the Rules of Golf, complete and publish the Player's Edition, The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf, The Modified Rules of Golf for Players with Disabilities and other materials;
- Facilitate the translation of these materials;
- Finish work on a new Rules app and other means of electronic delivery; and
- Educate golfers and officials at all levels of the game.
- Golfers will continue to play by the current Rules until the new Rules take effect on 1 January 2019 when all the necessary supporting materials will be available.



Rules Modernization FAQs – March 2018 Update

Background Questions

1. What was the motivation to modernize the Rules of Golf?

The Rules of Golf are normally revised in a regular four-year cycle that allows us to adapt them in response to the ongoing stream of Rules questions from golfers and officials across the game. The current review began in 2012 because we recognized that these incremental revisions over the years have tended to make the Rules more and more complex, especially as concepts and exceptions are added in an effort to give a “fair” answer for every situation.

This fundamental review is intended to bring the Rules up to date to make them more consistent, easy to understand and apply, and fair. See also [Overview of the Rules Modernization Initiative: Goals, Changes and Process for Implementation in 2019](#).

2. How did the USGA and The R&A decide which Rules to consider as part of the initiative?

In carrying out this review, we looked at every Rule. A guiding theme for the initiative was that even far-reaching rules changes should be open for discussion, but golf’s essential principles and character must be preserved.

3. Was the primary consideration to simplify the Rules of Golf?

No. The main goal of the initiative is to achieve greater consistency and fairness and, overall, by making them easier to understand and apply.

4. When did this modernization initiative begin and who has been involved?

Since 2012, a working group of USGA and R&A Rules staff, committee members, professional tour officials and other rules experts has been examining both the substance of the Rules and how they are written. In 2017, we sought feedback from golfers and golf organizations around the world about the proposed Rule changes. The final changes have now been approved by both organizations’ Rules of Golf Committees and respective boards and will go into effect on January 1, 2019.

5. Do the changes apply to all levels of the game around the world?

Yes. We remain committed to the principle that a single set of Rules for all golfers, irrespective of ability, is one of golf’s enduring strengths.

6. Are there previous times when a full review of the Rules of Golf has led to a broad set of rules changes being made at a single time?

The regular Rules process tends to focus on discrete issues, but there have also been times when the Rules have been reviewed and revised from a broader perspective. Such fundamental reviews led to the first consolidated Rules code in 1899, a major Rules revision in 1934, the first unified R&A/USGA Rules code in 1952 and a full reorganization of the Rules in 1984. Each fundamental review had its own motivations and goals, but the common thread was that the time had come for a major review and revision of the Rules. See also [A Brief History of Revisions to the Rules of Golf: 1744 to 2016](#).

Timeline Questions

7. When will the new Rules take effect?

The new Rules of Golf will take effect on January 1, 2019.

8. Will any of the changes be available to use through an optional Local Rule before the new set of Rules takes effect?

In general, no. Unless already authorized, none of the new Rules will be permitted for use by a Local Rule before the new Rules take effect on January 1, 2019. The current Rules of Golf will continue to apply in their entirety until the new Rules take effect in 2019.

9. Is it okay for clubs or committees to begin using the new Rules of Golf in 2018?

No, the current set of Rules should be used. We will encourage all groups and individuals to learn about the new Rules towards the end of this year, but continue playing by the current Rules until the new Rules take effect on January 1, 2019.

10. Am I allowed to submit a score for handicap purposes which I made while trying out the new Rules?

No. An important characteristic of the handicap systems used around the world is that submitted scores must have been played under the same set of Rules so that there is a common basis for calculating a player's handicap that measures his or her potential ability. Scores from rounds played using any of the changes before January 1, 2019 will not be acceptable for handicap purposes.

Feedback and Evaluation Period

11. How was feedback collected and considered before the Rules were finalized?

Between March and August of 2017, the USGA and The R&A sought and received input from the golf community on the proposed changes in a variety of ways. Collectively, we received comments from over 30,000 individuals through the joint online survey, social media platforms, in-person conversations and direct correspondence with USGA and R&A staff. These comments were analyzed and considered by the respective Rules of Golf committees, and ultimately played a role in the subsequent changes to the proposed Rules.

12. What changes have been made to the final 2019 Rules since the proposed Rules were released in March 2017?

Several changes were made to the new Rules following their initial release and as a result of the review, including:

Dropping procedure: When taking relief (from an abnormal course condition or penalty area, for example), players will now drop from knee height. This will ensure consistency and simplicity in the dropping process while also preserving the randomness of the drop. (*Key change: the proposed Rules released in 2017 suggested dropping from any height.*)

Measuring in taking relief: The player's relief area will be measured by using the longest club in their bag (other than a putter) to measure one club-length or two club-lengths, depending on the situation, making for a consistent process for players to establish their relief area. (*Key change: the proposed Rules released in 2017 suggested a 20-inch or 80-inch standard measurement.*)

Removing the penalty for a double hit: The penalty stroke for accidentally striking the ball more than once in the course of a stroke has been removed. Players will simply count the one stroke they made to strike the ball. (*Key change: the proposed Rules released in 2017 included the existing one-stroke penalty.*)

Balls Lost or Out of Bounds – Alternative to Stroke and Distance: A new Local Rule will now be available from January 2019, permitting committees to allow players the option to drop the ball in the vicinity of where the ball is lost or out of bounds (including the nearest fairway area), under a two-stroke penalty. The addition was made to further encourage pace of play. (*Key change: this is a new addition to support pace of play.*)

Content Questions

13. What are examples of the major changes included in the new Rules?

It's important for golfers to know that the entire set of Rules have been rewritten, essentially decreasing the number of Rules from 34 to 24. We have identified approximately thirty "major" changes that many golfers would know and apply. We have created a series of educational videos, infographics and other learning tools to help golfers understand them more fully.

14. Do you expect that the new Rules will help with pace of play?

Yes. We certainly considered pace of play and hope it will be positively impacted for all golfers through some of the changes in the 2019 Rules. One of the changes includes a recommended maximum time (40 seconds) to play each stroke, noting that players should usually play more quickly than that. There is also a strong encouragement to play "ready golf" in stroke play when this can be done in a safe and responsible manner. Other changes that will also positively impact pace of play include: the reduced time to search for a ball, allowing committees to designate "penalty areas" (currently called water hazards) for areas that don't contain water and to mark all penalty areas as red (so that lateral relief is always allowed) if they choose to do so, the simplified dropping procedure, and the option to leave the flagstick in the hole when putting.

15. The new Rules still seem long – could you have made them shorter and simpler?

The majority of players are expected to use the Player's Edition of the Rules of Golf as their main Rules resource both on and off the golf course. This will be a streamlined version that should be easier to use and apply, focusing only on the Rules most relevant to "you", the individual player.

The Rules of Golf will continue to be an important tool as it will contain the Rules of Golf in their full form and this is expected to be the version that will mainly be used by Committees and Referees. The Rules of Golf will therefore continue to cover all of the many types of situations that can arise in what is a game with inherent complexities, given it is an outdoor game played on non-standardized playing fields throughout the world.

With that in mind, our review of The Rules of Golf did not focus on the length of the book, but rather looked to present the Rules so that they are complete while also using a simpler writing style. In doing this, many "hidden Rules" currently contained in the Decisions book have been included directly in the Rule book for ease of access and understanding.

Rules Presentation Questions

16. How has the presentation of the new Rules changed from the current Rules?

The new Rules have been written using a modern, plain style that uses common words, shorter sentences, bulleted lists and explanatory headings. Each new Rule will include a "purpose statement" to help explain key concepts and the new Rules will also use visual tools, such as illustrations.



In addition, the new Rules have been written using a version of International English that is used by many international organizations including the United Nations and NATO. This will allow a common language to be used across all English Rules of Golf publications going forward.

17. Will technology be used to help readers access the new Rules?

We will continue to embrace technology in presenting the new Rules on various digital platforms. Even greater use of links, videos and search capabilities will give fast and efficient access to Rules answers and other explanatory material, on and off the course. We plan to take advantage of technological advances when providing digital resources for the implementation of the new Rules.

18. What are the primary Rules publications available for reference?

There will be three primary Rules publications available this September for players and administrators, available in both print and digital form.

The Player's Edition of the Rules of Golf: An abridged, user-friendly set of the Rules with shorter sentences, commonly used phrases, and illustrations. Written in "second person," The Player's Edition is intended to be the primary publication for players. Importantly, this will be an actual Rule book, not merely a summary or a "Quick Guide", and so it will give the same answer that is found in the full edition of the Rules of Golf. Less frequently occurring situations will not be included, but the Player's Edition will advise the player where to find those answers in the full Rule book.

The Rules of Golf: The full edition of the Rules is written in the third person and will include illustrations in the final printed and digital versions. The Rules of Golf is intended to be the primary publication for officials.

The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf: This "guidebook" replaces the Decisions book, and will contain information to support committees and officials. It includes interpretations on the Rules, Committee procedures (available model local rules and information on establishing the terms of the competition), and the Modified Rules of Golf for Players with Disabilities. It is a "long-form" resource document intended as a supplementary publication. It will be available as a pdf around September 2018 and will be available in print before the end of 2018.

19. When will the three Rules publications be available for reference?

The Player's Edition to the Rules of Golf: Print and digital publications will be available beginning mid-September 2018.

The Rules of Golf: A pdf version is available now and the print and digital publications will be available beginning mid-September 2018.

The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf: Pdf and digital versions will be available from mid-September 2018 and the print publication will be available beginning November 2018.

Translated versions of the Rules publications: For details on when foreign language versions will be available, please contact the relevant national golf union. The Rules of Golf is currently translated into more than 30 languages.

20. Where do I find the rules and procedures that guide Committees in charge of a competition or a course?

As part of the reorganization of the new Rules, information that is relevant only to Committees who are in charge of a competition or a golf course (especially Rule 33 of the current Rules) has been removed from the Rules of Golf and will instead be included in a separate section of the Official Guide entitled “Committee Procedures.” That section will cover all matters related to running a competition and adopting Local Rules.

21. Is there a new Decisions book for 2018?

No. The current edition of the *Decisions on the Rules of Golf*, 2016-2017 is in effect until the new Rules of Golf take effect in 2019.

Other Related Questions

22. Is there anything that Committees need to be aware of now to start preparing for the 2019 changes?

Committees should be aware that there are a number of changes that will impact their Local Rules. The Committee Procedures section of the Official Guide to the Rules of Golf will detail these changes.

We recommend that Committees do not reprint scorecards or finalize their Terms of Competition (new term for Conditions of Competition) until the Committee Procedures for 2019 are available as that publication will include new recommended wording for Local Rules, and we wish to avoid confusion between the existing and 2019 Rules.

23. Does this initiative encompass the equipment Rules for clubs and balls?

Modernizing the Rules is about the playing Rules, and it does not address the Rules of equipment standards. Accordingly, the absence of any changes or discussion on those topics should not be viewed as indicating that any decisions have been reached about whether to make any future changes to the Equipment Rules; these rules are the subject of a separate, ongoing review.

24. Will the new Rules impact the clubs or balls that I currently use?

No. While the playing Rules require that the equipment a player uses must conform to the Equipment Rules, this review will have no effect on the clubs and balls you currently use.

25. How will the new Rules impact course ratings and handicaps?

The USGA Course Rating System is primarily an evaluation of the difficulty of a course based on yardage, effective playing length corrections, obstacles and other factors to the extent they affect expected scores, and, therefore, will not be drastically impacted by these Rules changes. With that said, we will communicate any material changes to these systems later in the year before the new Rules take effect.

26. Are the Modifications to the Rules of Golf for Players with Disabilities also being reviewed as part of this initiative?

Yes. A parallel review of the Modifications is ongoing. The Modifications will be updated to reflect the revised style of the new Rules of Golf for 2019 (common language, revised terms, organization, etc.), and other changes are also being considered. This review will be completed on the same timeline, with the revisions taking effect on January 1, 2019.

Education Questions

27. When will you begin educating golfers on the revised Rules?

The R&A will commence its Rules education programme from September 2018. Due to the demand for seminars, The R&A looks to its affiliated National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to assist in delivering its Level 1 and Level 2 Rules Seminars. Anyone interested in joining a Seminar should contact their NGB in the first instance. In addition to the Rules Seminars, information on the new Rules will be available online at www.randa.org and www.rules.golf.

28. What resources will The R&A make available to learn the Rules?

Working with our affiliated national associations around the world, we will have many educational opportunities and resources available for golfers, administrators and referees at all levels to learn and better understand the new Rules of Golf for 2019.

From September 2018, the following will be available:

- The Player's Guide publication
- The Rules of Golf publication
- A variety of digital products that provide all golfers with the opportunity to learn at their own pace and schedule, and
- Practical seminars run by national associations in conjunction with The R&A, as part of The R&A's tiered education process.

Certain Topics Not Addressed in the New Rules of Golf for 2019 – March 2018 Update

Introduction

The Rules Modernization Initiative has been comprehensive in scope. Every one of the game's 34 Rules has been reviewed, including a careful assessment of the historical evolution and current effectiveness of each Rule. In doing so, we have been guided by a central theme for this fundamental review: even far-reaching Rule changes should be open for discussion, but golf's essential principles and character must be preserved.

The new Rules reflect a large number of changes, many of which came from suggestions that have been voiced by people in the golf community over the years. However, it is also necessarily the case that there are a significant number of suggestions for change that we have noted, but decided not to include in the new Rules. We categorize and list below some of these ideas that we have not adopted.

1. Preserving the Essential Character of Golf

- Dimensions of the hole – The size of the hole in the putting green is retained at 4 ¼ inches in diameter. Golf is a combination of many skills, with the touch and feel of putting being in marked contrast to the strength, coordination and timing required for full shots. An increase in the dimensions of the hole (as a few people have suggested) would alter that balance and we have found no good reason to do so.
- Number of clubs a player may carry in a round – While the 14 club limit is essentially an arbitrary limit (established in the late 1930's), it has worked well and we can see no compelling reason to decrease or increase the limit.
- Number of holes in a round – We recognize the concern that many have about the amount of time it takes to play a round and the time constraints faced by many golfers. The current Rules provide the appropriate flexibility by allowing a round to be either 18 holes (the maximum allowed) or any fewer number of holes. While 18 hole rounds continue to be recognized as a traditional and common length of round, shorter rounds (for example, 9 hole rounds) are allowed and encouraged as well. The definition of "round" in the new Rules will more clearly recognize that a round is "18 or fewer holes played in the order set by the Committee".
- Match play and stroke play - An early consideration of the project was whether it was right to preserve these two basic forms of playing the game. We feel that the game is stronger and more fun by allowing players to choose to compete in either match play or stroke play (and to do so either as an individual or with a partner). Match play and stroke play involve fundamentally different tactics and strategy and enable golf to be played competitively and enjoyed in different but equally valid ways.

2. Preserving the Fundamental Challenge of the Game

- Play the ball as it lies – In its simplest form, golf is about playing the ball from tee to green by hitting it with a golf club, and not otherwise touching the ball. A fundamental challenge of the sport is to deal with whatever position your ball comes to rest in – whether good or bad. While there are some necessary exceptions (such as obstructions and other abnormal course conditions), the essential nature of golf means these must remain exceptions rather than the norm. Therefore, the new Rules do not provide relief without penalty from situations that some

golfers complain about, such as when their ball comes to rest in a divot hole on a fairway or in footprints in a poorly raked bunker. In addition to being contrary to the fundamental principle of playing the ball as it lies, providing free relief in such circumstances would make the Rules harder to apply (for example, what is the difference between an irregularity of surface and an old divot hole?) and could slow down play when there are difficult questions about what is or isn't a divot hole.

- Prohibitions against improving the “conditions affecting the stroke” - In conjunction with “play the ball as it lies,” the fundamental principle of “play the course as you find it” helps reinforce that players need to accept the outcome of their previous stroke (good or bad) and play the ball from where it comes to rest. The core restrictions that support this principle (namely, prohibiting improvements to the lie of the ball, the area of stance or swing and the line of play) are maintained in the new Rules.
- Restrictions on touching sand in a bunker – Although the new Rules significantly relax the current prohibitions on what a player can do in the bunker, we have retained certain restrictions (namely, no deliberately touching the sand with hand or club to test the condition of the bunker and no touching of the sand with a club in the area right in front of or behind the ball or in making a practice swing or the backswing for the stroke). These prohibitions have been maintained to preserve the essential challenge of playing a shot from the sand in a bunker.
- No general exemption from penalty for a player accidentally causing the ball to move – While the new Rules eliminate the penalty for accidentally moving a ball during search or when it is on the putting green, the penalty for accidentally moving a ball that lies off the putting green has been retained. There is a good reason for the distinction: we still want players to be careful around their ball, which in turn helps to support the principles of playing the ball as it lies and the course as you find it. If players were free to remove all loose impediments under or right next to a ball without fear of penalty for moving the ball and could be careless around the ball without any sanction, there would be too many situations where the ball would end up being replaced in and played from a lie that was not exactly the same as the original lie. Such a concern does not apply on the putting green where the lie is known and the ball can be replaced on its estimated spot.
- Dropping procedure retained but simplified – There was strong consensus that the current dropping procedures are too complicated and should be modified. To that end, we considered many alternatives, including various possible procedures for dropping the ball and the alternative of allowing the ball to be placed rather than dropped. Our conclusion was that the procedure being proposed is a better solution than allowing the ball to be placed in all circumstances, as it achieves the goal of simplifying and speeding up how relief is taken without completely losing the element of randomness associated with dropping the ball.

3. Focus on the Playing Rules (rather than the Equipment Rules)

- Specifications or performance limits for clubs and balls – The Rules Modernization Initiative is about the playing Rules, and it does not address the specifications or performance of clubs and balls. Accordingly, the absence of any changes in relation to these topics should not be viewed as indicating that any decisions have been reached about whether to make any future changes

to the Equipment Rules; these rules are vitally important for the future of the sport, but are the subject of a separate, ongoing review.

4. Match Play and Stroke Play are Different Forms of the Game

- Differences in penalties and procedures in match play and stroke play – Having decided to retain match play and stroke play, we considered whether these two basic forms of playing the game could have entirely the same penalties. In terms of the general penalty, it was quickly noted that there is an inherent difference in the two forms of play – in match play the general penalty is loss of hole (which is quick and easy to apply), whereas in stroke play it is two penalty strokes (as there can be no concept of loss of hole in stroke play). In addition, we reviewed all other penalties to determine if they could be identical. After due consideration, it was determined that it remains appropriate for a small number of penalties and procedures to be different (for example, the correction procedure for playing outside the teeing ground).
- Differences in the Rules on practising on the course before a round – We recognize that the players in a match have the same opportunities to practise, whereas players in stroke play will have different opportunities depending on their starting times. Therefore, the Rules on whether a player may practise on the competition course before a round will continue to be different. As indicated in new Rule 5.2, however, we are relaxing the restrictions on practising after a round on the day of a stroke play competition, which have been problematic for multiple round events.

5. Simplicity, Clarity and Enforceability are Important Considerations because of Self-Regulation

- Simplicity – Any new Rule needs to be as simple as possible. This is not the single determining factor, but it is an important consideration. For example, it was suggested that we should allow “regression” under the unplayable ball Rule (that is allowing stroke-and-distance relief at the spot where any previous stroke had been made on the hole in question, rather than only the spot of the last stroke). We believe that the occasions where this might have been helpful will be rare and the suggested solution is too complicated.
- Clarity – Any new Rule needs to be as clear as possible. As with simplicity, this is not the single determining factor, but it is another important consideration. For example, it was suggested that we should remove the requirement to announce the playing of a provisional ball, deeming this to be the player’s intention, unless he or she declared otherwise. However, as players are not always required to declare what they are doing, including when putting a ball into play under stroke-and-distance, this suggestion was not supported because it would have created too much uncertainty in terms of which ball is “in play”.
- Enforceability – Any new Rule needs to be enforceable. For example, while improving pace of play is a fundamental objective of this initiative, it is not considered feasible to impose specific limits on a player’s actions in preparing for a stroke (such as a limit on practice swings, or a limit on the amount of putting green repair). Hence, the new Rule recommends (rather than requires) 40 seconds as the maximum time in which a stroke should be made (while also emphasizing that it usually should be possible to make a stroke more quickly than that). This also gives Committees the flexibility to set their own time limits and other requirements in a Pace of Play Policy that is suited to their particular competitions.



Conclusion

As noted, one of the guiding themes throughout our review has been that, in considering any possible change in the Rules, golf's essential principles and character must be preserved. We believe that the new Rules strike the right balance – enhancing golf's important traditions, while updating the Rules of the sport. Under the new Rules, the game will still look and feel entirely like golf.

A REVISED APPROACH TO WRITING AND PRESENTING THE RULES OF GOLF FOR 2019 – MARCH 2018 UPDATE

In addition to proposing many substantive Rule changes, the Rules Modernization Initiative focused on changing how the Rules are written and presented. This resulted in a new writing style and format, a reorganization of the Rules and the introduction of a “Player’s Edition” of the Rules.

A. New Writing Style and Format

- **A Simpler Writing Style:** There is a deliberate move away from the legalistic drafting style used in previous editions of the Rules. The new writing style uses more commonly used and spoken words. Where possible, shorter sentences, bulleted lists and additional white space are used. The new style also includes more explanatory headings and easier to read formatting. The Rules of Golf are translated into over 30 languages, and we feel that the simpler, more consistent writing style will make the Rules easier to translate for those undertaking this important task. While our goal has been to make the language less complex, we realize that the Rules need to be clear and accurate to ensure consistency of application, and this does create some limitations on how simple the wording in the book can be.
- **Referring to the Player as “He or She”:** In the current edition of the Rules, the player is referred to as “he” and there is a statement at the front of the book indicating that this should be understood to include both males and females. The new Rules for 2019 are written to refer to “he or she” throughout.
- **Using Examples to Explain What the Rules Mean and How They Work:** We are adding examples to many of the Rules to help show what is meant by the words. One such instance is in Rule 16.3a where we state:

“A ball is not *embedded* if it is below the level of the ground as a result of anything other than the player’s previous *stroke*, such as when:

- The ball is pushed into the ground by someone stepping on it,
- The ball is driven straight into the ground without becoming airborne, or
- The ball was *dropped* in taking relief under a Rule.”

While providing this type of explanatory text increases the length of the Rules, it makes them easier to read and understand, which is the principal aim.

- Using Visual Tools to Explain Key Concepts and Procedures: Even with a simpler style of writing and the use of examples, some key concepts and procedures in the Rules are not easily explained in words. In recognition of this, the new format will include diagrams and illustrations to deal with common situations that lend themselves to visual explanations, such as identifying the nearest point of complete relief and taking relief for an unplayable ball.

Rule 16

Rule 16

FIGURE 16.1: RELIEF WITH PENALTY FROM ABNORMAL COURSE CONDITION IN BUNKER

When there is interference from an abnormal course condition in a bunker, relief may be taken outside the bunker for one penalty stroke. A reference point on the reference line is chosen, with no limit to how far back on the line the reference point may be. A ball must be dropped in and played from the relief area, which is within one club-length of and not nearer the hole than the reference point.

FIGURE 16.1: RELIEF FROM ABNORMAL COURSE CONDITION ON PUTTING GREEN

When a ball is on the putting green and there is interference by an abnormal course condition (ACC), relief without penalty may be taken by placing a ball on the spot of the nearest point of complete relief. That point must be either on the putting green or in the general area. Whether the ball is placed on the putting green or in the general area, relief must also be taken for interference from the line of play.

16.1d Relief for Ball on Putting Green

If a player's ball is on the *putting green* and there is interference by an *abnormal course condition* on the *course*, the player may take free relief by placing the original ball or another ball on the spot of the *nearest point of complete relief*, using the procedures for *replacing* a ball under Rule 14.2b(2) and 14.2e.

- The *nearest point of complete relief* must be either on the *putting green* or in the *general area*.
- If there is no such *nearest point of complete relief*, the player may still take this free relief by using the *point of maximum available relief* as the reference point, which must be either on the *putting green* or in the *general area*.

16.1e Relief for Ball Not Found but in or on Abnormal Course Condition

If a player's ball has not been found and it is *known or virtually certain* that the ball came to rest in or on an *abnormal course condition* on the *course*, the player may use this relief option instead of taking *stroke-and-distance* relief:

- The player may take relief under Rules 16.1b, c or d, using the estimated point where the ball last crossed the edge of the *abnormal course condition* on the *course* as the spot of the ball for purposes of finding the *nearest point of complete relief*.

- Statement of Purpose of Each Rule: A statement of purpose will be included to give guidance on the key concepts in each particular Rule. This should help golfers understand the background of the Rule they are reviewing. For example, Rule 12 in the Rules of Golf concerning bunkers has the following statement describing a bunker and reasoning for the special provisions that apply when a ball lies in a bunker:

***Purpose:** Rule 12 is a specific Rule for bunkers, which are specially prepared areas intended to test the player's ability to play a ball from the sand. To make sure the player confronts this challenge, there are some restrictions on touching the sand before the stroke is made and on where relief may be taken for a ball in a bunker.*

- Embracing Technology: The number of golfers and referees accessing the Rules of Golf on smart phones, tablets and computers is increasing all the time. We are embracing technology and will present the new Rules on various digital platforms, compatible with various electronic devices. Even greater use of links, videos and search capabilities will give fast and efficient access to Rules answers and other explanatory material, on and off the course. We also aim to take advantage of technological advances when providing digital resources for the implementation of the new Rules.
- Written Using International English: The new Rules have been written using a version of International English known that is used by many international organizations including the United Nations and NATO. This will allow the same spelling to be used across all English Rules of Golf publications going forward.

B. Reorganizing the Rule Book

- Focus on What the Player Needs to Know: The new Rule book will focus on what the typical player needs to know. Information that is only relevant to Committees who organize competitions or oversee the golf course is moved to a separate “Committee Procedures” document that will form part of “The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf”. The Committee Procedures will cover all matters about running a competition (such as marking the course and giving out scorecards) and adopting Local Rules and their recommended wording. The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf will be available later in 2018.
- Number of Rules Reduced from 34 to 24: This has been achieved by restructuring the Rules, combining certain relief procedures and removing the Committee specific information. The basic Rules for individual match play and individual stroke play are covered in Rules 1-20. Other forms of play (including those involving play with a partner) are covered in Rules 21 to 24.
- Moving Key Decisions into the Rules: It has been a valid criticism that there are some “hidden Rules” that are found only in the Decisions book. An example would be the current Decisions dealing with restoring conditions that are altered after a player’s ball has come to rest (such as the specific case when another player’s stroke from a bunker deposits sand on the player’s ball lying just off the putting green);

nothing in the current Rules themselves alerts the player to the fact that he or she is entitled to the relief of restoring the situation back to the way it was. To address this concern, we are moving the contents of more than 300 key Decisions into the body of the Rules. This approach makes the Rule book itself longer, but reducing the word count in the book is much less important than allowing the reader to find all Rule answers in a single document.

- The Official Guide to the Rules of Golf: The traditional “question and answer” Decisions book will be replaced with the Official Guide to the Rules of Golf. This publication will give interpretations on each Rule where needed rather than using “Decisions” as the sole method of providing interpretations of the Rules. The Official Guide will be available later in 2018.

C. The Player’s Edition

- A Shorter Edition of the Rules: A major change in our approach to presenting the Rules is issuing a shorter “Player’s Edition” of the Rules. This will be widely circulated to golfers worldwide, as it is intended to be the version of the Rules that golfers should use to find answers to questions that arise on the course. We hope that the Player’s Edition will encourage many more golfers to read and understand the Rules and will make it easier to find answers when situations arise on the course.
- Written in the Second Person: The Player’s Edition will be written in the second person with the focus on “you” the golfer. This golfer-focused style is another key step in making the Rules more accessible. An example of this golfer-focused style is as follows:

a. When Lifted or Moved Ball Must Be Replaced

If you lift your ball at rest or cause it to *move*, your ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), **except**:

- When you lift your ball to take relief under a Rule or to *replace* your ball on a different spot, or
- When your ball *moves* only after you have started the *stroke* or the backswing for a *stroke* and then go on to make the *stroke*.



- It is a Rule book: The Player's Edition will be an actual Rule book, not merely a summary or a "Quick Guide". It will look like the full Rules of Golf publication and, although the text of the Player's Edition will be condensed, it will give the reader, the same answer that is found in the full Rules of Golf. The Player's Edition will include the Rules that describe the essential characteristics of the game of golf – for example, the fundamentals of the game, such as playing by the Rules, the different parts of the course and the equipment to be used. It also covers the most commonly used Rules. For the less frequently occurring situations that are not included, the Player's Edition will tell the golfer where to find those answers in the full Rules of Golf.

Explanation for Each Major Change in the New Rules of Golf for 2019

Each of these papers explains one or more of the major changes that are described in “Summary Chart: *The Major Changes in the New Rules of Golf for 2019.*” Each individual paper describes:

- The current Rule,
- The Rule change and
- The reasons for the change.

The following papers are included:

#	Topic	#	Topic
1	Ball Accidentally Struck More than Once	17	Procedure for Dropping a Ball in Playing it from a Relief Area
2	Ball in Motion Accidentally Deflected	18	Reasonable Judgment in Estimating and Measuring
3	Ball Moved During Search	19	Relief for an Embedded Ball
4	Ball Played from the Putting Green Hits Unattended Flagstick in the Hole	20	Repairing Damage on the Putting Green
5	Caddie Lifting Ball on the Putting Green	21	Replacing a Ball When the Original Spot Is Not Known
6	Caddie Standing Behind a Player to Help Line the Player Up	22	Standard for Deciding Why a Ball Moved
7	Code of Player Conduct	23	Substitution of a Ball Damaged During Play of a Hole
8	Concept of Penalty Areas to Supersede Water Hazards	24	Substitution of a Ball Always Allowed When Taking Relief
9	Elimination of Opposite Side Relief for Red Penalty Areas	25	Time for Search Before a Ball is Lost
10	Elimination of the Requirement to Announce the Player’s Intent to Lift a Ball	26	Touching the Line of Play on a Putting Green
11	Encouraging Prompt Pace of Play	27	Touching or Moving Loose Impediments or Ground in a Penalty Area
12	Expected Standards of Player Conduct	28	Unplayable Ball in a Bunker
13	Fixed Distances to be Used for Measuring	29	Use and Replacement of Clubs Damaged During a Round
14	“Maximum Score” Form of Stroke Play	30	Use of a Distance-Measuring Device
15	Moving or Touching Loose Impediments or Touching Sand in a Bunker	31	When to Replace a Ball that Moves on the Putting Green
16	No Penalty for Moving a Ball on the Putting Green		

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

1. Ball Accidentally Struck Multiple Times During Stroke

Current Rule: If a player accidentally strikes his or her ball two or more times when making a single stroke:

- The player gets a one-stroke penalty in addition to the stroke that was made, regardless of the number of times the ball is struck.
- The ball is played as it lies.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 10.1a, if the player's club accidentally hits the ball more than once during a single stroke:

- There will be no penalty and the ball will be played as it lies.
- If the player deliberately strikes the ball more than once while it is in motion, in addition to counting the stroke, he or she will also get the general penalty under Rule 11.3 for deliberately deflecting a ball in motion.

Reasons for Change:

- Where a double hit occurs as part of a single stroke and was not the intention of the player, it was felt unfair and unnecessary for the player to be penalized.
- Just as there is no penalty if a player's ball accidentally deflects off his or her body, equipment or caddie, there is no need for a penalty when a player accidentally strikes his or her own ball in making a stroke.
 - Accidental deflections are, by definition, an accident.
 - When a player's club accidentally strikes his or her ball multiple times it usually results in the ball going somewhere that the player did not intend for it to go.
 - The outcome in such cases is random and unpredictable, and it results in a disadvantage for the player as often as it results in an advantage.
- Treating all accidental deflections the same no matter who or what caused them will simplify the Rules by providing consistency.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

2. Ball in Motion Accidentally Deflected

Current Rule: If a player's ball in motion is accidentally deflected, the outcome depends on what caused the deflection:

- If the ball hits the player or his or her equipment or caddie, the player gets a one-stroke penalty and the ball is played as it lies (with limited exceptions).
- If the ball hits an opponent or his or her equipment or caddie, there is no penalty but the player has a choice to play the ball as it lies or to cancel the stroke and play again.
- If the ball is deflected by any other person, animal or object, there is no penalty and the ball is played as it lies.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 11.1, for all accidental deflections, including when the ball hits the player or opponent or their equipment or caddies:

- There will be no penalty and the ball will be played as it lies (with limited exceptions).
- To address any concern that a player might deliberately position equipment to act as a backstop and potentially deflect his or her ball, there will be a penalty if the ball hits equipment that was positioned for that purpose (Rule 11.2a).

Reasons for Change:

- Many objects, persons and animals are present on a golf course during play; it is inevitable that a ball in motion will sometimes hit them before coming to rest, and a player is generally required to accept the outcome (whether good or bad).
- Just as there is no penalty in stroke play if one player (or his or her equipment or caddie) accidentally deflects another player's ball, there is no need for a penalty when a player (or the player's equipment or caddie) accidentally deflects his or her own ball.
 - Accidental deflections are, by definition, an accident – and this applies equally to players, caddies and equipment, which are necessarily close to the area of play.
 - When a player's ball hits the player or his or her equipment, it is usually the result of a poorly played shot or an unanticipated outcome, such as when a ball bounces off a bunker wall or a tree and hits the player, or when a chip shot rolls over a green and hits the player's cart or golf bag.
 - The outcome in such cases is random and unpredictable, and it results in a disadvantage for the player at least as often as it results in an advantage.
- For the same reasons, there is no need to give the player the option to cancel and replay a stroke when an opponent in match play accidentally deflects the player's ball.
- Treating all accidental deflections the same, no matter who or what caused them, will greatly simplify the Rules in various situations, such as when a player's ball is deflected by equipment being shared with another player (such as a golf cart); it will no longer be necessary to apply complicated analysis to decide which player the shared equipment belonged to at that time.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

3. Ball Moved During Search

Current Rule: If a player moves his or her ball while searching for it:

- The player generally gets a one-stroke penalty (there are four limited exceptions), and
- When the player does not know the ball's exact original spot, he or she must return it to play by dropping it as near as possible to that estimated spot.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 7.4, if a player accidentally moves his or her ball while searching for it:

- The player will get no penalty for causing it to move, and
- The ball will always be replaced; if the exact spot is not known, the player will replace the ball on the estimated original spot (including on, under or against any attached natural or man-made objects which the ball had been at rest under or against).

Reasons for Change:

- A fundamental principle of golf is to play the ball as it lies; so the Rules should help the player to find his or her ball and play it from the spot where it was at rest.
- Players often need to probe in grass, bushes, leaves and other conditions to look for a hidden ball, and such reasonable acts create an inherent risk of moving the ball.
- The current Rules allow both an opponent in match play, and other players in stroke play, to help search for the player's ball without risk of penalty if they accidentally move the player's ball; outside persons such as spectators are allowed to help search as well.
- It is inconsistent to encourage everyone but the player or his or her caddie (or partner) to look for the ball, and this creates an odd incentive for the player to hold back and let others search.
- Because the ball's location isn't known before it is found, eliminating a penalty in this situation will be a reasonable exception to the obligation to avoid moving a ball at rest.
- Removing this penalty will not allow the player to benefit from excessive actions in searching for the ball, as there will be a penalty if the player searched in an unreasonable way (that is, beyond what was necessary for a "fair search") that improved the conditions affecting the next stroke (see new Rules 7.1 and 8.1).
- Changing the procedure for replacing a ball moved in search will help make sure the ball is played from its original spot or, if that spot is not known, on the estimated spot, including from a poor lie under grass or other growing things:
 - Today, when a player returns such a ball to play by dropping it as near as possible to its estimated spot, the ball is typically dropped on top of the grass or other growing things, which can result in a much better lie than the player originally had.
 - Under the new procedure, the player will need to replace that ball on its estimated spot on, under or against the grass or other growing things, and so face the challenge of playing from that difficult spot where the ball had come to rest.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

4. Ball Played from Green Hits Unattended Flagstick in Hole

Current Rule: Under Rule 17-3, if a player makes a stroke on the putting green and the ball then hits the unattended flagstick that was left in the hole, the player gets the general penalty.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 13.2b(2):

- There will no longer be a penalty if a ball played from the putting green hits a flagstick left in the hole.
- Players will not be required to putt with the flagstick in the hole; rather, they will continue to have the choice to have it removed (which includes having someone attend the flagstick and remove it after the ball is played).

Reasons for Change:

- Allowing a player to putt with the flagstick in the hole without fear of penalty should generally help speed up play:
 - For example, if a putt is long enough that the player cannot easily see the hole unless the flagstick is left in, the player currently needs to wait for another person to attend the flagstick even if it is the player's turn to play or (in stroke play) if the player is ready to play and it would save time to go ahead and do so.
 - This change could also speed up play for short tap-ins, as the player could simply putt the ball into the hole without first removing and then replacing the flagstick.
- When the players do not have caddies, the current Rule can result in considerable delay, such as:
 - When the opponent (or the other player in stroke play) is raking a greenside bunker and will be delayed for a minute or two before coming on to the green.
 - When other players in stroke play are delayed in coming on to the green for other reasons, such as a ball search, indecision about what club to use or shot to play, etc.
 - When all players in the group have long putts and so will need to walk back and forth to the hole to attend the flagstick for one another (which sometimes produces uncertainty about who will or should attend for someone else).
- In match play, a player without a caddie will now be able to choose to putt with the unattended flagstick in the hole rather than ask the opponent to attend the flagstick, reducing the potential for dispute that can arise when the opponent attends for the player (such as when the opponent fails to remove the flagstick and the ball hits it).
- On balance it is expected that there should be no advantage in being able to putt with the unattended flagstick in the hole:
 - In some cases, the ball may strike the flagstick and bounce out of the hole when it might otherwise have been holed, and
 - In other cases, the ball may hit the flagstick and finish in the hole when it might otherwise have missed.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

5. Caddie Lifting Ball on the Putting Green

Current Rule: A player's caddie has no general authority to mark, lift and replace the player's ball on the putting green:

- A caddie is treated the same as any other person for these purposes: the caddie may mark and lift the ball only if authorized by the player, and the caddie may replace the ball only if he or she was the one who had lifted or moved it; and
- This authorization must be given each time the player wants the caddie to lift the ball.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 14.1b:

- The player's caddie will be allowed to mark and lift the player's ball on the putting green any time the player is allowed to do so, without needing authorization.
- The caddie will continue to be allowed to replace the player's ball only if the caddie was the one who had lifted or moved the ball.

Reasons for Change:

- There is no compelling reason to prohibit a caddie from performing these purely mechanical acts when the player's ball is on the putting green:
 - A player is already free to mark, lift, clean and replace a ball on the putting green at any time, and thus this happens routinely.
 - The elimination of the penalty for a player who accidentally causes his or her ball to move on the putting green will eliminate any risk that allowing a caddie to mark, lift and replace the ball will result in unforeseen consequences to the player.
- In many places, it is common practice for caddies to mark, lift, clean and replace the player's ball when it first comes to rest on the putting green without authorization from the player, even though this is not permitted under the current Rules.
 - In some areas of the world, this is a cultural expectation relating to the role of a caddie.
 - In other places, this is done to help with pace of play - for example, where a caddie is shared by two players, the caddie may mark, lift, clean and replace one player's ball (so that he or she can be ready to play) before going to help the other player.
- This change will also benefit players who have physical limitations that make it difficult to bend down to mark and lift the ball, without needing to give the caddie specific permission each and every time.
- Giving the caddie this authority is consistent with the limited role of a caddie:
 - Any player who prefers not to have the caddie mark and lift the ball will simply be able to tell the caddie not to do so.
 - A caddie will still be prohibited from making strategic choices for the player, such as deciding to take relief under a Rule, deciding where to drop a ball, etc.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

6. Caddie Standing Behind a Player to Help Line the Player Up

Current Rule: Under Rule 14-2b:

- When a player is taking a stance, the player's caddie is allowed to stand behind to help the player line up to the target and confirm that the player is correctly aligned.
- The caddie must then move away before the player makes the stroke; otherwise the player is penalized if the caddie is positioned on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball when the stroke is made.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 10.2b(4):

- The current prohibition will be extended so that, once the player begins taking a stance for the stroke, and until the stroke is made, the player's caddie must not deliberately stand on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball for any reason.
- There will be no penalty if the caddie accidentally stands on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball, rather than in trying to help in lining up.

Reasons for Change:

- Although a player may get advice from a caddie on the shot to be played, the line of play and similar matters, the ability to line up one's feet and body accurately to a target line is a fundamental skill of the game for which the player alone should be responsible.
 - Allowing a caddie to stand behind a player taking a stance so as to direct the player how to line up undermines the player's need to use his or her own alignment skills and judgment.
- This practice has been controversial for other reasons:
 - Many players and others consider it to be distracting.
 - It may delay play, such as when players wait for the caddie to confirm they are correctly aligned as part of their set-up routine.
- We believe that an appropriate line is drawn between allowing advice from a caddie and prohibiting the caddie from being involved in directing the player in the act of taking a stance to play the ball.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

7. Code of Player Conduct

Current Rule: A Committee may penalize a player for improper conduct (such as dishonesty, offensive remarks, damaging equipment or the course, etc.) only in one way:

- If the player is guilty of a “serious breach of etiquette”, the Committee may disqualify the player from the competition under Rule 33-7.
- But unless some other specific Rule is breached, the Committee has no authority to impose any lesser penalty for a player’s misconduct.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 1.2b, a Committee will be allowed to adopt a “Code of Conduct” that:

- Sets the Committee’s own standards for how players should conduct themselves, and
- May set penalties less than disqualification (such as a one-stroke penalty or a two-stroke penalty/loss of hole penalty) for a player’s breach of those standards.

The Committee will also still be able to disqualify a player for serious misconduct that is contrary to the spirit of the game, as emphasized in new Rule 1.2a (see Explanation for Proposed Rule Change – *Expected Standards of Player Conduct*).

Reasons for Change:

- Some Committees have requested additional means under the Rules to allow them to address player conduct that is contrary to expected standards that are central to the game (such as courtesy and sportsmanship).
 - In many cases, disqualifying a player for inappropriate behavior will be overly harsh - leaving Committees today with no way to penalize players for such behavior.
 - Some Committees deal with this through disciplinary sanctions outside the Rules (such as warnings, fines, restriction of playing privileges, etc.), but such methods are not always effective, appropriate or practical.
 - Also, as the game’s global reach has continued to expand to include golfers from many more cultures and backgrounds, there is a growing desire to let Committees set and enforce standards that fit their particular needs and local norms of proper behavior.
 - This has been a particular concern for junior golf organizations whose mission often includes teaching young golfers how to act while on the course.
- The proposed Rule change will give Committees flexibility to set and enforce standards of conduct specific to their competitions and players, should they choose to do so.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

8. Concept of “Penalty Areas” to Supersede “Water Hazards”

Current Rule: Rule 26-1 allows relief with penalty when a ball is in a “water hazard” (marked yellow) or a “lateral water hazard” (marked red).

- These hazards are limited to areas with water or where water may flow; no other areas may be marked as water hazards, even if they might present similar obstacles to play.
- Water hazards are intended as the norm; lateral water hazards are to be used only when it is impracticable to drop a ball behind a water hazard under Rule 26-1b.

2019 Rule: Under the new Rules, “Water hazards” will be superseded by the expanded concept of “penalty areas”, and Rule 17 will provide the same basic options for relief that exist under the current Rules:

- A penalty area will include both (1) all areas currently defined in the Rules as a water hazard or lateral water hazard and (2) any other areas the Committee chooses to define as penalty areas (with recommended guidelines to be provided in the guidebook).
- Penalty areas may therefore include areas such as deserts, jungles, lava rock fields, etc.
- The two types of penalty areas will be known by the colour of their marking: red penalty areas (today called lateral water hazards) and yellow penalty areas (today called water hazards); and Committees will be given the discretion to mark all penalty areas as red so that lateral relief will always be allowed.
- The term “hazard” will no longer be used in the Rules.

Reasons for Change:

- The options to take relief back on a line behind any water hazard (Rule 26-1b) or within two club-lengths of where a ball entered a lateral water hazard have become important for pace of play, as the player can usually play from near the hazard rather than having to go back some distance to play from where the previous stroke was made.
- It has been recognized that requiring areas to contain water seems to be a somewhat arbitrary reason for permitting such relief options.
- For reasons such as safety and pace of play, many Committees have sought to expand the use of lateral water hazards by marking areas that do not contain water and by marking water hazards as red where that is not specifically contemplated by the Rules.
- The broader use of “penalty areas” will allow Committees to respond to the wide range of settings in which golf is played by giving relief from areas that present similar obstacles to existing water hazards such as difficulties with finding and playing a ball and similar practical needs about pace of play.
- Giving Committees the discretion to mark all penalty areas as red will make it simpler for players to learn the relief options (as the distinction between yellow and red water hazards is not always well understood) and will further help pace of play.
- Individual Committees will remain free to choose what to mark as a penalty area (and so for example could decide only to mark traditional water hazards) and when to mark a penalty area as yellow (such as to preserve the challenge of playing a particular hole).

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

9. Elimination of Opposite Side Relief for Red Penalty Areas

Current Rule: Rule 26-1c provides two extra options for taking relief from a lateral (red) water hazard; the player may drop a ball within two club-lengths of (and not nearer the hole than):

- The point where the original ball last crossed the margin of the lateral water hazard, or
- A point on the opposite margin of the hazard equidistant from the hole (Rule 26-1c(ii)).

2019 Rule: Rule 17.1d will remove the option to take relief on the opposite side of a red penalty area (the new term that will include what is today called a lateral water hazard):

- This means that, when a ball is in a red penalty area, the player will have three options for relief (all for a one-stroke penalty) rather than four options as today.
- But a Committee could still adopt a Local Rule allowing opposite side relief on those holes where it believes the other relief options are not viable.

Reasons for Change:

- Opposite side relief is a complicated option that many players are not familiar with and that is seldom used.
- The primary purpose behind this relief was to give an extra relief option for the unusual cases where neither back-on-the-line relief (Rule 26-1b) nor lateral relief on the side where the ball entered the water hazard (Rule 26-1c(i)) seem viable and the player's only realistic option is to take relief under penalty of stroke and distance (Rule 26-1a).
- In practice, opposite side relief is often taken when a player actually has adequate relief under one or both of the other relief options and thus serves only to give an unnecessary extra option that at times can seem too advantageous.
 - For example, where a stream runs next to a fairway and a line of trees or thicker rough is on the other side, a ball that is poorly played into the trees or rough and then bounces back into the water can result in the player being allowed to take relief on the fairway.
 - For larger bodies of water such as a pond or small lake, opposite side relief can allow the player to play from a considerable distance away from where the ball entered the water or came to rest and/or to play from the fairway of another hole.
 - Removing this option may, in rare situations, result in a player's best (or only) option being stroke-and-distance relief; there is nothing wrong with a player sometimes having to proceed under stroke and distance.
- Assessing the relief option for opposite side relief can take considerable time and so eliminating this option should benefit pace of play.
- This change will also help avoid any concern that, with the expanded use of red penalty areas, a player might be able to use the opposite side option to drop on the green side of the penalty area, thereby avoiding the challenge of having to play over the penalty area.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

10. Elimination of the Requirement to Announce the Player's Intent to Lift a Ball

Current Rule: A special procedure applies when a player intends to mark and lift a ball in three specific situations under the Rules:

- Before lifting the ball, the player must announce the intention to do so to the opponent in match play or another player or the marker in stroke play, and then allow that person to observe the process of lifting and replacing the ball.
- This procedure applies when a ball will be lifted (1) for identification (Rule 12-2), (2) to see if it has become unfit for play (Rule 5-3), or (3) to see if it lies in a condition from which relief is allowed, such as when the ball might be embedded (Decision 20-1/0.7).

2019 Rule: In all three situations under the Rules (that is, Rule 4.2c, Rule 7.3 and Rule 16.4):

- A player will be allowed to mark and lift the ball and proceed under the Rule without needing first to announce this intention to another person or to give that person a chance to observe the process.
- But the player will still get a one-stroke penalty if he or she marked and lifted the ball without good reason to do so under that Rule.

Reasons for Change:

- The Rules generally rely on the integrity of the player.
 - In other relief situations, including when a ball may be lifted and played from a different place, players are allowed to proceed under the Rules without being required to involve another person in any part of the process.
 - For example, a player may determine that a cart path interferes with the lie of his or her ball or the area of intended stance or swing, find the nearest point of relief, lift the ball and drop it in the specified area, determine that the ball has come to rest in the right place, and play the ball – all without having to announce his or her intentions to another person or to allow that other person to observe the process to make sure the player acts correctly.
- Eliminating the announcement requirements for these three situations will simplify the Rules, bring consistency to the approach of trusting the player and eliminate an unnecessary procedural penalty for simply not informing an appropriate person.
- These procedural requirements often have no practical effect as many players to whom such an announcement is made decline to observe the lifting and replacement process and thus are content to rely on the player's integrity.
- This change should also speed up play because a player will no longer need to take the time to inform another player of the intent to lift and to wait to see if that other player wants to come over to observe the lifting and replacement of the ball.
- The requirement for the player to have a good reason to lift under the Rule is a sufficient safeguard against inappropriate lifting or abuse of the Rule.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

11. Encouraging Prompt Pace of Play

Current Rule: Although intended to support pace of play, the Rules do not affirmatively emphasize this issue or encourage players to play promptly:

- Rule 6-7 provides only that “undue delay” is prohibited and that players must follow any pace of play guidelines if established by the Committee to prevent “slow play.”
- Although players are allowed to play out of turn to save time, this is neither highlighted nor particularly made clear in the text of the Rules.

2019 Rule: Rule 5.6 will encourage prompt pace of play by recommending that:

- Players should recognize that their pace of play affects others and they should play promptly throughout the round (such as by preparing in advance for each stroke and moving promptly between strokes and in going to the next tee),
- A player should make a stroke in no more than 40 seconds (and usually in less time) after the player is able to play without interference or distraction, and
- Committees should adopt a Pace of Play Policy (rather than only say they may do so).

In addition, new Rule 6.4 will expressly allow playing out of turn in match play by agreement, and for stroke play, will affirmatively allow and encourage players to play out of turn in a safe and responsible way to save time or for convenience (also known as “ready golf”).

Reasons for Change:

- By giving players affirmative guidance, support and encouragement on prompt play, these proposed Rule changes will help in:
 - Setting expectations for both beginners and experienced players on what types of behavior are considered prompt play, including the maximum amount of time it should normally take to make a stroke, and
 - Encouraging players to play faster by confirming that it is proper to play out of turn in stroke play when it is safe and responsible to do so (that is, to play “ready golf”).
- Enforcing pace of play will continue to be primarily up to each Committee, as there are limits to what the Rules themselves can do to insist that players play promptly.
- For example, it is impractical for the Rules to impose penalties whenever a player does not complete a round or a hole or make a stroke in a time fixed in the Rules:
 - Golf is played in so many different settings and by so many different people that any such time limits may naturally differ for any given competition or course.
 - There is also no practical way to require all players to follow (and to enforce against one another) any form of “shot clock” for each stroke made during a round.
- These changes will enable Committees to point to specific expectations set by the Rules when using their authority to enforce prompt play, and encourage every Committee to adopt a pace of play policy so that all players on the course, whatever the type or level of play, will know what is expected of them.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

12. Expected Standards of Player Conduct

Current Rule: The Rules address player conduct in only a limited and muted way:

- They set out no standards of conduct, except indirectly when giving the Committee discretion to disqualify players for a “serious breach of etiquette” (Rule 33-7).
- The Rules do not explain what “breach of etiquette” means, leaving that to Decision 33-7/8 and a few other Decisions.
- Although a separate Etiquette Section is published in the same book along with the Rules, it is not made part of the Rules (other than through a few Decisions).

2019 Rule: Rule 1.2a will consolidate the expected standards of player conduct:

- It will declare that players are expected to play in the spirit of the game by acting with integrity, showing consideration to others and taking good care of the course.
- It will unequivocally state the Committee’s authority to disqualify a player for any serious misconduct that is contrary to the spirit of the game.
- In place of the unclear concept of “breach of etiquette”, it will use the more direct and stronger phrases “misconduct” and “serious misconduct.”

Rule 1.2b will also give the Committee authority to adopt its own Code of Conduct and to set penalties for its breach (see Explanation for Proposed Rule Change – *Code of Player Conduct*).

Reasons for Change:

- Golf is a sport in which high standards of conduct are expected from players, and the Rules should declare this in a clear and direct way.
- Although the current Rule book has a separate Etiquette Section that covers the most important aspects of the spirit of the game:
 - The priorities and emphasis of the section are unclear, as it also includes more general recommendations on a variety of topics, and
 - The section does not have the force of Rules or naturally form part of a Committee’s powers.
- Using Rule 1.2a to explain playing in the spirit of the game will help in:
 - Giving more prominence to the expectation that all players will act with integrity, show consideration to others and take good care of the course, and
 - Setting expectations so that players are on notice that serious misconduct in failing to meet those expectations could lead to disqualification.
- Changing the term from “serious breach of etiquette” to “serious misconduct” will help to distinguish this concept from the term “serious breach” which will continue to be used in the new Rules for an entirely different purpose.

Explanation for Rule Change in 2019

13. Fixed Distances Used for Measuring

Current Rule: Club-lengths are used to measure the limits of many areas under the Rules:

- There is no fixed definition of a club-length, therefore when measuring a player may choose any club in his or her bag to measure a club-length.
- Players with long putters can drop in areas other players cannot reach.

2019 Rule: A club-length will be defined as the length of the longest club in the player's bag, except that this cannot be his or her putter.

- The relief area for dropping a ball will be a fixed size of either one or two club-lengths depending on which relief Rule is being used.
- The relief area is a fixed size for each player and is pre-determined based on the clubs the player has selected for play.

Reasons for Change:

- The definition of a club-length as the longest club other than a putter will mean that a player cannot choose which club to measure with based on the situation.
- For example, players will no longer be able to make a strategic choice about the size of the relief area by choosing a longer club so that the player can reach a location that is farther from the nearest point of relief or other reference point.
- Using the longest club for measuring will minimize the inconsistency in the size of a relief area between players (including eliminating the advantage for players who currently can use a long putter for measuring).

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

14. "Maximum Score" Form of Stroke Play

Current Rule: The Rules now recognize two main forms of stroke play:

- The basic form of stroke play where a player must hole out at every hole, or else is disqualified (Rule 3), and
- The Stableford form of play where a point scoring system is used and a player who scores two or more than the fixed score or does not finish the hole simply gets zero points for that hole (Rule 32).

2019 Rule: "Maximum Score" will be a new, additional form of stroke play:

- A player's score for each hole is capped at a maximum set by the Committee, which may be fixed (such as 6, 8, 10, etc.), related to par (such as two times par or triple bogey), or related to the player's handicap (such as net double bogey).
- A player who does not complete a hole (often referred to informally as "picking up") will not be disqualified, but simply gets the maximum score for the hole.

Reasons for Change:

- The need to hole out on every hole in stroke play can have at least two downsides: (1) it often leads to a slow pace of play, and (2) it may discourage golfers who feel they no longer have a realistic chance to compete or to make a good score for the round once they get a very high score on one or two holes.
- Maximum Score will be an alternative form of play that addresses both concerns, by allowing a player to "pick up" when he or she scores at or above the maximum and by capping the player's score for any hole at the maximum.
- These are important reasons why Stableford is popular in various parts of the world; Maximum Score will create a similar form of stroke play, with the difference that scoring is by strokes rather than by number of points.
- The Maximum Score form of play will be unlikely to be used for elite play, but it may be useful in many other contexts, such as for play by beginners or golfers who are less skilled or experienced and, more generally, for club level and day-to-day play when pace of play is a particular concern.
- Like Stableford, Maximum Score could be used in conjunction with handicap systems that set a maximum score (such as net double bogey) that can be posted on any hole.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

15. Moving or Touching Loose Impediments or Touching Sand in a Bunker

Current Rule: When a player's ball is in a bunker, Rule 13-4 provides (with exceptions) that the player must not:

- Test the condition of the bunker,
- Touch the ground in the bunker with a hand or club, or
- Touch or move loose impediments that are in the bunker.

2019 Rule: Under Rules 12.2a and 12.2b, the player will be allowed to touch or move loose impediments in a bunker and will be generally allowed to touch the sand with a hand or club; but a limited prohibition continues so that the player must not:

- Deliberately touch the sand in a bunker with a hand, club, rake or other object to test the condition of the sand to learn information for the stroke, or
- Touch the sand in a bunker with a club in making a practice swing, in grounding the club right in front of or behind the ball, or in making the backswing for a stroke.

Reasons for Change:

- The challenge of playing from a bunker is the need to play out of the sand, not to play with leaves, stones or other loose impediments left in place in the bunker.
- The current approach has created confusion by stating a total prohibition on touching the sand with a hand or club and then recognizing many exceptions.
- The revised Rule will simplify this by prohibiting only those acts where there is a purpose for doing so under the Rules:
 - Deliberately testing the condition of the sand with a hand or club will continue to be prohibited because part of the player's challenge is to assess and predict how the sand may affect the stroke, and also because it will be time consuming and inappropriate for players to dig in the sand with a hand or club for that purpose before every shot.
 - Touching the sand with the club right in front of or behind the ball or in the backswing for the stroke will continue to be prohibited to make sure the player does nothing to reduce the challenge of playing from the sand; these prohibitions are already well known and followed by almost all players.
 - Touching the sand with a club in taking a practice swing will continue to be prohibited both for pace of play and to avoid having large amounts of sand deposited outside bunkers (especially greenside bunkers) as a result of repeated practice swings.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

16. No Penalty for Moving a Ball on the Putting Green

Current Rule: Under Rule 18-2, if a player (or opponent) accidentally causes the player's ball to move anywhere on the course, there is a one-stroke penalty (unless one of several exceptions applies).

2019 Rule: Under Rule 13.1d, there will no longer be a penalty if a player (or opponent) accidentally causes the player's ball to move on the putting green.

The substance of this Rule change has already been implemented as of 1 January 2017 by authorizing Committees to adopt a Local Rule that eliminates the penalty for accidentally moving a ball on the putting green.

Reasons for Change:

- The shape, slope and condition of many putting greens today increase the chances that a ball at rest on the putting green might move, and it can be difficult to determine whether a player caused the ball to move or whether the ball was moved by wind or other natural causes.
- When a ball moves while the player is doing nothing more than taking normal actions to prepare for a stroke, it can seem unfair for the player to be penalized.
- Most "ball moved" situations occur on the putting green, involve minimal movement of the ball, frequently occur when the player is taking reasonable actions to prepare for a stroke and the ball can be easily replaced.
- These considerations are not the same when the ball lies off the putting green, and so the penalty will continue to apply (with exceptions, such as accidentally moving a ball during search) to a player or opponent in those circumstances to reinforce the principle that the ball should be played as it lies and that players should continue to exercise care when near to a ball in play.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

17. Procedure for Dropping and Playing a Ball from a Relief Area

Current Rule: When taking relief (with or without penalty) under many of the Rules, the player is required to use this dropping procedure:

- The player must drop the ball while standing erect and holding the ball at shoulder height and arm's length; or else it must be re-dropped (Rule 20-2a).
- The ball must first strike the course in a specified place and must not strike any person or equipment before coming to rest; or else it must be re-dropped (Rule 20-2b).
- The ball is then to be played from where it comes to rest, **except** that if it ends up in any of 9 specific locations (such as nearer to the hole or more than 2 club-lengths from where it struck the course), it must be re-dropped (Rule 20-2c).
- If the ball comes to rest in any of those 9 locations when dropped a second time, the player must place the ball where it first struck the course on the second drop.

2019 Rule: Players will continue to drop a ball when taking relief, but the dropping procedure will be changed in several ways as detailed in Rule 14.3:

- How a ball may be dropped is simplified; the only requirement will be that the ball be let go from knee height so that it falls through the air and does not touch any part of the player's body or equipment before it hits the ground.
- The focus of the dropping procedure will be on a specific "relief area" set by the Rule under which relief is being taken and will be either one or two club-lengths from a reference point (and may have certain other limitations).
- The ball will need only to be dropped in and come to rest in the relief area; and there will be no re-drop requirement if the dropped ball accidentally hits a person or object after hitting the ground but before coming to rest in the relief area.
- If the dropped ball comes to rest outside the relief area, it will be dropped a second time; if it comes to rest outside the relief area after being dropped a second time it will be placed where it first touched the ground.
- If the placed ball will not come to rest on that spot after two attempts, the player will then place the ball on the nearest spot (not nearer the hole) where it will come to rest.

Reasons for Change:

- The new procedure lowers the height from which the ball is dropped to increase the chance that it stays within the relief area.
- Requiring the player to drop a ball (as opposed to placing it) will retain a desired randomness about where the ball will end up:
 - The player has no guarantee that the ball will come to rest on a desired spot or in a good lie.
 - This is especially the case when a ball is dropped in more difficult conditions such as thick rough or longer grass.

- The new procedure avoids giving players more relief than necessary:
 - A dropped ball is currently allowed to roll up to two club-lengths from where it hits the ground – so that, for example, it can end up being played up to three club-lengths from the nearest point of relief from a cart path or ground under repair, or up to four club-lengths from where the original ball went into a lateral water hazard or where it was unplayable.

Requiring the dropped ball to come to rest in and be played from the same relief area where it was dropped will make it much more likely that the ball will be played from close to where it originally came to rest.
- Allowing the player to drop a ball from knee height will help to limit the extent to which a ball will embed in sand in a bunker.
- The new procedure will mean there will be greater consistency across all relief procedures, making it simpler for players to know where and how to drop a ball:
 - For example, many times today a player is required to drop a ball as near as possible to a certain spot (such as where the previous stroke was made or where a ball was embedded) and questions can arise about whether it was dropped near enough to that spot.
 - The new procedure when dropping with reference to a spot will be to drop a ball anywhere in a relief area measured one or two club-lengths from (but not nearer the hole than) that spot.
- It will be simpler for players to know when to re-drop a ball:
 - A player currently needs to know the nine re-dropping scenarios in Rule 20-2c; these are difficult to understand and apply and this is a widely misunderstood Rule.
 - Under the new Rule, the player will only need to know that the ball must be re-dropped if it comes to rest outside the relief area.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

18. Reasonable Judgment in Estimating and Measuring

Current Rule: Before April of 2017, when estimating or measuring under a Rule:

- The player's judgment in doing so was normally given no particular weight or regard; if the player ended up playing from a wrong place based on a wrong estimate or measurement, even if only by a small amount, the player would have been penalized.
- An exception was when a player used his or her best judgment to estimate where a ball entered a water hazard, played the ball and then learned that the judgment was wrong; in that case, there was no penalty if it was an honest judgment (Decision 26-1/17).

In April 2017, a new decision was introduced (Decision 34-3/10) so that when the player estimates or measures a spot, point, line, area or other location, his or her reasonable judgment is accepted:

- If the player did all that could be reasonably expected under the circumstances to make a prompt and accurate estimation or measurement.
- This means that the player's reasonable judgment is upheld even if later shown to be wrong by other information (such as video technology).

2019 Rule: Decision 34-3/10 will be incorporated into the Rules as Rule 1.3b(2).

Reasons for Change:

- The Rules generally rely on the integrity of the player, and this is a natural and appropriate extension of this trust in the player.
- There are many times when the Rules require a player to estimate or measure a spot, point, line, area or other location, such as when the player:
 - Uses a ball-marker to mark a ball's spot, and then replace the ball, or
 - Estimates the spot where the previous stroke was made when playing again under penalty of stroke and distance or when a stroke has been cancelled, or
 - Needs to find a reference point or line for taking relief (such as the nearest point of complete relief or the line when taking unplayable ball relief), or to determine the extent of a relief area (such as measuring a fixed distance from a reference point).
 - Estimates the location of his or her knee when dropping a ball.
- Such judgments need to be made promptly, and players often cannot be precise in doing so.
- So long as the player did all that could be reasonably expected under the circumstances:
 - The player gets no penalty for small inaccuracies, even if an advantage is gained.
 - There is no penalty in certain situations where the player's estimation was significantly wrong but there was effectively no way to have done a better job (as may happen when estimating where a ball entered a water hazard or where a ball was at rest before being moved by an outside influence).
- Accepting a player's reasonable judgment limits the detailed analysis that can arise from the use of enhanced technology (such as video review when golf is televised).

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

19. Relief for an Embedded Ball

Current Rule: In certain circumstances, a player is allowed to take relief when his or her ball is embedded in its own pitch-mark:

- Rule 25-2 allows relief only when a ball is embedded in a closely-mown area (that is, an area cut to fairway height or less) that is through the green.
- But a Committee may adopt a Local Rule that extends this relief to a ball embedded anywhere through the green, whether or not in a closely-mown area (except when embedded in sand).
- In taking relief, the player must drop the original ball as near as possible to where it was embedded and not nearer the hole.

2019 Rule: The current default position in the Rules will be reversed:

- Rule 16.3 will allow relief for a ball embedded anywhere in the “general area” (that is, the area currently known as “through the green”), except when embedded in sand.
- But a Committee may adopt a Local Rule restricting relief to a ball embedded in those parts of the general area cut to fairway height or less.
- In taking relief, the player will drop the original ball or a substituted ball within one club-length of (but not nearer the hole than) the spot right behind where the ball was embedded.

Reasons for Change:

- This is an appropriate exception to the principle of playing the ball as it lies because having to play a ball that is stuck in soft or wet ground (whether in the fairway or the rough) should not be considered part of the normal challenge of playing a course.
- Allowing relief throughout the general area is consistent with other relief Rules, which do not make distinctions based on the height of the grass in the general area.
- Many Committees throughout the world, from the professional and elite amateur levels to the typical club level, have adopted the current Local Rule.
- In many countries the Local Rule is sufficiently well established that golfers assume that the Rules always allow relief anywhere in the general area.
- Reversing the default position will help avoid the confusion that sometimes exists today when clubs or players do not realize that such relief is not allowed unless a Local Rule has been adopted.
- Basing the relief area on the reference point “right behind” the spot of the embedded ball will avoid the question of what to do when a dropped ball comes to rest in the same pitch-mark where it had been embedded; such a ball will always be re-dropped because it came to rest outside the relief area.
- Allowing the ball to be dropped within a one club-length relief area ensures consistency with other free-relief Rules.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

20. Repairing Damage on Putting Green

Current Rule: Rule 16-1c allows only limited repair of damage on the putting green:

- A player may repair any old hole plug or ball-mark on the green on his or her line of play, whether the ball is on or off the putting green (this is an exception to Rule 13-2).
- But a player must not repair any other damage on the green (such as spike marks, animal damage, etc.) if it might assist in his or her subsequent play of the hole.

2019 Rule: Rule 13.1c(2) allows repair of almost any damage on the green:

- “Damage on the putting green” will be 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.
- The player is allowed to repair damage only with his or her hand, foot or other part of the body or a ball-mark repair tool, tee, club or similar item of normal equipment and must not unreasonably delay play.

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 will eliminate the frequent questions 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.
- This change will also reduce the current tension between prohibiting a player from repairing damage while playing a hole and then encouraging the player to repair that damage (such as repairing the ragged edge of the hole or tapping down spike marks) as a courtesy to following groups or in care of the course (Decisions 1-2/0.7 and 1-2/3.5).
- 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.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

21. Replacing Ball When Original Spot Not Known

Current Rule: If a player's ball at rest anywhere off the putting green is lifted or moved under a Rule that requires the ball to be replaced:

- The ball must be replaced by placing it on its original spot (Rule 20-3a).
- But if the ball's exact original spot is not known, the player must get the ball back into play not by placing it but by dropping it as near as possible to the ball's estimated original spot (Rule 20-3c).

2019 Rule: Under Rule 14.2c, in that same situation:

- The ball will always be placed on a spot rather than being dropped.
- If the exact original spot is not known, the player will be required to replace the ball on its estimated spot (including on, under or against any attached natural objects that the ball had been at rest on, under or against).

Reasons for Change:

- A fundamental principle of golf is to play the ball as it lies; so this should mean that, when a ball at rest is moved, it should be returned to and played from its original spot or as close to that original spot as possible.
- When a player marks the ball's spot with a ball-marker before lifting the ball, the original spot is known and the ball is replaced on the marked spot.
- But when a ball is accidentally moved, the player may not know the exact original spot:
 - Currently, if the ball was at rest anywhere off the putting green, the player must drop the ball as near as possible to its estimated spot and play the ball from where it comes to rest (unless it rolls to where it must be re-dropped under Rule 20-2c).
 - This means that the ball will often not be played from the estimated spot, as the dropped ball is allowed to roll as much as two-club lengths away from that spot.
 - It also means that the ball may end up being played from a better or worse lie than the original lie (such as when the original spot was in the rough and the dropped ball comes to rest in the fairway, or vice versa; or when the ball had been at rest in deep grass and the dropped ball comes to rest on top of the grass).
- Requiring the player to replace the ball on the estimated spot (including being required to replace the ball on, under or against any fixed or growing things it had been at rest on, under or against) will help make sure the ball is played from as close as possible to its original spot and from the same or almost the same lie.
- Replacing the ball on its estimated spot also applies when the player does not know the exact original spot of a ball that was lifted or moved on the putting green, and so the same procedure will apply throughout the course.
- This change should also make it easier for players to understand the Rules by eliminating the confusing concept of "replacing" a ball by dropping it rather than by placing it.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

22. Standard for Deciding Why a Ball Moved

Current Rule: The “weight of evidence” standard is used to decide whether a player (or an opponent) caused the player’s ball to move:

- The decision must be made in the light of all relevant circumstances, evaluating the weight of the evidence and the balance of probabilities (Decision 34-3/9).
- The player will be found to have caused the ball to move if the weight of the evidence indicates that it is more likely than not that he or she was the cause (Decision 18-2/0.5).

But a higher standard (“known or virtually certain”) applies in deciding whether an outside agency (such as an animal, spectator or another player in stroke play) caused a ball to move.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 9.2, the “known or virtually certain” standard (meaning at least 95% likely) will apply to all questions of fact about why a ball at rest moved:

- A player, opponent or outside influence will be found to have caused the ball to move if the player, opponent or outside influence was known or virtually certain to have caused it to move; otherwise it will be assumed that natural forces caused it to move.

Reasons for Change:

- The weight of the evidence test is often difficult to apply in ball moved situations:
 - Many competing factors need to be balanced, such as what the player did near the ball, the lapse of time before the ball moved, the lie of the ball, the slope and other course conditions near the ball and the presence of wind or weather conditions, and
 - There is no prescribed way of prioritizing or balancing these factors.
- The “known or virtually certain” standard will be simpler to apply because it will eliminate most “close calls” where it is hard to know for sure why the ball moved.
- Using this standard will fit well with the new Rule 13.2 that will eliminate the penalty for accidentally causing a ball to move on the putting green:
 - The primary reason for eliminating that penalty is that it is often particularly difficult to decide why a ball moved on the putting green.
 - This is explained further in Explanation for Proposed Rule Change - *When to Replace Ball that Moves on Putting Green*.
 - Given those particular difficulties, using the “known or virtually certain” standard will be more clear-cut and easier to apply, and help avoid the risk of players being penalized for playing from a wrong place (replacing the ball when it should have been played as it lies, or vice versa) based on the same difficult balancing of factors that led to eliminating the penalty for causing the ball to move.
- This Rule change also means that only the single standard of “known or virtually certain” will be used for all ball moved questions, rather than the situation under the current Rules where different standards apply in deciding whether an outside influence moved a ball or whether the player or opponent did so.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

23. Substitution for a Ball Damaged During Play of a Hole

Current Rule: Under Rule 5-3:

- A player is allowed to substitute another ball if during the play of a hole his or her ball in play becomes unfit for play – that is, if it is visibly cut, cracked or out of shape.
- Before lifting a ball to see if it is unfit for play, the player must:
 - Announce his or her intention to the opponent in match play or to the marker or another player in stroke play, and
 - Give that person an opportunity to observe the lifting and replacement and to examine the ball, and if that person wishes to dispute a claim of unfitness, it must be done before the player plays another ball.

2019 Rule: Rule 4.2 will revise two aspects of this procedure:

- The player will be allowed to substitute a ball only if the ball in play has become cut or cracked during the play of the hole – not if it is just “out of shape”.
- The player will no longer be required to announce the intention to lift to another person or to give that person a chance to observe the process or examine the ball.

Reasons for Change:

- There is no longer a good reason to allow substitution for a ball in play that has become “out of shape” (which means not fully round), because:
 - The construction and composition of modern golf balls has made it rare for a ball to cease to be round, and
 - The playing characteristics of modern balls are not materially affected except when cut or cracked.
- The “out of shape” language has led to confusion, as some players incorrectly believe that a ball with any scuff or scrape on its surface has become out of shape and therefore is unfit for play.
- Restricting relief only to when a ball is cut or cracked will eliminate this confusion and reinforce the Rule’s intention that a player not be allowed to substitute another ball when the ball in play is merely scratched or scraped.
- There is no compelling need to require the player to announce his or her intention to lift the ball or to give another person the chance to observe the process:
 - Eliminating these requirements will simplify and speed up the process and be consistent with the Rules’ overall approach of trusting the player to act correctly without needing to have another player watch over the process
 - This is explained further in Explanation for Proposed Rule Change - *Elimination of the Requirement to Announce the Player’s Intent to Lift a Ball*.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

24. Substitution of Ball Always Allowed When Taking Relief

Current Rule: A player is allowed to substitute a ball only when taking relief under certain Rules:

- Substitution is allowed when taking penalty relief, such as when a ball is in a water hazard, is unplayable or is lost or out of bounds (Rules 26-1, 27-1, 28).
- Substitution is not allowed when taking free relief, such as relief from obstructions or abnormal ground conditions (Rules 24-2 and 25-1); this means the player must use the original ball (except when that ball is not immediately recoverable).

2019 Rule: Under Rule 14.3, when taking relief, the player will always be allowed the choice to substitute a ball or to use the original ball, including:

- When taking penalty relief as well as when taking free relief (Rules 15-19), and
- Any other time the player is required to drop and play a ball, such as when returning to play from where a previous stroke was made after the stroke is cancelled.

Reasons for Change:

- The requirement to use the original ball in some relief situations but not others is confusing, hard to remember and leads to unnecessary penalties. Taking a consistent approach that always allows a player taking relief the choice to substitute a ball or use the original ball is much simpler.
- There is no need for a different procedure based on whether the player is taking relief with penalty or without penalty:
 - The penalty is applied for reasons having to do with where the ball ended up (lost, out of bounds, in a penalty area or unplayable), not with which ball is played next.
 - For example, if a ball lies in easy reach of the player, there is no reason to require the original ball to be used when taking relief because of interference by an animal hole, while allowing substitution when taking relief because the ball is unplayable.
- This change will eliminate the need when taking free relief to decide whether the original ball is “not immediately recoverable”, which can raise questions in various cases such as when the ball is in a few inches of temporary water or is under a prickly bush.
- This will also draw a clearer and more intuitive line between when substitution is allowed in returning a ball to play and when the original ball must be returned to play:
 - Substitution will be allowed only when a player is taking relief under any Rule – that is, when the player is required or allowed to play the next stroke from somewhere other than where the original ball came to rest.
 - Substitution will not be allowed when a ball was lifted or moved, and the Rules require it to be replaced on its original spot – in that case, the original ball must still be used (unless it cannot be recovered with reasonable effort and in a few seconds).

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

25. Time for Search Before Ball is Lost

Current Rule: If a player's ball is not found within 5 minutes after the player or his or her caddie began searching for it:

- The ball is treated as "lost", and
- The player gets a one-stroke penalty and must play another ball from the spot of the previous stroke (that is, must play under penalty of stroke and distance). (Definition of "Lost Ball"; Rule 27-1c.)

2019 Rule: Under Rule 18.2, the time for a ball search (before the ball becomes lost) will be reduced from 5 minutes to 3 minutes.

Reasons for Change:

- Limiting the search period to 3 minutes is more consistent with the underlying principle that golf is to be played in a prompt and continuous way, without long pauses in play.
- In most cases, if the ball is going to be found, it will be found within the first 3 minutes.
- The total delay for a lost ball can be much longer than the search time alone; for example, it may take 10 minutes or longer to look unsuccessfully for a tee shot including the 5 minutes for search, the walk back to the tee to play another ball under penalty of stroke and distance, and the walk back down the hole to where that ball comes to rest.
- The time taken in each ball search can also have a negative impact on the pace of play of following groups; when there are multiple long ball searches, the cumulative delay can be major for all those playing on the course.
- Although this change may increase the number of lost balls, on average the overall impact should be to speed up play.
- Knowing that the search time is limited to 3 minutes should encourage players to play a provisional ball when they believe there is a chance their ball may not be found.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

26. Touching Line of Play on Putting Green

Current Rule: Under Rule 16-1a, when a player's ball is on the putting green:

- The player is generally prohibited from touching his or her line of putt.
- But there are seven exceptions (such as when removing loose impediments or movable obstructions, when lifting or replacing a ball, when repairing ball marks, etc.).

2019 Rule: The prohibition of touching the line of play on the putting green will be eliminated:

- There will no longer be a penalty for merely touching the line of play on the putting green (the term "line of play" will apply everywhere on the course including the putting green, and the term "line of putt" will no longer be used).
- But the player will still be subject to the prohibition on improving his or her line of play on the putting green (see Rule 8.1a, as limited by 8.1b).

Reasons for Change:

- No advantage is gained if a player or his or her caddie merely touches the surface of the putting green on the line where the ball will be played.
- Over time, the prohibition on touching the line of putt has become subject to many exceptions:
 - Current Rule 16-1a lists seven different situations in which a player is allowed to touch the line of putt.
 - The Decisions recognize additional exceptions, such as that there is no penalty if a player accidentally walks on the line of putt.
- The current prohibition is difficult to administer and penalties are not often applied; and those penalties that are applied may be perceived as serving little or no purpose, such as when a caddie accidentally touches the line of putt with the flagstick.
- The change that will allow a player to repair almost all damage on the putting green (see also Explanation for Proposed Rule Change - *Repairing Damage on Putting Green*) is a further reason why the prohibition on merely touching the line of putt is no longer needed.
- Eliminating the prohibition on touching the line of putt will also be consistent with the related change in new Rule 10.2b(2), which will eliminate current Rule 8.2b's prohibition on merely touching the putting green when pointing out the line of play for a ball on the green.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

27. Touching Loose Impediments or Ground in a Penalty Area

Current Rule: When a player's ball is in a water hazard, Rule 13-4 provides (with exceptions) that the player must not:

- Test the condition of the water hazard,
- Touch the water or the ground in the water hazard with a hand or club, or
- Touch or move loose impediments that are in the water hazard.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 17:

- There will no longer be any special restrictions when a ball is in a "penalty area" (the expanded designation for the area that includes what are now called water hazards).
- A player will be allowed to touch or move loose impediments and touch the ground with hand or club (such as grounding the club right behind the ball) for any reason, subject only to the prohibition on improving conditions for the stroke (see new Rule 8.1a).

Reasons for Change:

- A strict prohibition on touching or moving loose impediments or touching the ground in a water hazard has never been practical, and so a series of exceptions had to be recognized in Rule 13-4 (see Exception 1), Rule 12-1 and various Decisions.
- This has created confusion and complications in applying the Rules, such as needing to decide when a player was or was not "testing", what constitutes touching "as a result of or to prevent falling", and similar questions about applying the many exceptions.
- The current prohibitions have led to penalties that some view as overly harsh, such as:
 - Where the breach was so inconsequential that the player could not have gained any advantage or where even a careful player could not have avoided the penalty, and
 - In a televised competition, where the breach could not be detected by the player or others on the course and was discovered only through later video review.
- Treating a penalty area the same as the general area for these purposes will simplify the Rules, reduce confusion and eliminate unnecessary penalties.
- Removing these restrictions is consistent with the purpose of a penalty area – which is not necessarily to require the player to face a more difficult challenge in playing the ball, but to address the practical need to give the player appropriate relief options because it will often be difficult or impossible to play a ball from the penalty area (such as when the ball is under water).

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

28. Unplayable Ball in Bunker

Current Rule: When taking relief for an unplayable ball in a bunker (Rule 28), the player may:

- Drop and play a ball only in the bunker itself, if taking relief back on a line from the hole to the ball (Rule 28b) or within two club-lengths of the ball (Rule 28c), or
- Take relief outside the bunker only by taking stroke and distance relief from where the previous stroke was made from outside the bunker (Rule 28a); if the previous stroke was made from the bunker, there is no option for relief outside the bunker.

2019 Rule: The player will have an extra option allowing relief outside the bunker using the back-on-the-line procedure, but for a total of two penalty strokes (Rule 19.3b).

Reasons for Change:

- It is not uncommon for a player to need to take unplayable ball relief in a bunker, such as when the ball is very close to the bunker wall or lip.
 - Players usually take back-on-the-line or lateral relief under Rule 28b or c, partly because it is time consuming and inconvenient to return to where the previous stroke was made from outside the bunker to take stroke and distance relief (Rule 28a).
 - Once the player makes a stroke at the ball and it stays in the bunker, there is no longer any option for relief outside the bunker – especially if the ball lies in the very back of the bunker where it is almost impossible to gain any practical relief.
- Playing from a bunker can be very difficult for some players, especially when the bunker has steep walls.
 - This can present particular problems in stroke play because the player must finish the hole and so cannot simply pick up and move to the next hole after multiple tries to play the ball from the bunker.
 - Giving those players an option for taking relief outside the bunker will allow them to keep playing rather than be disqualified.
- This extra option will result in a total of two penalty strokes, to make sure that:
 - The penalty is consistent with the significant amount of relief being allowed, and
 - This option does not become commonly used by players who are able to play from a bunker.
- In effect, the player who uses this extra relief option will be penalized one stroke for taking unplayable ball relief and one extra stroke for being allowed to take that relief outside the bunker using the back-on-the-line procedure.
- This relief will be philosophically consistent with other Rules that provide that, when an obstruction or abnormal ground condition interferes with the play of a ball in a bunker, the player has the option to take free relief within the bunker itself or the extra option to take relief for one penalty stroke by playing from back-on-the-line outside the bunker.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

29. Use and Replacement of Clubs Damaged During Round

Current Rule: Rule 4 sets out two complex standards to be applied in sequence for determining whether a player may continue to use or replace a club that is damaged during the round:

- A damaged club may be used only if it was damaged in the “normal course of play”.
- A club damaged in the normal course of play may be replaced with another club only if the damaged club meets an additional test of being “unfit for play”.
- A club damaged outside the normal course of play (such as when slammed against something in anger) must be declared out of play, must not be used for the rest of the round, and must not be replaced even if unfit for play; or else the player is disqualified.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 4.1:

- A player will be allowed to keep using and/or to repair any club damaged during the round, no matter what the damage and even if the player damaged it in anger.
- A player will not be allowed to replace a damaged club, except when it is damaged during the round by an outside influence or natural forces or by someone other than the player or his or her caddie.

Reasons for Change:

- This Rule change will greatly simplify the complex Rules on damaged clubs.
- In particular, deciding when a club is “unfit for play” may require a technical judgment that few players have the depth of understanding to make, and even referees can find it challenging to make such judgments quickly and consistently on the course.
- Allowing a player to keep using or to repair any damaged club, regardless of the nature or cause of the damage, will benefit players in several ways.
 - It will help players avoid the disqualification penalties that can arise today when a player hits a club against something in anger and then continues to use the club, not realizing that the shaft was slightly bent or some other damage had occurred.
 - The player will be able to choose whether to continue using that club in its damaged state or to use another club; whereas today, for example, a player who damages a putter in anger is not allowed to use it for the rest of the round (even if it is still in a usable form) and so ends up having to putt with a wedge or another club.
- Although there will be times when a damaged club is unusable and cannot be readily repaired on the course (such as when a driver head comes off), the practical ability to get a replacement club is seldom present other than at some elite levels of golf.
- This potential downside from a player’s perspective is outweighed by the ability to use or repair any damaged club, as well as by the significant simplification that results
- This change will be consistent with the overall philosophy that a player normally should play the entire round with only the clubs that he or she started with or added during the round to get to the 14-club limit.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

30. Use of Distance-Measuring Devices

Current Rule: Rule 14-3b, Appendix IA (section 7) and Appendix IV (section 5) cover distance-measuring devices (DMDs):

- The Rule itself prohibits use of DMDs to measure distance during a round.
- But a Committee may adopt a Local Rule allowing such use of DMDs.

2019 Rule: The current default position in the Rules will be reversed:

- Rule 4.3 will allow players to use DMDs to measure distance.
- But a Committee may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting such use of DMDs.

Reasons for Change:

- Allowing DMD use is consistent with the principles of the game:
 - Figuring out the distance to the hole or to another location on the course is not one of the decisions that the Rules expect players to make using only their own skill and judgment or only with a caddie's advice.
 - Distance is public information a player may get from anyone; and on most courses, this information is found on sprinkler heads, markers, posts, etc.
- DMD use has become widespread in the 10 or so years since they were introduced, and they are allowed at most clubs throughout the world and in most amateur competitions, including (since 2014) at USGA and R&A amateur championships.
- Given that in many countries the DMD Local Rule has been adopted by most Committees, it will be sensible for this to be a Rule of Golf rather than being permitted by Local Rule.
- Reversing the default position will help avoid the confusion that sometimes exists today when clubs or players do not realize that DMD use requires adoption of a Local Rule.
- At the same time, Committees that are not comfortable with allowing use of electronic devices such as DMDs on their course generally or during a particular competition may still prohibit their use.
- The revised approach will align the Rules with the reality that golfers of all ages increasingly expect to be able to use electronic devices on the course for other purposes that are allowed by the Rules such as looking up a Rule of Golf or checking the weather.
- Embracing and encouraging the use of DMDs should also benefit pace of play as has been the experience at most amateur championships and clubs that have adopted the Local Rule.

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

31. When to Replace Ball that Moves on the Putting Green

Current Rule: If a player's ball on the putting green moves before the stroke is made:

- The player must replace the ball if it was moved by any player, caddie or outside agency (such as an animal, spectator or moving object).
- But the moved ball must always be played from its new spot if the ball was moved by wind, water or other natural forces (including when the ball moves for no apparent reason because of the effects of gravity).

2019 Rule: Rule 13.1d, will revise the procedure for when a ball on the putting green is moved by wind, water or other natural forces, so that it must sometimes be replaced and sometimes be played from its new spot:

- If the ball had been lifted and replaced on its original spot before it moved, the ball must always be replaced on its original spot, regardless of what caused it to move.
- The ball must be played from its new spot only if the ball had not been lifted and replaced before it moved.

Reasons for Change:

- When a ball at rest is moved by natural forces such as the wind, it is normally played as it lies because its movement is considered a continuation of the previous stroke, as no person or object has affected where the ball lies.
- But when the moved ball had already been lifted and replaced, the connection to the previous stroke is no longer obvious.
- This is especially true on the putting green, where a player is allowed to mark, lift and replace a ball for any reason and many players do so as a matter of course.
 - It can be difficult to determine whether a person or object caused the ball to move or whether it was moved by wind or other natural causes.
 - It will simplify the Rules to provide that a ball always must be replaced if it moves from a spot where it had already been lifted and replaced.
- When a ball on the green moves after having come to rest:
 - It can result in outcomes that seem unfair, such as when the ball rolls off the green (sometimes ending up in a bunker or in water) or rolls close to or into the hole.
 - Requiring the ball to be replaced if it had already been lifted and replaced will eliminate such outcomes in those situations.
- This Rule change may also be helpful in conditions of very high wind on the course, as it may allow play to continue in conditions where it might otherwise not be possible or fair because too many balls are being blown from their spot on the green.



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rule of Golf

The following summary shows where all Decisions from the Decisions on The Rules of Golf, effective 2016, can be found in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf. Its intent is not to provide you with what the answer is in the new Rules, but rather to help those familiar with the previous Decisions book in learning how to navigate the new Rules.

While the mapping contained below has been thoroughly audited, please contact the Rules Department should you see an inaccuracy.

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
1-1/1	NO	X	Rules 1.3b(1), 3.3c and 6.5
1-1/2	NO		Interpretation 6.5/1
1-1/3	NO		Interpretation 6.5/1
1-1/4	NO		Interpretation 6.5/1
1-2/0.5	YES	X	Rules 1.2, 8.3 and 11.2
1-2/0.7	YES	X	Interpretation 8.1b/6
1-2/1	NO		Rules 8.1d(1) and 8.3
1-2/1.5	NO		Rule 8.1d(1)
1-2/2	YES		Rule 10.2b(5)
1-2/3	NO	X	Interpretation 8.2b/1
1-2/3.5	YES		Rule 8.3 and Interpretation 13.1c(2)/2
1-2/4	NO	X	Rules 9.4 and 11.3.
1-2/5	NO	X	Rule 11.2
1-2/5.5	YES		Rule 11.2c(1) and Interpretation 11.2c(1)/1
1-2/7	YES		Rules 11.2c(2) and 23.5b



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
1-2/8	NO		Rule 11.3 and Interpretation 11.3/1
1-2/9	NO		Interpretation 8.2b/1
1-2/10	YES		Interpretations 8.1a/5 and 10.2b(5)/2
1-3/0.5	NO		Rule 1.3b(1)
1-3/2	NO		Interpretations 1.3b(1)/1 and 1.3b(1)/2
1-3/4	NO	X	Rule 1.3b(1)
1-3/5	NO		Rule 1.3b(1) and Interpretation 1.3b(1)/2
1-3/6	NO		Rule 3.3c and Interpretation 3.3b(1)/1
1-3/7	NO		Interpretation 1.3b(1)/2
1-4/1	NO	X	None
1-4/2	NO	X	Rule 15.2
1-4/3	NO	X	None
1-4/4	YES		Rule 5.5a
1-4/5	YES	X	Rules 15.1a and 15.2a
1-4/7	YES		Interpretation 17.1a/2
1-4/8	NO		Definition of Nearest Point of Complete Relief and Interpretation 16.1/3
1-4/8.5	NO		Definition of Nearest Point of Complete Relief
1-4/9	YES		Definition of Ground Under Repair and Rule 16.1a(2)
1-4/10	YES		Rule 16.2b
1-4/11	NO		Rule 16.2a and Interpretation 16.2a/1
1-4/12	NO		Rule 1.3c and its Interpretations
1-4/13	NO		Interpretation 1.3c(4)/1
1-4/14	NO		Interpretation 1.3c(4)/1
1-4/15	NO		Rule 1.3c(4) and Interpretation 1.3c(4)/2
2/1		X	None
2/2	NO		Rules 5.3, 22.4a and 23.3
2/3	YES	X	Rule 15.3



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
2-1/1	NO		Rules 1.3b, 3.2a(2) and 20.1b(1)
2-1/1.5	NO		Rules 1.3b and 3.2a(2)
2-1/2	NO	X	Rule 3.1c(2)
2-1/3	NO	X	Rule 1.3
2-1/4	NO	X	Rule 1.3
2-1/5	NO	X	Rule 1.3
2-1/6	NO	X	Rules 1.3b and 5.7c(1)
2-2/1	YES	X	See applicable penalty statement
2-3/1	YES		Rule 3.2d(3)
2-3/2	NO	X	Rule 3.2b(2)
2-4/1	NO	X	Rule 3.2b(1)
2-4/2	NO	X	Rules 3.2b(1) and 13.3a
2-4/3	NO		Rule 3.2b(2)
2-4/3.5	NO		Rule 3.2b(2) and Interpretation 3.2b(2)/1
2-4/4	NO	X	Rule 3.2b(2)
2-4/5	NO	X	Rules 3.2b(2) and 9.7b
2-4/6	NO		Rule 23.6
2-4/7	NO	X	Rule 3.2b
2-4/8	NO		Rule 15.3a
2-4/9	NO	X	Rules 3.2b(1) and 6.5
2-4/11	NO		Rules 3.2b(1) and 6.5, and Interpretation 6.5/1
2-4/12	NO	X	Rule 3.2b
2-4/13	NO		Rule 3.2b(2)
2-4/14	NO	X	Rules 3.2b(2) and 3.2d(1)
2-4/15	NO	X	Rules 3.2b(1) and 20.1b(3)
2-4/16	NO	X	Rule 20.1b(2) and Interpretation 20.1b(2)/2
2-4/17	NO	X	Rules 3.2b(2) and 9.5



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
2-4/19	NO	X	Rules 3.2a(3) and 3.2b
2-4/20	NO	X	Rule 3.2b
2-4/21	NO	X	Rule 1.3
2-4/22	NO		Interpretation 3.2b(1)/1
2-5/2	YES	X	Rule 20.1b
2-5/3	YES	X	Rules 3.2d(2), 3.2d(4) and 13.2c
2-5/4	NO	X	Rule 20.1b(3)
2-5/5	NO		Rule 20.1b(1)
2-5/5.5	NO	X	Rule 20.1b(2) and Interpretation 20.1b(2)/2
2-5/6	NO		Rule 3.2d(3)
2-5/7	NO	X	Rules 3.2d(1) and 20.1b(1)
2-5/8	NO	X	Rule 20.1b(1)
2-5/8.5	NO		Rule 20.1b(1)
2-5/9	NO		Rule 3.2d(3)
2-5/10	NO		Rule 20.1b(1)
2-5/11	NO	X	Rules 3.2d(1) and 20.1b(3)
2-5/12	NO		Rule 20.1b(1)
2-5/13	NO		Rules 3.2c(2) and 3.2d(3)
2-5/14	NO		Rule 3.2a(5) and Committee Procedures, Section 5A(7)
3/1	NO		Interpretation 1.3c/2
3/2	NO	X	Rules 1.2a and 5.5b
3/3	NO		Rules 5.3, 21.1e, 21.2e, 21.3e and 23.3b
3-2/1	NO	X	Rules 3.3c and 9.6
3-2/2	NO	X	Rules 3.3c and 9.4b
3-3/1	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/6
3-3/2	NO	X	Rules 5.6a and 20.1c(3)
3-3/3	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/2



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
3-3/4	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/2
3-3/5	NO	X	Rule 20.1c(4)
3-3/6	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/2
3-3/6.5	NO	X	Rule 20.1c(3)
3-3/7	YES	X	Definition of In Play and Rules 11.1a, 9.6 and 20.1c(4)
3-3/7.5	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/5
3-3/8	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/5
3-3/9	YES		Interpretation 20.1b(4)/1
3-3/10	NO	X	Rule 20.1c(3)
3-3/11	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/7
3-3/12	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/7
3-3/13	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/3
3-3/14	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/4
3-4/1	YES		Rule 15.3a
4-1/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule G-2
4-1/2	NO		Interpretation 4.1a(1)/1
4-1/3		ER	See the Equipment Rules
4-1/4		ER	See the Equipment Rules
4-1/5		ER	See the Equipment Rules
4-2/0.5	YES		Rule 4.1a(2) and Interpretation 4.1a(2)/1
4-2/2	YES		Rule 4.1a(3)
4-2/3	YES		Rule 4.1a(3)
4-2/4	YES		Rule 4.1a(3)
4-3/1	YES	X	Rules 4.1a(2) and 5.1
4-3/2	YES		Rule 4.1a(2) and Interpretation 4.1a(2)/1
4-3/3	YES		Rule 4.1b(3)
4-3/4	YES		Rule 4.1a(2)



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
4-3/5	NO	X	Rule 4.1a(2)
4-3/7	YES		Rule 4.1b(3)
4-3/8	NO		Rules 4.1b(1) and 4.1b(3)
4-3/9	YES	X	Rule 4.1a(2)
4-3/9.5	NO		Rule 4.1b(3)
4-3/10	NO		Rule 4.1b(3)
4-3/11	YES		Rules 4.1a(2) and 4.1b(3)
4-3/12	NO		Rule 4.1a(2)
4-4a/1	NO		Interpretation 4.1b(1)/4
4-4a/2	NO	X	Definition of Round and Rules 4.1b and 5.1
4-4a/4	NO		Interpretation 4.1b(2)/1
4-4a/5	NO		Rules 4.1b(1), 4.1b(2) and 4.1c(1)
4-4a/5.5	NO		Rule 4.1b(1)
4-4a/6	NO	X	Rules 4.1b(1) and 20.3
4-4a/7	YES	X	Rules 4.1a(1) and 4.1b(1)
4-4a/8	NO		Rule 4.1b(1)
4-4a/9	NO		Rule 4.1b
4-4a/10	NO	X	Rules 4.1b and 23.8a(2)
4-4a/11	NO		Interpretation 4.1b/1
4-4a/12	NO		Rule 4.1b(2)
4-4a/13	NO		Interpretation 4.1b(2)/2
4-4a/14	NO		Interpretation 4.1b(1)/2
4-4a/15	NO		Interpretations 4.1b(1)/1 and 4.1b(4)/1
4-4a/16	NO		Rules 1.3c(4) and 10.3a(1) and Interpretation 4.1b(1)/3
4-4b/1	NO		Rule 4.1b(2), 22.5 and 23.7
4-4c/1	YES		Rule 4.1c(2)
4-4c/2	YES	X	Rules 4.1c(1) and 4.1c(2)



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
5-1/1	NO	X	Rules 1.3c(3) and 4.2a
5-1/1.5	NO		Interpretation 4.2a(1)/1
5-1/1.7	NO	X	None
5-1/2	NO		Rule 1.3c(3)
5-1/3	NO		Interpretation 4.2a(1)/3
5-1/4	NO		Interpretation 4.2a(1)/2
5-1/5	NO		Rule 4.2a
5-3/1	NO	X	Rule 4.2c
5-3/2	NO		Rule 4.2c(2)
5-3/3	NO		Rule 4.2c and Interpretation 20.1b(2)/1
5-3/3.5	YES	X	Rule 4.2c
5-3/4	NO	X	Rule 4.2b
5-3/5	NO	X	Rules 4.2c(2) and 14.2
5-3/6	YES	X	See relief Rules
5-3/7	YES	X	Rule 4.2c
5-3/8	NO		Interpretation 20.1b(2)/1
6-1/1	YES	X	Rules 1.3a and 1.3b
6-2/1	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(4)/1
6-2a/1	NO		Rule 3.2c(2) and Interpretation 3.2c(2)/1
6-2a/2	NO		Rule 3.2c(2) and Interpretation 3.2c(2)/1
6-2a/3	NO		Rule 3.2c(2)
6-2a/4	NO	X	Rule 3.2b
6-2a/5	NO	X	Rules 3.2c(1) and 20.1b(3)
6-2a/6	NO		Rules 1.3a and 3.2c(2)
6-2b/0.5	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(4)/1
6-2b/1	NO	X	Rule 20.2e(2)
6-2b/2	NO	X	Rule 20.2e(2)



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
6-2b/2.5	NO		Rules 20.2e(2) and 22.2
6-2b/3	NO		Interpretations 20.2d/1 and 20.2d/2
6-2b/3.5	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(4)/2
6-2b/4	NO		Interpretation 22.1/1
6-2b/5	NO		Interpretation 1.3c/1
6-3a/1		X	None
6-3a/1.5	NO		Interpretation 5.3a/1
6-3a/2	NO		Rule 5.3a
6-3a/2.5	NO		Rule 5.3a
6-3a/3	NO		Interpretation 5.3a/5
6-3a/4	NO		Rule 5.3a
6-3a/5	NO		Rule 5.3a
6-4/1	NO		Rule 10.3a(2)
6-4/2.5	NO		Definition of Caddie
6-4/3	NO		Interpretation 10.3a/1
6-4/4	NO		Definition of Caddie and Rule 10.3a(1)
6-4/4.5	NO		Definition of Caddie
6-4/5	NO		Rule 10.3a(1)
6-4/5.3	NO		Interpretation Equipment/1
6-4/5.5	YES	X	Rule 10.3a
6-4/6	YES	X	Rule 11.1a
6-4/7	NO		Rule 10.3a(1)
6-4/8	NO		Interpretation 10.3a/2
6-4/9	NO		Interpretation 10.3a/2
6-4/10	NO		Rule 10.3b
6-6a/1	YES		Rule 3.3b
6-6a/2	NO		Interpretation 3.3b/1



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
6-6a/3	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(3)/1
6-6a/4	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(1)/2
6-6a/5	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(1)/1
6-6a/6	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(2)/2
6-6a/7	NO		Interpretation 3.3b/3
6-6b/1	NO		Interpretation 3.3b/2
6-6b/2	NO		Interpretation 3.3b/2
6-6b/3	NO	X	Rule 3.3b(3)
6-6b/4	NO	X	Rule 3.3b
6-6b/5	NO		Rule 3.3b
6-6b/6	NO		Rule 3.3b(2) and Interpretation 3.3b(2)/3
6-6b/7	NO		Rule 3.3b(2) and Interpretation 3.3b(2)/3
6-6b/8	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(2)/1
6-6c/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5A(5)
6-6d/1	NO		Rule 3.3b(3)
6-6d/2	NO		Rule 3.3b(5)
6-6d/3	NO		Interpretation 3.3b(3)/1
6-6d/4	NO		Interpretation 3.3b/2
6-6d/5	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 6C(7)
6-6d/6	YES		Rule 3.3b(3)
6-6d/7	YES		Rule 3.3b(3)
6-6d/8	NO	X	Rule 3.3b(3)
6-6d/9	YES	X	Rule 3.3b(3)
6-6d/10	NO		Rule 3.3b(3)
6-7/1	NO		Interpretation 5.6a/1
6-7/2	NO		Interpretation 5.6a/1
6-8a/1	YES		Interpretation 5.7a/1



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
6-8a/2	NO		Interpretation 5.7a/1
6-8a/2.5	NO		Interpretation 5.6a/1
6-8a/2.7	NO		Interpretation 5.6a/1
6-8a/3	NO		Interpretation 5.6a/2
6-8a/4	NO		Interpretation 5.6a/1
6-8a/5	NO		Rules 5.7a and 5.7c
6-8a/6	NO		Rules 5.7a and 5.7c
6-8b/1	NO		Rule 5.7b(2)
6-8b/2	NO		Rule 5.7b(2)
6-8b/3	NO		Rule 5.7b(2)
6-8b/3.5	YES		Rule 5.7b(2)
6-8b/4	NO	X	Rule 5.7c
6-8b/5	NO		Interpretation 5.7c/1
6-8b/6	YES		Rules 5.3a and 5.7c
6-8b/7	NO		Interpretation 5.7b(1)/1
6-8b/8	NO		Interpretation 5.7b/1
6-8b/9	NO		Rule 5.7c(2)
6-8c/1	YES	X	Rule 5.7d(1)
6-8d/1	NO		Rules 5.7d(1) and 8.1d(2), and Interpretation 8.1d(2)/1.
6-8d/2	YES		Rule 5.7d(1) and Interpretation 5.7d(1)/1
6-8d/3	YES	X	Rule 5.7d(1)
6-8d/4	NO		Rule 5.7d(2)
6-8d/5	NO		Rules 1.3b(2) and 5.7d(2)
7-1b/1	YES		Rule 5.2
7-1b/2	YES	X	Rule 5.2b and Interpretation 5.2b/1
7-1b/3	YES		Rule 5.2b and Interpretation 5.2b/1
7-1b/4	YES	X	Rule 5.2b



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
7-1b/5	NO		Rule 5.2
7-1b/6	YES		Rule 5.2b
7-1b/7	NO		Interpretation 5.2b/2
7-2/1	NO		Interpretation 5.5b/1
7-2/1.5	NO		Rule 5.5a
7-2/1.7	NO	X	Rule 5.5a
7-2/3	NO	X	Rule 5.5a
7-2/4	NO		Interpretation 5.5a/1
7-2/5	NO		Rule 5.5a
7-2/5.5	NO		Rule 5.5a
7-2/7	NO	X	Definition of Stroke and Rule 5.5a
7-2/8	NO		Interpretation 5.2b/2
7-2/9	NO		Interpretation 5.2b/2
7-2/10	NO		Rule 5.5c
7-2/11	NO		Rule 5.5c
7-2/12	NO		Interpretation 5.5c/1
8/1	NO		Interpretation 24.4/1
8/2	NO		Rule 24.4b
8-1/2	NO		Definition of Advice
8-1/5	NO		Definition of Advice
8-1/6	NO		Interpretation Advice/2
8-1/7	NO		Interpretation Advice/2
8-1/8	YES		Interpretations Advice/1 and Advice/2
8-1/9	NO		Interpretation Advice/1
8-1/10	NO		Interpretation Advice/2
8-1/11	NO		Rule 10.2a
8-1/12	NO		Interpretation 10.2a/1



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
8-1/13	NO	X	Definition of Advice
8-1/14	NO		Interpretation Advice/1
8-1/15	NO	X	Definition of Advice and Rule 10.3a
8-1/16	NO		Interpretation Advice/1
8-1/17	NO		Interpretation Advice/2
8-1/18	NO	X	Rule 10.2a
8-1/19	NO		Rule 10.2a
8-1/20	NO		Rule 10.2a
8-1/21	NO		Rule 24.4c
8-1/22	NO		Rule 24.4c. But, see also Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule H-5
8-1/24	NO		Interpretation 10.2a/2
8-1/25	NO	X	Rules 10.2a and 23.8a(2)
8-1/26	NO		Rule 10.3a(1)
8-2a/0.5	NO	X	Rule 10.2b(1)
8-2a/1	YES		Rule 10.2b(3)
8-2a/2	YES		Rule 10.2b(3)
8-2a/3	NO	X	Rule 10.2b(1)
8-2b/0.5	YES		Rule 10.2b(2)
8-2b/1	NO	X	Rule 10.2b(2)
8-2b/2	YES		Rule 10.2b(2)
8-2b/3	NO	X	Rule 10.2b
8-2b/4	YES		Interpretation 24.4/1
9/1	YES	X	Rules 3.2d(1) and 3.2d(2)
9-2/1	NO		Interpretation 3.2d(2)/1
9-2/2	NO		Rules 10.3c and 23.5b
9-2/3	NO		Rule 3.2d(1)



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
9-2/3.5	NO		Rule 3.2d(1)
9-2/4	NO		Interpretation 3.2d(1)/1
9-2/5	NO		Rule 3.2d(1)
9-2/6	YES		Rule 3.2d(1)
9-2/7	NO		Rule 3.2d(1)
9-2/8	NO	X	Rules 3.2d(2) and 20.1b(2)
9-2/9	NO		Interpretation 3.2d(1)/3
9-2/10	NO	X	Rules 3.2d(1) and 20.1b(2)
9-2/11	NO		Rule 20.1b(1)
9-2/12	NO		Interpretation 3.2d(3)/1
9-2/13	NO		Interpretation 3.2d(1)/5
9-2/14	NO	X	Rules 3.2d(1) and 6.5
9-2/15	NO		Interpretation 3.2d(1)/2
9-2/16	NO	X	Rule 5.6
9-3/1	NO		Rule 1.2a and Interpretation 1.3c/2
10/1	NO	X	Rule 6.4d(1)
10/2	NO	X	Rule 6.4d(1)
10/3	NO	X	Rules 6.4a(1) and 6.4b(1)
10/4	NO		Rule 6.4d(2)
10-1a/1	NO	X	Rule 6.4a(1)
10-1a/2	NO		Rule 6.4a(1)
10-1b/1	NO	X	None
10-1c/1	NO		Rules 6.4a(2) and 20.1b(1)
10-1c/2	NO	X	Rules 6.4a(2) and 15.3b(2)
10-1c/3	NO		Rule 6.4a(2)
10-2a/1	NO		Rule 6.4b(1)
10-2b/1	NO	X	Rules 6.4b(2) and 15.3



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
10-2c/1	NO	X	Rule 18.1
10-2c/2	NO		Rule 6.4b(2)
10-3/1	NO		Interpretation 6.4c/1
11-2/1	YES		Rule 6.2b(4)
11-2/2	YES		Rule 6.2b(4) and Interpretation 6.2b(4)/1
11-3/1	YES		Rule 6.2b(6) and Interpretation 6.2b(6)/1
11-3/3	NO		Rule 6.2b(5)
11-4a/1	NO		Rule 6.1b(1)
11-4b/2	YES		Interpretation 6.1/1
11-4b/3	YES		Interpretation 6.1/1
11-4b/6	NO	X	Rule 6.1b(2)
11-5/1	NO	X	Rule 6.1b(2)
11-5/2	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 5E(1)
11-5/3	NO		Interpretation 6.1b(1)/1
11-5/4	NO	X	Rule 6.1b(2)
12-1/3	YES	X	Rule 15.1a
12-1/4	NO		Rules 7.1 and 15.1a
12-1/5	YES		Rules 7.4 and 9.4b
12-2/1	NO		Rule 7.2
12-2/2	YES		Rule 7.3
13/1	NO		Definition of Bunker
13/2	NO		Definition of Bunker
13/3	NO	X	Rule 12.1
13/4	YES		Definition of Bunker
13/5	NO		Rule 12.1
13-2/0.5	NO		Definition of Improve and Interpretations 8.1a/1 and 8.1a/2
13-2/1	NO		Rule 8.1b(6), and Interpretations 8.1b/3 and 8.1b/4



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
13-2/1.1	NO		Rules 8.1a(1), 8.1b(6) and 8.1c(1)
13-2/1.5	NO		Interpretation 8.1b/3
13-2/1.7	NO	X	Rules 8.1a(1), 8.1b(6) and 8.1c(1)
13-2/2	NO		Rules 6.2b(3) and 8.1b(8)
13-2/3	NO		Rules 6.2b(3) and 8.1b(8)
13-2/4	NO		Rules 1.3c(1) and 8.1a, and Interpretation 1.3c(1)/1
13-2/4.5	NO		Interpretation 8.1a/8
13-2/5	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment and Rule 8.1a(3)
13-2/6	NO		Rule 8.1a(3)
13-2/7	NO		Interpretation 8.1a/9
13-2/8	NO		Rule 8.1d(1) and Interpretation 8.1d(1)/1
13-2/8.5	NO		Rule 8.1d(1) and Interpretation 8.1d(1)/1
13-2/8.7	NO		Rule 8.1d(1) and Interpretation 8.1d(1)/1
13-2/9	YES	X	Rule 8.1b(7)
13-2/10	YES	X	Rules 8.1a, 8.2 and 16.3b
13-2/12	NO		Rule 8.1b(4) and Interpretation 8.1b/1
13-2/13	YES		Rules 8.1b(2) and 15.1a, and Interpretation 12.2a/1
13-2/14	YES		Rules 6.2b(3), 8.1b(8) and 8.1c, and Interpretations 8.1a/3 and 8.1b/5
13-2/14.5	NO	X	Rule 8.1b(7)
13-2/15	YES		Rules 8.1a(1) and 8.1c(1)
13-2/15.5	NO		Rules 8.1a and 8.1d, and Interpretation 8.1d(2)/2
13-2/16	YES		Definition of Obstruction, and Rules 8.1a(1) and 8.1c(1)
13-2/17	YES		Rules 8.1a(1) and 8.1c(1)
13-2/18	YES		Rules 8.1a(1) and 8.1c(1)
13-2/19	YES		Definition of Immovable Obstructions and Rules 8.1a(1) and Rule 8.1c(1).
13-2/20	YES		Interpretation 8.1a/4
13-2/23	NO	X	Definition of Improve and Rule 8.1a(5)



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
13-2/24	YES		Interpretation 8.1a/3
13-2/25	YES		Rules 8.1a(1) and 8.1c(1)
13-2/26	YES		Rule 8.1b(11)
13-2/27	YES		Interpretations 8.1a/7 and 12.2b/2
13-2/29	NO		Rule 8.1d(2)
13-2/29.3	YES		Interpretation 8.1d(2)/3
13-2/29.5	NO		Rule 8.1d(1)
13-2/30	NO		Rules 8.1a(3) and 12.2b(1)
13-2/31	NO	X	Rules 8.1a(4) and 15.1a
13-2/32	YES		Definition of Movable Obstruction, and Rules 8.1a(1) and Rule 8.1c(1)
13-2/33	NO		Rules 1.3c(1) and 8.1a(1), and Interpretations 1.3c(1)/1 and 8.3/1
13-2/35	NO	X	Rules 8.1a(5) and 8.1b(8)
13-2/36	YES	X	Rule 13.1c(2)
13-2/37	NO	X	Definition of Loose Impediment and Rule 8.1a(1)
13-3/1	NO		Rule 8.1a(2)
13-3/2	NO		Rule 8.1a(2) and Interpretation 8.1a/5
13-3/3	NO		Interpretation 8.1a/6
13-3/5	NO		Rule 8.1c and Interpretations 8.1a/5 and 8.1a/6
13-4/0.5	YES		Rule 12.2b and Interpretation 8.1b/2
13-4/1	NO	X	Rule 8.1b(4)
13-4/2	YES		Rule 12.2b(2)
13-4/3	NO		Rule 12.2b(1) and Interpretation 1.3c(4)/3
13-4/3.5	NO		Rules 12.2b(2) and 17.1b
13-4/4	NO	X	Rule 17.1b
13-4/5	NO		Interpretation 12.2b/1
13-4/6	YES	X	Rule 12.2b
13-4/7	NO	X	Rule 12.2b



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
13-4/8	YES	X	Rule 17.1b
13-4/9	NO	X	Rule 12.2b
13-4/9.5	YES	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/10	NO		Rule 8.1d(1)
13-4/11	NO	X	Rules 8.1d(2) and 12.2b(2)
13-4/12	NO	X	Rules 9.4b and 17.1b
13-4/13	NO	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/13.5	NO	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/14	YES	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/15	YES	X	Rules 9.4b and 15.1b
13-4/16	NO	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/16.5	NO	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/17	YES	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/18	NO	X	Rules 8.1d(1) and 15.1a
13-4/18.5	YES		Rule 15.1a. But see also Interpretation 8.1d(2)/1.
13-4/19	NO		Rules 12.2b(1) and 8.1d(1), and Interpretation 8.1d(1)/1
13-4/21	NO		Rule 12.2b(2)
13-4/24	NO		Interpretation 8.1b/2
13-4/26	NO		Interpretation 8.1b/2
13-4/28	NO		Rule 15.1a and Interpretation 1.3c(4)/3
13-4/29	NO	X	Rule 17.1b
13-4/30	NO	X	Rule 17.1b
13-4/31	NO		Rule 12.2b(1)
13-4/33	YES		Rule 15.1a and Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-14
13-4/34	YES		Definition of Bunker
13-4/35	YES		Rule 12.2b(2)
13-4/35.5	YES		Rules 12.2b(2) and 12.2b(3)



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
13-4/35.7	YES	X	Rule 15.1a
13-4/35.8	NO		Interpretations 12.2b(3)/1 and 12.2b/3
13-4/37	NO		Rule 12.2b(3)
13-4/37.5	NO		Rule 12.2b(3) and Interpretation 8.1b/6
13-4/38	NO		Rule 12.2b(3)
13-4/39	NO		Rule 12.2b(3) and Interpretation 8.1a/8
13-4/40	YES	X	Rule 17.1b
14/1	NO		Interpretation Stroke/1
14/1.5	NO		Definition of Stroke
14/2	NO		Interpretation Stroke/1
14/3	NO		Interpretation Stroke/1
14/4	NO		Interpretation Stroke/1
14/5	NO		Interpretation Stroke/1
14/7	NO		Interpretation Stroke/1
14-1a/1	NO		Interpretation 10.1a/2
14-1a/2	NO		Interpretation 10.1a/1
14-1a/3	NO		Rule 10.1a
14-1a/4	NO		Rule 10.1a
14-1a/5	NO		Interpretation 10.1a/3
14-1a/6	NO		Rule 10.1a and Interpretation 10.1a/1
14-1a/7	NO	X	Rule 10.1a
14-1b/1	NO		Interpretation 10.1b/1
14-1b/2	NO		Interpretation 10.1b/1
14-1b/3	NO		Rule 10.1b
14-1b/4	NO	X	Definition of Stroke and Rule 10.1b
14-1b/5	NO	X	Definition of Stroke and Rule 10.1b
14-1b/6	NO		Rule 10.1b



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
14-1b/7	NO		Interpretations 10.1b/2 and 10.1b/3
14-2/0.5	NO		Rule 10.2b(5)
14-2/1	YES	X	Rule 10.2b(4)
14-2/2	NO		Rule 10.2b(5)
14-2/2.5	NO		Rule 10.2b(5) and Interpretation 10.2b(5)/1
14-2/3	NO		Rule 10.2b(5) and Interpretation 10.2b(5)/1
14-3/0.5	YES		Rule 4.3a(1)
14-3/0.7	NO	X	But see Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule G-5, Rule 4.3 and Rule 1.3c(1).
14-3/1	YES	X	Rule 4.3a(1)
14-3/2	NO	X	Rule 4.3a(1)
14-3/3	NO		Rule 4.3a
14-3/4	NO		Rule 4.3a(1)
14-3/5	NO		Rule 4.3a(1)
14-3/5.5	NO	X	Rule 4.3a(1)
14-3/6	NO		Rules 4.3a and 4.3a(5)
14-3/6.5	NO		Rule 4.3a
14-3/7	NO		Rule 4.3b(2)
14-3/8	NO		Rule 4.3b(2)
14-3/9	NO	X	Rule 4.3a
14-3/10	NO		Rule 4.3a(6)
14-3/10.3	NO		Rule 4.3a(6)
14-3/10.5	NO		Rule 4.3a(6)
14-3/11	NO		Interpretation 4.3a(1)/1
14-3/12	NO		Interpretation 4.3a(1)/1
14-3/12.5	NO		Interpretation 4.3a(1)/1
14-3/13	NO		Rule 4.3a



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
14-3/13.5	YES		Rule 4.2a(2)
14-3/14	NO	X	Rule 4.3a
14-3/15	NO		Rule 4.3b(1)
14-3/15.5	NO	X	Rule 4.3b(1)
14-3/16	NO		Rules 4.3a(3) and 4.3a(4), and Interpretation 4.3a(4)/1
14-3/17	YES		Rule 4.3a(4)
14-3/18	NO		Rule 4.3a(2)
14-3/19	NO	X	Rules 1.3c(4) and 4.3a(6)
14-3/20	NO		Rule 4.3
14-3/21	NO	X	Rules 1.3c(4) and 4.3a(5), and Interpretation 1.3c(4)/1
14-4/2	NO	X	Rule 11.1a
14-4/3	YES	X	Rule 10.1a
14-5/1	NO	X	Rules 9.1b and 10.1d
14-5/2	NO		Rule 10.1d
14-6/1	NO	X	Rule 9.2b(2)
15/1	NO	X	Definition of Stroke
15/2	NO	X	Definition of Stroke
15/3	NO		Interpretation Wrong Ball/1
15/4	NO		Definition of Wrong Ball and Rule 14.4
15/5	NO	X	Rules 18.1, 9.4b and 6.3c
15/6	NO		Definition of Wrong Ball
15/6.5	NO	X	Rules 6.3a and 6.3b
15/7	NO	X	Interpretation 6.3c(1)/1
15/8	NO		Rules 18.1, 16.1e, 9.4 and 6.3b
15/9	NO		Definition of Wrong Ball and Rules 10.3c and 18.2a(2)
15/10	NO		Interpretation 9.6/4
15/11	NO		Rule 6.3c



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
15/12	NO	X	Rule 18.1
15/13	NO		Rules 19.2 and 14.5
15/14	NO	X	Rules 19.2 and 18.1, and Committee Procedures, Section 6C (9)
15-1/1	NO		Rule 6.3a
15-1/2	NO		Interpretation 6.3a/1
15-1/2.5	NO	X	Rules 6.3b and 6.3c
15-1/3	NO	X	Rule 6.3c(1)
15-1/4	NO	X	Rule 17.1d
15-2/1	YES		Rule 14.2a
15-2/2	NO	X	Rules 6.3b(2) and 14.5
15-2/3	NO		Rule 6.3b(2)
15-2/4	NO	X	Rules 6.3b(2) and 1.3c(1)
15-3b/1	NO		Rule 6.3c(2)
15-3b/2	NO	X	Rule 6.3c(1) and Interpretation 1.3c(4)/1
15-3b/3	NO	X	Rules 9.6 or 1.3c(1) and 6.3c
16/1	NO		Rule 13.1a
16/2	NO		Interpretation Holed/1
16/3	NO		Interpretation Holed/1
16/4	NO	X	Rules 15.2a and 13.1c(2), and Interpretation 13.1c(2)/2
16/5	NO		Rule 11.1a
16/5.5	NO		Interpretation Holed/2
16/7	NO		Definition of Ground Under Repair
16-1a/1	NO	X	Rule 8.1a(5)
16-1a/3	NO	X	Rule 8.1a(5)
16-1a/4	NO	X	Rule 8.1a(5)
16-1a/5	YES	X	Rule 10.2b(2)
16-1a/6	YES		Interpretation 13.1c(2)/2



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
16-1a/7	YES		Rule 13.1c(2)
16-1a/8	YES	X	Rules 13.1c(2) and 15.1a
16-1a/9	YES	X	Rules 13.1c(2) and 15.1a
16-1a/10	YES	X	Rules 13.1c(2) and 15.1a
16-1a/11	NO		Rules 13.1c(2) and 8.1b(11)
16-1a/12	YES	X	Rule 10.2b(2)
16-1a/13	NO		Rules 8.1d(1) and 13.1c(2), and Interpretation 13.1c(2)/1
16-1a/15	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-15
16-1a/16	YES	X	Rule 13.1c(2)
16-1a/16.5	YES	X	Rule 13.1c(2)
16-1a/17	NO	X	Rules 10.2b(2) and 13.1c(2)
16-1b/1	NO	X	Rule 13.1b
16-1b/2	NO		Rule 11.3
16-1b/3	NO		Rules 11.1a, Rule 11.1b and 11.2
16-1b/4	YES		Rule 11.3
16-1c/1	NO	X	Rule 13.1c(2)
16-1c/1.5	NO		Interpretation 8.1b/7
16-1c/2	YES		Rules 8.1d(1) and 8.3, and Interpretation 8.1d(1)/2
16-1c/3	NO		Rule 13.1c(2) and Interpretation 13.1c(2)/3
16-1c/4	YES		Rule 13.1c(2)
16-1d/1	NO		Interpretation 13.1e/1
16-1d/2	NO		Interpretation 13.1e/1
16-1d/3	YES		Interpretation Replace/1
16-1d/4	NO		Interpretation 13.1e/1
16-1d/5	NO		Interpretation 13.1e/1
16-1d/6	NO	X	Rules 10.3c and 13.1e
16-1e/1	NO	X	Definition of Line of Play and Rule 10.1c



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
16-2/0.5	NO		Rules 13.3a and 13.3b
16-2/2	YES		Rule 13.3b
16-2/4	YES		Rule 13.3b and Interpretation 13.3b/1
16-2/5	YES		Rule 13.3b and Interpretation 13.3b/1
17/1	NO		Definition of Flagstick and the Equipment Rules
17/2	NO		Definition of Flagstick and the Equipment Rules
17/3	NO		See the Equipment Rules
17/3.5	NO		Definition of Flagstick and the Equipment Rules
17/4	NO		Rule 13.2a(1) and Interpretation 13.2a(1)/1
17/6	NO	X	Rules 15.2a and 20.3
17/7	NO	X	Definition of Hole
17/8	YES		Rule 11.1b and Interpretation 11.1b/1
17/9	NO		Rule 11.1b
17-1/1	NO	X	Rule 13.2b(1)
17-1/2	NO	X	None
17-1/3	NO	X	Rule 13.2b(1)
17-1/4	NO		Interpretation 13.2b(1)/1
17-1/4.5	NO		Rule 13.2b(1) and Interpretation 13.2b(1)/1
17-1/5	YES		Interpretation 13.2b(1)/2
17-2/1	YES		Interpretation 13.2a(4)/1
17-2/2	YES		Rule 13.2a(4)
17-3/1	YES	X	Rule 13.2a(2)
17-3/2	YES		Rule 13.2b(2)
17-3/3	YES		Rule 13.2b(2)
17-3/4	YES		Rules 13.2b(1) and 13.2b(2)
17-3/5	YES		Definition of Flagstick and Rule 13.2b(2)
17-3/6	NO		Interpretation Flagstick/1



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
17-4/1	YES		Rule 13.2c
17-4/2	YES		Rule 13.2c
17-4/3	YES		Rule 13.2c
17-4/4	YES	X	Rule 13.2c
18/1	NO		Definition of Moved
18/2	NO		Definition of Moved
18/3	NO		Interpretation Moved/1
18/4	NO		Definition of Moved, Rule 20.2c and Interpretation Moved/2
18/7	YES	X	Definition of Equipment
18/7.5	NO		Rules 9.5, 9.6 and 13.1d(1)
18/8	YES	X	Definition of Outside Influence and Rule 9.6. But, see also Rules 9.4 and 9.5.
18/11	NO		Rule 14.2a
18-1/2	NO		Interpretation Outside Influence/1
18-1/3	NO		Interpretation 9.6/3
18-1/4	YES		Rule 9.2b(2) and Interpretation 9.6/3
18-1/5	YES		Interpretation 9.6/2
18-1/6	NO		Definition of Outside Influence, Rule 9.6 and Interpretation 9.6/1
18-1/7	NO		Interpretation 9.6/1
18-1/8	YES	X	Rule 9.5
18-1/9	NO		Interpretation 9.4a/1
18-1/12	YES		Rule 13.1d(2)
18-2/0.5	YES		Definition of Known or Virtually Certain and Interpretation Known or Virtually Certain/1
18-2/1	YES		Rule 6.2b(6) and Interpretation 6.2b(6)/1
18-2/2	YES		Rules 18.1 and 6.2b(6), and Interpretation 6.2b(6)/1
18-2/3	NO	X	Rule 9.4b
18-2/4	NO	X	Rule 9.4b



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
18-2/5	NO	X	Definition of Wrong Ball and Rules 6.3c(1), 9.2b(2) and 9.4
18-2/6	YES		Rules 9.2b(2), 9.4 and 11.1a, and Interpretation 11.1b/2
18-2/7	NO	X	Definitions Outside Influence and Natural Forces and Rules 9.3 and 9.4
18-2/8	NO	X	Rule 9.4
18-2/8.5	NO	X	Rules 6.3b and 18.1, and Interpretation 19.2/5
18-2/9	NO		Rules 9.4 and 14.2b(2), and Interpretation 14.2b(2)/1
18-2/10	YES	X	Rules 9.4 and 14.2b(2), and Interpretation 14.2b(2)/1
18-2/11	NO		Interpretation 18.1/2
18-2/12	NO		Interpretation 9.4b/6
18-2/12.5	NO		Interpretation 9.4b/6
18-2/13	NO	X	Rule 14.1c
18-2/13.5	NO		Rule 14.2a
18-2/14	NO	X	Rules 7.3, 9.4b, 10.3b(2)
18-2/15	NO		Rules 10.3b(3), 10.3c and 9.4
18-2/16	NO	X	Rules 1.3c(2) and 9.4
18-2/17	YES		Definition of Outside Influence and Rule 9.6
18-2/18	YES	X	Rules 9.4 and 13.1d(1)
18-2/19	NO		Rule 6.2b(5)
18-2/20	YES	X	Rules 9.4 or 13.1d(1)
18-2/20.5	NO	X	Rule 9.4
18-2/21	NO	X	Rules 9.4, 6.3c(1), 1.3c(4) and 1.3c(4)/4
18-2/21.3	NO	X	Rules 9.4, 14.2d(2) and 14.7
18-2/21.5	YES	X	Rules 9.4 and 14.2d
18-2/22	NO	X	Definition of Stroke and Rule 9.4
18-2/23	NO	X	Rule 9.4b
18-2/24	YES		Rules 13.1d(1) and 13.3a
18-2/25	NO		Rules 9.1 and 9.4. But see also Rule 9.4b Exceptions.



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
18-2/26	NO		Interpretation 9.4a/1
18-2/27	NO		Interpretation 9.4a/1
18-2/28	NO		Interpretation 9.4a/1
18-2/29	NO		Interpretation 9.4a/1
18-2/30	NO		Interpretation 9.4a/1
18-2/31	NO	X	Rule 9.4b
18-2/32	NO		Interpretation 9.4b/1
18-2/33	NO		Rules 14.1, 14.1a and 9.4b
18-3b/1	NO	X	Rule 9.5
18-3b/2	YES	X	Rules 9.2b(2) and 9.5
18-3b/3	NO	X	Rules 7.4 or 9.5 and 10.3c
18-3b/4	NO		Interpretation 9.5b/1
18-3b/5	NO	X	Rules 1.3b(2), 9.5, 10.3c and 18.2a(2)
18-4/3	NO	X	Rule 9.6 and Committee Procedures, Section 7A
18-5/2	NO	X	Definition of Outside Influence and Rule 9.6
18-5/3	NO		Interpretation 9.6/3
18-6/1	NO	X	Rule 9.4b
18-6/2	YES	X	Rules 9.4b and 13.1d(1)
19/1	YES	X	Rules 11.1 and 11.2
19/2	YES	X	Definitions of Equipment and Outside Influence, and Rules 11.1 and 11.2
19-1/1	NO	X	Rule 11.1
19-1/2	NO	X	Definition of Outside Influence and Rule 11.1
19-1/3	NO		Interpretation 11.1b/1. But see also Rule 11.1b.
19-1/4.1	NO		Rules 1.3b(2) and 11.2c(1), and Interpretation 11.2c(1)/1
19-1/5	YES	X	Rules 11.2a, 11.2b and 11.2c(2), and the Definition of Serious Breach
19-1/6	NO		Rules 11.1a and 11.1b
19-1/7	NO		Rule 11.1b



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
19-2/1	YES		Interpretation 11.1b/2
19-2/1.5	YES		Interpretation 11.1b/2
19-2/2	YES	X	Rules 11.1 and 18.2a(2)
19-2/3	YES	X	Rule 11.1a
19-2/4	YES	X	Rules 11.1 and 18.2a(2)
19-2/5	YES	X	Rules 11.1a and 11.2
19-2/6	YES	X	Rules 11.1 or 11.2
19-2/7	YES	X	Rules 11.1 or 11.2
19-2/8	YES	X	Rules 11.1 or 11.2
19-2/9	YES	X	Rule 11.1a
19-2/10	YES	X	Definition of Equipment and Rule 11.1a
19-3/1	YES		Rule 11.1
19-3/3	YES		Rule 11.1
19-5/1	YES		Definition of In Play and Rule 11.1b
19-5/1.5	YES		Rules 13.1d and 9.6
19-5/1.7	YES		Definitions of Equipment and In Play, and Rule 11.1b
19-5/2	NO		Rule 11.1b
19-5/4	YES		Rule 11.1b
19-5/5	YES		Definitions of Equipment and In Play, and Rules 11.1a Rule 11.1b. But see also Rule 11.2.
20/1	YES		Definition of Club-Length and Rule 14.3c
20/2	NO		Definition of Club-Length
20-1/0.5	NO	X	Rule 14.1b
20-1/0.7	YES		Rule 16.4
20-1/1	NO	X	Rules 14.1a, 13.1b and 9.4b
20-1/2	NO		See Rules 9.4b. But see also Exception 2 to Rule 9.5b.
20-1/3	NO	X	Rules 9.5 and 9.7b



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
20-1/4	NO	X	Rules 9.6 and 14.1b
20-1/5	NO	X	Rules 1.3c(1), 20.3, 14.1b and 6.3b
20-1/5.5	YES		Rules 9.7b and 13.1d, and Interpretation 13.1d(1)/1
20-1/6	YES		Rules 9.7b and 13.1d, and Interpretation 13.1d(1)/1
20-1/6.5	YES		Rules 9.7b and 13.1d, and Interpretation 13.1d(1)/1
20-1/7	YES		Rules 9.7b and 13.1d, and Interpretation 13.1d(1)/1
20-1/8	NO	X	Rule 9.7b
20-1/9	NO	X	Rules 9.7b and 13.1d, and Interpretation 13.1d(1)/1
20-1/10.5	NO		Rule 9.7a
20-1/11	YES		Rule 15.3c
20-1/12	NO		Rules 9.7b and 13.1d, and Interpretation 13.1d(1)/1
20-1/13	YES		Rule 9.4b and Interpretations 9.4b/4 and 9.4b/5
20-1/14	YES		Rules 9.4b and 13.1d, and Interpretation 13.1d(1)/1
20-1/15	YES	X	Rule 9.4b and Interpretations 9.4b/4 and 9.4b/5
20-1/15.5	NO		Rule 8.1b(3) and 8.1d(2)
20-1/16	YES		Definition of Ball-Marker and Rule 14.1a
20-1/17	NO		Rule 11.b. But see the Definition of Equipment.
20-1/19	NO		Interpretation 14.1a/2. Also see Rule 10.2b(2).
20-1/20	No		Rule 14.1a and Interpretation 14.1a/2
20-1/22	NO		Interpretation 14.1a/1
20-2a/2	NO		Definition of Drop and Rule 14.3b(2)
20-2a/3	NO	X	Rules 14.3 and 14.5
20-2a/4	YES		Rules 9.4b and 14.5c
20-2a/5	YES		Rules 8.1a(1), 8.1c(1), 14.3b and 20.3
20-2a/6	NO		Rules 14.3c(1) and 14.5b
20-2a/7	YES	X	Definition of Equipment and Rules 14.3b(2) and 14.3c(1)
20-2a/8	YES		Interpretation 14.4/2



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
20-2b/1	NO		Interpretation 14.3c/1
20-2b/2	NO		Definition of Relief Area
20-2c/0.5	NO	X	Definition of Relief Area and Rule 16.1b. But see also Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-23.
20-2c/0.7	NO		Interpretation Nearest Point of Relief/3
20-2c/0.8	NO		Interpretation Nearest Point of Relief/3
20-2c/1	YES	X	Rule 14.3c(1)
20-2c/1.3	NO	X	Rule 14.3c and Interpretation 14.3c/1
20-2c/1.5	NO	X	Rules 14.3c and 14.6b
20-2c/1.7	NO	X	Rules 14.3c and 16.1b
20-2c/2	NO	X	Rules 14.2b(2), 14.2, 14.3c(2) and 14.5a, and Interpretation 14.2b(2)/1.
20-2c/3	NO		Rule 14.3
20-2c/3.5	NO	X	Rules 9.3 and 14.3c(1)
20-2c/4	YES		Rule 14.3d
20-2c/5	NO		Rule 14.5b(3)
20-2c/6	NO		Interpretation 14.7b/2
20-2c/7	NO		Definition of Nearest Point of Complete Relief and Interpretation 16.1/2
20-3a/0.5	NO	X	Rule 14.2b(1)
20-3a/1	NO		Rule 9.4b and Interpretations 9.4b/4 and 9.4b/5
20-3a/2	NO		Interpretation 14.2c/1
20-3a/3	NO		Interpretation 14.2/1
20-3b/1	NO	X	Rule 14.2d(1)
20-3b/2	NO		Rule 8.1d(1) and Interpretation 8.1d(1)/1
20-3b/3	NO		Rules 8.1d(1) and 8.1d(2), and Interpretation 8.1d(2)/2
20-3b/4	NO	X	Rules 14.2c and 14.2d(2)
20-3b/5	YES		Rule 14.2d(2)
20-3b/6	NO	X	Rules 14.2c and 14.2d(1)



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
20-3b/7	NO		Interpretation 14.2d(2)/1
20-3b/8	NO		Definition of Lie and Rule 14.2c
20-3d/1	YES	X	Rules 13.1d and 14.2e
20-3d/2	YES		Interpretation 14.2e/1
20-3d/3	NO	X	Rules 9.4 and 14.2e, and the Definition of Moved
20-4/1	YES		Rules 13.1d(2) 14.4, and the Definition of In Play
20-4/2	NO		Interpretation 14.4/1
20-5/1	NO	X	Rule 14.6a
20-5/2	NO	X	Rules 14.5b(2) and 14.6b
20-6/1	YES		Rules 14.2b(2), 14.3b and 14.5a, and Interpretation 14.2b(2)/1
20-6/2	NO		Rule 14.5b(2)
20-6/3	YES		Rule 14.3a
20-6/4	YES		Rule 14.3a
20-6/5	NO		Rule 14.5b(2)
20-7/1	NO	X	Rules 11.1b and 18.1b, and the Definition of Wrong Place
20-7/2	NO	X	Rule 14.7 and Committee Procedures, Section 6C(9)
20-7/2.5	NO		Rule 14.5b(1)
20-7/3	NO		Interpretation 14.3c/2
20-7/4	NO		Interpretation 14.7b/1
20-7c/1	NO	X	Definition of Wrong Place and Rules 14.2 and 14.7
20-7c/2	NO	X	Definition of Wrong Place, Rules 14.2 and 14.7, and Interpretation 1.3c(4)/1
20-7c/3	NO	X	Definition of Wrong Place and Rules 14.7 and 18.2b
20-7c/4	NO	X	Rules 6.3c(2), 14.2, 6.3b(3) and 1.3c(4)
20-7c/5	NO		Interpretation 6.3c(1)/1
20-7c/6	NO	X	Definition of Wrong Place and Rules 14.2. and 14.7
21/1	YES	X	Rule 8.1a
21/2	YES		Definition of Loose Impediment and Rule 8.1a



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
21/3	NO		Interpretation 14.1c/1
21/4	YES	X	Rules 7.3 and 1.3c(4)
21/5	NO		Interpretation 14.2c/1
22/1	NO		Rule 15.3b(1)
22/2	NO		Rule 15.3b(1)
22/3	NO	X	Rules 15.3b and 5.6a
22/5	NO		Interpretation 15.3a/2
22/6	YES		Rule 15.3a. But see also Interpretation 15.3a/1.
22/7	YES	X	Rule 15.3a
23/1	NO		Interpretation Loose Impediment/2
23/2	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment. But see also Rule 13.1c(2).
23/3	NO		Interpretation Loose Impediment/1
23/4	NO		Interpretation Loose Impediment/1
23/5	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment
23/5.5	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment
23/6.5	NO		Definitions of Loose Impediment and Outside Influence. See also the Definition of Animal.
23/7	NO	X	Definition of Loose Impediment
23/8	NO	X	Definition of Loose Impediment
23/9	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment. But see also Rule 13.1c(2).
23/10	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment
23/11	NO	X	Definitions of Animal Hole and Loose Impediment
23/12	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment
23/13	NO		Definition of Loose Impediment
23/14	NO		Interpretation Loose Impediment/4
23-1/1	NO		Rule 15.1a and Interpretation 15.1a/1
23-1/2	NO		Interpretation 15.1a/1



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
23-1/3	NO		Interpretation 15.1a/1
23-1/4	NO		Interpretation 15.1a/2
23-1/5	YES		Rule 15.1a and Interpretation Loose Impediment/5
23-1/6	NO		Interpretation 15.1a/3
23-1/6.5	NO		Interpretation 15.1a/3
23-1/7	YES		Rule 15.1a
23-1/7.5	NO		Rule 15.1a
23-1/8	NO		Rule 15.1a
23-1/9	NO		Rule 15.1a
23-1/10	YES		Interpretation 8.1d(1)/2 and Rule 8.3
23-1/11	YES		Rule 13.1d(1)
23-1/12	NO	X	Rule 13.1d(1)
24/1	NO		Definition of Boundary Object and Interpretation Boundary Object/1
24/2	NO		Definition of Boundary Object and Interpretation Boundary Object/1
24/3	NO		Definition of Boundary Object
24/4	NO	X	Definition of Boundary Object
24/5	NO		Committee Procedure, Section 8; Model Local Rule A-4
24/6	NO	X	Definition of Movable Obstruction
24/7	NO	X	Definition of Movable Obstruction
24/8	NO	X	Definitions of Movable Obstruction, Obstruction and Immovable Obstruction
24/9	NO		Interpretation Loose Impediment/4
24/12	NO		Definition of Obstruction and Interpretation Loose Impediment/2
24/14	NO		Interpretation Immovable Obstruction/1
24-1/2	NO		Interpretation Movable Obstruction/1
24-1/3	NO		Rule 15.2a(1)
24-1/4	NO		Rule 9.4b and Interpretation 9.4b/1



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
24-1/5	NO		Rule 9.4b. See also the Definition of Equipment.
24-2a/1	NO		Rule 16.1a(1)
24-2b/1	NO		Definition of Nearest Point of Complete Relief
24-2b/2	NO		Interpretation Nearest Point of Complete Relief/2
24-2b/3	NO		Interpretation Nearest Point of Complete Relief/4
24-2b/3.5	NO		Definition Nearest Point of Complete Relief and Interpretation Nearest Point of Complete Relief/5
24-2b/3.7	NO	X	Interpretation Nearest Point of Complete Relief/5
24-2b/4	NO		Interpretation Nearest Point of Complete Relief/3
24-2b/5	YES		Interpretation 16.1c/2. But see also Interpretation 16.1c/1.
24-2b/6	NO		Interpretation 16.1/1
24-2b/7	NO		Interpretation 16.1/1
24-2b/8	NO		Interpretation 16.1/1
24-2b/9	NO		Definition Nearest Point of Complete Relief and Interpretation 16.1/2
24-2b/9.5	NO	X	Definition Nearest Point of Complete Relief and Interpretation 16.1/2
24-2b/10	NO		Interpretation 16.1/3
24-2b/11	NO		Interpretations 16.1/4 and 16.1/5
24-2b/12	NO		Interpretation 16.1b/1
24-2b/14	NO		Definitions of Movable Obstruction and Obstruction
24-2b/15	NO		Definitions of Movable Obstruction and Obstruction
24-2b/15.3	NO		Definitions of Movable Obstruction and Obstruction
24-2b/15.5	YES		Definitions of Movable Obstruction and Obstruction
24-2b/16	NO		Rule 16.1a(3)
24-2b/17	NO		Interpretation 16.1a(3)/1
24-2b/18	NO		Interpretation 16.1a(3)/2
24-2b/19	NO		Rule 16.1a(3)



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
24-2b/20	NO		Interpretation Obstruction/1 and Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-21
24-2b/21	NO		Rule 16.1a(2)
24-3b/1	NO		Rule 16.1e and Interpretation 16.1b/1
25/1	NO		Definition of Temporary Water
25/2	NO		Definition of Temporary Water
25/3	NO	X	Definition of Temporary Water and Rule 16.4
25/4	NO		Definition of Temporary Water
25/5	NO	X	Definition of Temporary Water
25/6	NO		Interpretation Loose Impediment/3. But see also the Definition of Temporary Water.
25/7	NO		Interpretation Ground Under Repair/3
25/8	NO		Interpretation Ground Under Repair/3
25/9	NO		Interpretation Ground Under Repair/3
25/9.5	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 6B(1)
25/10	NO	X	Definition of Ground Under Repair, Rule 16.1e and Interpretation Ground Under Repair/2
25/10.5	NO		Interpretation Ground Under Repair/2
25/10.7	NO		Definition of Ground Under Repair
25/10.9	NO		Definition of Ground Under Repair
25/11	NO		Definitions of Ground Under Repair and Loose Impediment
25/12	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-8
25/13	NO		Definition of Bunker
25/14	YES		Definition of Ground Under Repair
25/15	NO		Definition of Ground Under Repair
25/16	NO		Interpretation Ground Under Repair/1
25/17	NO		Interpretation Ground Under Repair/1 and Rule 13.1c
25/18	NO		Definition of Ground Under Repair



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
25/19.5	NO		Interpretation Animal Hole/1
25/23	NO		Definition of Animal Hole
25-1/1	YES	X	Rule 16.1
25-1a/1	NO	X	Definition of Ground Under Repair and Rule 16.1a(1)
25-1a/2	NO	x	Rules 16.1a(1) and 8.1a(5)
25-1b/2	NO		Interpretation Nearest Point of Complete Relief/1
25-1b/3	NO		Interpretation 16.1/1
25-1b/4	NO		Rule 6.2b(3) and Committee Procedures, Section 6B(2)
25-1b/5	NO		Definition of Point of Maximum Available Relief
25-1b/6	YES		Rules 16.1c(1) and 14.3c
25-1b/7	YES	X	Rules 14.3b(3) and 16.1c
25-1b/8	YES		Rule 16.1c and Interpretations 16.1c/1 and 16.1c/2
25-1b/9	YES		Interpretation 16.1c/1
25-1b/10	NO		Rule 16.1d
25-1b/10.5	NO	X	Rule 16.1d and Diagram 16.1d
25-1b/11	NO		Interpretation 16.1/3
25-1b/11.5	NO		Interpretation 16.1/3
25-1b/12	NO	X	Rules 14.7 and 16.1b, Definition of Wrong Place, and Committee Procedures Section 6C(9)
25-1b/13	NO	X	Rules 14.3a, 14.7 and 16.1b, Definition of Wrong Place, and Committee Procedures Section 6C(9)
25-1b/14.5	NO		Interpretation 14.3c/2
25-1b/15	NO	X	Definition of Relief Area. See also related Interpretation 17.1d(3)/1.
25-1b/16	NO		Interpretation Nearest Point of Complete Relief/1
25-1b/17	NO	X	Definitions of Ground Under Repair and Loose Impediment
25-1b/19	NO		Rule 16.1a(3)
25-1b/20	NO		Rule 16.1a(3)



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
25-1b/21	NO		Interpretation 16.1a(3)/2
25-1b/22	NO		Interpretation 16.1a(3)/1. See also Interpretation 16.1/1.
25-1b/23	NO		Interpretation 16.1b/1
25-1b/24	NO		Interpretation 16.1b/1
25-1b/25	NO		Interpretation 16.1b/1
25-1b/25.5	NO		Interpretation 16.1a(3)/3
25-1b/26	NO		Rules 14.5a and 16.1a(2), and Committee Procedures Section 6C(9)
25-1c/1	NO	X	Definition of Knowledge or Virtual Certainty and Rule 16.1e
25-1c/1.5	NO	X	Rule 16.1e
25-1c/2	NO	X	Definition of Wrong Place, Rules 16.1e and 18.2b, and Committee Procedures Section 6C(9)
25-1c/2.5	NO		Rules 1.3b(2) and 16.1e
25-1c/3	NO	X	Rule 16.1e
25-2/0.5	NO		Definition of Embedded, Rule 16.3a(2) and Diagram 16.3a
25-2/1	NO	X	Interpretation 16.3a(2)/1
25-2/2	YES		Rule 16.3a(2)
25-2/2.5	YES		Rule 16.3a(2)
25-2/3	NO		Definition of Embedded and Rule 16.3a(2)
25-2/4	NO		Interpretation 16.1/3
25-2/5	YES		Rule 16.3a(1). But see also Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-2.
25-2/6	NO		Rule 16.3a(2)
25-2/8	YES	X	Rule 6.2b(6)
25-3/1	NO		Definition of Putting Green
26/1	NO		Rule 17.1a
26/1.5	NO		Rules 2.2c and 17.1a
26/2	NO		Interpretation 17.1a/1



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
26/3	YES		Definition of Penalty Area
26/3.5	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 2C
26/6	NO	X	Rule 18.1
26-1/1	NO		Definition of Known or Virtually Certain
26-1/1.3	NO	X	Definition of Known or Virtually Certain
26-1/1.5	NO		Rule 17.1d(2) and Diagrams #1 and #2 for Rule 17.1d
26-1/2	NO		Rules 17.1d(2) and 17.1d(3)
26-1/3	NO	X	Rules 17.1c, 18.1 and 14.7, and Committee Procedures Section 6C(9)
26-1/3.5	NO		Interpretation 17.1d(3)/2
26-1/3.7	NO	X	Rules 17.1c, 18.1, 14.7 and 14.5b(1), and Committee Procedures Section 6C(9)
26-1/4	NO	X	Rules 17.1c, 18.1, 14.7 and 14.5b(1)
26-1/5	NO		Interpretation 20.1c(3)/1
26-1/6	NO	X	Rule 17.1d
26-1/7	NO		Interpretation 18.2a(2)/1
26-1/8	NO	X	Rule 17.1d
26-1/9	NO		Rules 10.3b(3), 10.3c and 9.4b
26-1/10	NO	X	Rules 17.2b, 14.6 and 14.3
26-1/11	NO		Definition of Serious Breach
26-1/12	NO	X	Rule 17.1
26-1/13	YES	X	Rule 17.1d(3)
26-1/14	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule B-2
26-1/15	YES		Diagram #2 for Rule 17.1d
26-1/16	NO		Interpretation 17.1d(3)/2
26-1/17	NO		Rule 1.3b(2) and Interpretation 17.1d(3)/2
26-1/18	NO	X	None
26-1/19	NO		Rules 14.3b and 14.3c



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
26-1/20	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule B-2
26-1/21	NO		Definition of Serious Breach
26-2/1	NO		Interpretation 17.2b/1
26-2/2	NO		Diagrams #1 and #2 of Rule 17.2a
27/1	NO		Interpretation 18.2a(1)/2
27/1.5	YES		Definition of Lost and Interpretation 18.2a(1)/1
27/2	NO		Definition of Lost
27/3	YES		Interpretation 18.2a(1)/1
27/4	YES		Interpretation Lost/4
27/5	NO		Interpretation 18.2a(1)/3
27/5.5	YES		Rule 18.2a(1)
27/6	YES		Interpretation Known or Virtually Certain/3
27/7	NO		Interpretation Known or Virtually Certain/2
27/8	NO	X	Definition of Wrong Ball and Rule 6.3c
27/9	NO	X	Rule 5.6a
27/10	NO		Rule 7.2
27/11	YES		Rule 18.3c(2)
27/12	NO		Rule 7.2
27/13	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/2
27/14	NO		Rule 7.2 and Interpretation 7.2/1
27/15	NO	X	Rule 18.2a(1). But see also Interpretation 7.2/1.
27/16	NO		Interpretation Lost/1
27/17	NO		Definition of In Play and Rules 18.1 and 14.5b(1)
27/18	YES		Interpretation Boundary Object/2
27/19	NO		Definition of Out of Bounds, Rule 18.2a(2) and Diagram 18.2a
27/20	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule A-3
27-1/1	NO		Interpretation 18.1/1



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
27-1/2	NO		Interpretation 18.1/1
27-1/2.3	NO		Interpretation 18.1/1
27-1/2.5	NO	X	Rules 9.6, 18.2 and 14.7
27-1/3	NO		Definition of Wrong Place and Rule 18.2b
27-2/1	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(3)/1
27-2/2	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/2
27-2a/1	YES		Rule 18.3b and Interpretation 18.3b/2
27-2a/1.3	NO		Interpretation 18.3b/1
27-2a/1.5	YES	X	Rule 18.3
27-2a/2	NO		Rule 18.3a
27-2a/2.2	NO		Rule 18.3a and Interpretation 18.3a/1
27-2a/2.5	NO		Interpretation 18.3a/1
27-2a/3	NO		Rule 18.3a
27-2a/4	NO		Rule 18.3a and Interpretation 18.3a/3
27-2a/5	YES	X	Rule 18.3
27-2b/1	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/3
27-2b/2	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/4
27-2b/3	YES		Rule 18.3c(1)
27-2b/4	NO		Rule 18.3c(2) and Interpretation 18.3c(2)/1
27-2b/5	NO	X	Rule 18.3c(2)
27-2b/6	NO	X	Rule 18.3c(2)
27-2b/6.5	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(1)/1
27-2b/7	YES		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/1
27-2b/8	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/5
27-2b/9	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/5
27-2b/10	NO		Interpretation 18.1/2
27-2c/1.5	NO		Rule 18.3c(2)



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
27-2c/2	NO		Interpretation 18.3c(2)/2
27-2c/3	NO	X	Rule 18.3c
27-2c/4	NO		Rule 18.3a
28/1	NO		Rule 19.2
28/2	NO	X	Rule 18.3c(2)
28/3	NO		Interpretation 19.2/1
28/4	NO		Rules 19.2b and 19.2c
28/4.5	NO		Interpretation 19.2/2
28/5	NO		Interpretation 19.2a/2
28/6	NO		Interpretation 19.2a/2 and Rule 14.7
28/6.5	NO		Interpretation 19.2/3
28/7	NO		Interpretations 19.2a/2 and 19.2/3
28/8	NO		Interpretation 19.2a/1
28/9	NO	X	Definition of Bunker and Rule 19.2
28/10	YES	X	Definition of Wrong Place and Rule 14.7
28/11	NO		Interpretation 19.2c/1
28/12	NO		Interpretation 19.2c/1
28/13	NO		Interpretation 19.2/4
28/14	NO	X	Rule 19.2
28/15	NO		Interpretation 19.2/5
29/1	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 5A regarding setting the Terms of the Competition
29/2	NO		Interpretation 22.3/1
29/3	NO	X	Rules 5.5a and 6.1a
29/4	YES		Rule 22.2
29/5	YES	X	Rules 8.1a and 12.2b(2)
29/6	NO		Rule 22.2



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
29/7	NO		Rule 22.4b
29-1/1	NO		Rule 22.3
29-1/2	NO	X	Rule 22.3
29-1/3	NO		Rule 22.3
29-1/4	NO		Interpretation 22.3/4
29-1/4.5	YES	X	Rule 18.3a
29-1/5	NO		Rule 22.3
29-1/6	NO		Interpretation 22.3/3
29-1/7	NO		Interpretation 22.3/3
29-1/8	NO		Rule 22.3
29-1/9	NO		Interpretation 22.3/2
29-2/1	NO	X	Rule 22.3
29-2/2	NO	X	Rules 22.3 and 20.1b(2)
30/1	NO		Rule 10.3a(2)
30/2	NO		Interpretation 23.5a/1
30/2.5	YES		Rules 10.2b(2) and 23.5a
30/4	NO		Interpretation 23.6/1
30/5	NO		Rule 23.2a
30/6	NO		Interpretation 5.5b/1
30-1/1	NO		Interpretation 23.6/3
30-2/1	NO		Rule 21.4b
30-3/1	YES		Interpretation 23.7/1
30-3/2	YES	X	Rules 10.3a, 4.1b and 23.8
30-3/3	NO	X	Rule 2-2 is no longer applicable
30-3a/1	NO		Rules 23.4 and 23.8a(2)
30-3a/2	NO		Rule 23.4
30-3a/3	NO		Interpretation 23.4/1



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
30-3b/1	NO	X	Rules 13.1c(2) and 23.6
30-3b/2	NO		Interpretation 23.6/3
30-3c/1	NO	X	Rule 23.8a(2)
30-3c/2	NO		Rule 23.2a
30-3c/3	NO		Interpretation 23.2a/1
30-3c/4	NO		Rule 23.8a and Interpretation 23.2a/1
30-3e/1	NO	X	Rules 5.7 and 23.8b(1)
30-3f/1	YES	X	Rule 15.1a
30-3f/2	YES		Rules 8.1a, 12.2b(2) and 23.8b(2)
30-3f/2.5	NO	X	Rules 12.2b(1), 23.5a and 23.8b(1)
30-3f/3	YES		Rules 13.2c, 14.1a, 3.2d(3) and 23.8a(2), and Interpretation 23.8a(2)/2
30-3f/4	NO		Interpretation 23.8a(2)/3
30-3f/5	YES		Rules 13.2b(2) and 23.5b
30-3f/6	YES		Interpretation 1.2a/1
30-3f/7	NO		Interpretation 23.8a(2)/1
30-3f/8	NO	X	Rules 5.5 and 23.8a(2)
30-3f/9	YES	X	Rules 9.4 and 23.5b
30-3f/10	NO	X	Rules 9.5b and 23.8a(1)
30-3f/11	NO		Interpretation 23.8a(2)/1
30-3f/12	NO		Rules 5.5b and 23.8a(1), and Interpretation 5.5b/1
30-3f/13	NO		Rules 10.2b(4) and 23.8a(2), and Interpretation 23.8a(2)/1
31/1	NO	X	Rules 9.4b, 4.1b, 4.2a, 23.8a(1) and 23.8b(1)
31-2/1	NO	X	Rules 5.3a and 23.4
31-3/1	NO		Interpretation 23.2b/1
31-4/1	NO		Interpretation 23.6/2
31-4/2	NO		Interpretation 23.6/2
31-6/1	NO		Interpretation 23.2b/2



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
31-7a/1	NO		Interpretation 23.2b/1
31-7a/2	NO		Interpretation 23.2b/1
31-7a/3	NO		Interpretation 23.2b/2
31-8/1	YES	X	Rule 15.1a
32-1/1	NO		Interpretation 21/1
32-1/2	NO		Rules 21.1b(1) and 21.3b(1)
32-1b/1	YES	X	Rule 3.3b(3)
32-2a/1	NO		Rule 23.2b(2)
32-2a/2	NO		Interpretation 23.2b/1
32-2a/3	NO	X	Rules 3.3b(3) and 21.1b(2)
32-2a/4	NO	X	Rule 21.1b(2)
32-2a/5	NO		Rule 21.3b
32-2b/1	NO	X	Rules 21.1c(2) and 23.8b(3)
33/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6E(6)
33/2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6G(2)
33/3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6G(2)
33/7	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6G(2)
33/8	NO		Interpretations 1.3c/1 and 24.2/1
33-1/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5A(8)
33-1/2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5A(8)
33-1/3	NO		Definition of Round
33-1/3.5	NO		Rule 22.4a
33-1/4	NO		Rule 1.3b(1)
33-1/5	NO	X	Rule 3.3b and Committee Procedures, Section 6C(12)
33-1/6	YES	X	Committee Procedures, Section 6C(12)
33-1/7	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5A(5) and Rule 3.3b(5)
33-1/8	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule G-6



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
33-1/9.5	NO	X	Rule 10.3c
33-1/11.5	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8, Model Local Rule H-4
33-1/12	NO	X	Rules 3.2c(1) and 3.3b(4), and Interpretation 3.3b(4)/2
33-1/13	NO		Rule 3.3b(4)
33-1/14	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8, Model Local Rule G-7
33-2a/1	NO	X	Definition Integral Object
33-2a/2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5B(4)
33-2a/3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8, Model Local Rule F-4
33-2a/4	NO		Definition of Penalty Area and Committee Procedures, Section 2C(2)
33-2a/6	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2C(5)
33-2a/7	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2C(5)
33-2a/8	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2C(7)
33-2a/9	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2I(1)
33-2a/10	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2C(4)
33-2a/10.5	NO	X	Definition of Obstruction
33-2a/11	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2C(7)
33-2a/12	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8, Model Local Rule A-4
33-2a/13	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2A(1)
33-2a/14	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2A(1)
33-2a/15	NO	X	Definition of Out of Bounds and Committee Procedures, Section 2A(1)
33-2a/16	NO		Definition of Out of Bounds and Committee Procedures, Section 8, Model Local Rule A-2
33-2a/19	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 2A
33-2a/20	NO		Definition of Boundary Object
33-2b/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6B(2)
33-2b/1.5	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6B(2)
33-2b/2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6B(2)



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
33-2d/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6E(4)
33-2d/2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6E(2)
33-2d/3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6E(5)
33-2d/4	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6E(7)
33-3/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5F(2)
33-3/2	NO		Rule 5.3a
33-3/3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5F(2)
33-3/4	NO	X	None
33-4/1	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 5A(3)
33-5/1	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 5A(6)
33-5/2	NO		Interpretation 20.2d/2
33-5/3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6G(5)
33-6/3	NO		Interpretation 1.3c/2, and Committee Procedures, Section 7A(1) and (2)
33-6/4	YES		Rule 3.2a(4)
33-7/1	YES		Rule 1.3c(3)
33-7/2	NO		Rule 1.3c(3)
33-7/3	NO	X	Rule 3.3b(2)
33-7/4	NO		Rule 1.3c(3)
33-7/5	NO	X	Committee Procedures Section 6C(11)
33-7/6	YES	X	Rules 1.2a or 14.2
33-7/7	YES	X	Rule 1.2a and Interpretation 1.3c(1)/1
33-7/8	NO		Interpretation 1.2a/1
33-7/9	NO	X	Rule 1.2a and Interpretation 3.3b(1)/1
33-8/1	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2I(2)
33-8/4	NO	X	None
33-8/5	NO	X	Rule 5.7a



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
33-8/6	YES		Rule 1.2b and Committee Procedures, Section 5H
33-8/7	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/8	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-9
33-8/9	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/10	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/11	YES	X	Rule 13.2b(2)
33-8/12	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/13	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule E-11
33-8/14	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L and the Definition of Boundary Object
33-8/15	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/16	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-17
33-8/17	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/18	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule E-6
33-8/19	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/20	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/21	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-10
33-8/22	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-11
33-8/23	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/24	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-19
33-8/25	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-3
33-8/26	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/27	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-16
33-8/28	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/29	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 2G(1)
33-8/30	YES		Rule 13.1c(2)
33-8/31	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-14
33-8/32	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-13



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
33-8/32.5	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-10
33-8/32.7	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-12
33-8/33	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule D-4
33-8/34	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/35	YES		Definition of Penalty Area and Committee Procedures, Section 2C(1)
33-8/36	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8L
33-8/36.5	YES		Definition of Penalty Area and Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-20
33-8/37	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule B-4
33-8/37.5	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule B-5
33-8/38	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2A(1)
33-8/39	YES	X	Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-2
33-8/39.5	YES	X	Definition of Bunker
33-8/40	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule C-3
33-8/41	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 2G(1)
33-8/42	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 5H
33-8/43	NO		Definition of Wrong Place and Rule 14.7
33-8/44	NO		Definition of Serious Breach
33-8/44.5	NO		Interpretation No Play Zone/1
33-8/45	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 5B(6) and Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-23
34-1a/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6G(2)
34-1b/1	NO	X	Rule 20.2e(2)
34-1b/1.5	NO	X	Rules 20.2e(2) and 3.3b(3)
34-1b/2	NO	X	Rule 20.2e(2)
34-1b/3	NO	X	Rules 20.2d and 20.2e(2)
34-1b/4	YES	X	Rules 4.1a(3) and 20.2e(2)



Mapping Summary Chart: Location of Decisions in the 2019 Official Guide to the Rules of Golf

Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
34-1b/5	NO		Rules 20.2d and 20.2e(2), and Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-1b/6	NO		Interpretations 20.2d/1 and 20.2d/2
34-1b/7	NO	X	Rule 20.2e(2)
34-1b/8	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6G(2)
34-1b/9	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 5A(9)
34-2/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 5B(4)
34-2/2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(4)
34-2/3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(5)
34-2/4	YES		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(6)
34-2/5	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(10)
34-2/6	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(10)
34-2/7	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(10)
34-3/1	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-3/1.3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-3/1.5	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-3/2	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 6C(10) and Section 6D
34-3/3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(10)
34-3/3.3	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-3/3.5	NO		Rule 20.2d and Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-3/3.7	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-3/3.9	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11)
34-3/4	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 6C(7)
34-3/5	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(8)
34-3/6	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(9)
34-3/7	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 6C(11). But see also Rule 13.1d(1)
34-3/8	NO	X	Committee Procedures, Section 6C(4), Section 6C(10) and Section 6C(11)
34-3/9	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 6C(7)



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Original Decision	Outcome Change	Eliminated	2019 Rules Reference
34-3/10	YES		Rules 1.3b(2) and 20.2c
Misc./1	NO	X	None
Misc./2	NO		Committee Procedures, Section 2D