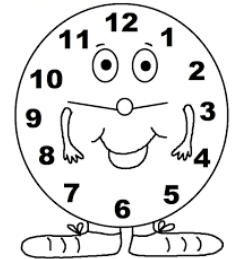


Rule Tip of the Week It's About Time!

The purpose of this article is to call your attention to some of the times the Rules consider *time* to be an important element in the proper playing of the game. If you've got a minute or two, watch and see the extent to which *time* matters in the Rules.



The subject of pace of play is first mentioned in Section I Etiquette, advising that players should be ready to play as soon as it is their turn to play. Subsequently, Rule 6-7 [Undue Delay; Slow Play] confirms that the player must play without undue delay and in accordance with any pace of play guidelines that the Committee may establish. Also, this Rule advises that the player must not unduly delay play between completion of a hole and playing from the next teeing ground.

Section I Etiquette points out that players searching for a lost ball need not wait for five minutes before signaling to the group behind to play through. However, the Definition of "*Lost Ball*" establishes a five-minute period for searching for a ball. After that amount of time has elapsed, the ball is deemed to be lost. This is confirmed in Rule 27-1c [Ball Not Found Within Five Minutes]. The Definition of "*Lost Ball*" also notes that time spent in playing a wrong ball is not counted in the five-minute period allowed for search.

In match play, if there is doubt as to how to proceed, and no duly authorized representative of the Committee is available within a reasonable time, Rule 2-5 [Doubt as to Procedure; Disputes and Claims] advises that the players must continue the match without delay. Rule 2-5 also notes that the Committee may consider a claim only if it has been made in a timely manner, and this Rule also describes what is meant by a "*timely manner*."

Rule 6-3a [Time of Starting] advises that the player must start at the time established by the Committee. The penalty statement for this Rule points out that the player can avoid disqualification if he or she arrives at his or her starting point, ready to play, within five minutes of the designated starting time. Decision 6-3a/2.5 [Meaning of "Time of Starting"] clarifies that a starting time of 9:00 am requires the player to be present and ready to play at 9:00:00 am.

Rule 6-8 [Discontinuance of Play; Resumption of Play] notes that if the player discontinues play without specific permission from the Committee, he must report to the Committee as soon as practicable.

Decision 6-8a/2.5 [Discontinuing Play for Refreshment] recommends against, but nevertheless permits, a Committee to permit players to discontinue play for a short period of time, e.g., up to five minutes, if the Committee considers there to be a good reason (e.g., a danger of dehydration or heat exhaustion in hot climates or a need to warm up in cold climates) to allow a player to discontinue play.

Decision 6-8a/3 [Discontinuing Play Due to Physical Problem] advises that it would be reasonable for a Committee to allow a player 10 to 15 minutes to recuperate from a sudden illness or physical problem, e.g., heat exhaustion, a bee sting, or being struck by a golf ball.

Rule 16-2 [Ball Overhanging Hole] allows the player a reasonable amount of time to reach the hole, plus an additional 10 seconds to determine if his ball overhanging the hole is at rest. If, by then, the ball has not fallen into the hole, it is deemed to be at rest. If the ball subsequently falls into the hole, the player is deemed to have holed out with his last stroke, and must add a penalty stroke to his score for the hole.

Note 1 to Rule 18 [Ball at Rest Moved] states, "*If a ball to be replaced under this Rule is not immediately recoverable, another ball may be substituted.*" Decision 18/11 [Meaning of "Immediately Recoverable"] clarifies that a ball is "*immediately recoverable*" only if it can be retrieved within a few seconds.