

Now & Then

2018 2019

This is the first in a series of educational articles pertaining to the forthcoming changes to the Rules that will come into effect on January 1, 2019. “Now” represents the Rules as they currently exist, and “Then” represents the Rules as they will be next year. In this initial installment of “Now & Then,” we examine several examples of changes to Rules terminology. It is often said that the three key words in real estate are “Location – Location – Location.” When it comes to learning the Rules of Golf, the three key words are “Definitions – Definitions – Definitions,” so let’s get started!

NOW

Abnormal Ground Conditions

Any casual water, ground under repair or hole, cast or runway on the course made by a burrowing animal, a reptile or a bird.

Advice

Any counsel or suggestion that could influence a player in determining his play, the choice of a club or the method of making a stroke. Information on the Rules, distance or matters of public information, such as the position of hazards or the flagstick on the putting green, is not advice.

Bunker

A hazard consisting of a prepared area of ground, often a hollow, from which turf or soil has been removed and replaced with sand or the like.

Grass-covered ground bordering or within a bunker, including a staked turf face (whether grass-covered or earthen), is not part of the bunker. A wall or lip of the bunker not covered with grass is part of the bunker. The margin of a bunker extends vertically downwards, but not upwards.

A ball is in a bunker when it lies in or any part of it touches the bunker.

Casual Water

Any temporary accumulation of water on the course that is not in a water hazard and is visible before or after the player takes his stance. Snow and natural ice, other than frost, are either casual water or loose impediments, at the option of the player.

Manufactured ice is an obstruction. Dew and frost are not casual water.

A ball is in casual water when it lies in or any part of it touches the casual water.

THEN

Abnormal Course Conditions

Any of these four defined conditions:

- *Animal Hole,*
- *Ground Under Repair,*
- *Immovable Obstruction, or*
- *Temporary Water.*

Advice

Any verbal comment or action (such as showing what club was just used to make a stroke) that is intended to influence a player in:

- *Choosing a club,*
- *Making a stroke, or*
- *Deciding how to play during a hole or round.*

But advice does not include public information, such as:

- *The location of things on the course such as the hole, the putting green, the fairway, penalty areas, bunkers, or another player’s ball,*
- *The distance from one point to another, or*
- *The Rules.*

Bunker*

A specially prepared area of sand, which is often a hollow from which turf or soil was removed.

These are not part of a bunker:

- *A lip, wall or face at the edge of a prepared area and consisting of soil, grass, stacked turf or artificial materials,*
- *Soil or any growing or attached natural object inside the edge of a prepared area (such as grass, bushes or trees),*
- *Sand that has spilled over or is outside the edge of a prepared area, and*
- *All other areas of sand on the course that are not inside the edge of a prepared area (such as deserts and other natural sand areas or areas sometimes referred to as waste areas).*

** Selected portions of the Definition*

Temporary Water

Any temporary accumulation of water on the surface of the ground (such as puddles from rain or irrigation or an overflow from a body of water) that:

- *Is not in a penalty area, and*
- *Can be seen before or after the player takes a stance (without pressing down excessively with his or her feet).*

It is not enough for the ground to be merely wet, muddy or soft or for the water to be momentarily visible as the player steps on the ground; an accumulation of water must remain present either before or after the stance is taken.

Special cases:

- *Dew and Frost are not temporary water.*

- Snow and Natural Ice (other than frost), are either loose impediments or, when on the ground, temporary water, at the player's option.
- Manufactured Ice is an obstruction.

Holed

A ball is "holed" when it is at rest within the circumference of the hole and all of it is below the level of the lip of the hole.

Holed

When a ball is at rest in the hole after a stroke and the entire ball is below the surface of the putting green. When the Rules refer to "holing out" or "hole out," it means when the player's ball is holed. For the special case of a ball resting against the flagstick in the hole, see Rule 13.2c (ball is treated as holed if any part of the ball is below the surface of the putting green).

Line of Play

The direction that the player wishes his ball to take after a stroke, plus a reasonable distance on either side of the intended direction. The line of play extends vertically upwards from the ground, but does not extend beyond the hole.

Line of Play

The line where the player intends his or her ball to go after a stroke, including the area on that line that is a reasonable distance up above the ground and on either side of that line. The line of play is not necessarily a straight line between two points (for example, it may be a curved line based on where the player intends the ball to go).

Move or Moved

A ball is deemed to have "moved" if it leaves its position and comes to rest in any other place.

Moved

When a ball at rest has left its original spot and come to rest on any other spot, and this can be seen by the naked eye (whether or not anyone actually sees it do so). This applies whether the ball has gone up, down or horizontally in any direction away from its original spot. If the ball only wobbles (sometimes referred to as oscillating) and stays on or returns to its original spot, the ball has not moved.

Nearest Point of Relief

The reference point for taking relief without penalty from interference by an immovable obstruction (Rule 24-2), an abnormal ground condition (Rule 25-1) or a wrong putting green (Rule 25-3).

It is the point on the course nearest to where the ball lies:

- that is not nearer the hole, and
- where, if the ball were so positioned, no interference by the condition from which relief is sought would exist for the stroke the player would have made from the original position if the condition were not there.

Note: In order to determine the nearest point of relief accurately, the player should use the club with which he would have made his next stroke if the condition were not there to simulate the address position, direction of play and swing for such a stroke.

Nearest Point of Complete Relief

The reference point for taking free relief from an abnormal course condition (Rule 16.1), dangerous animal condition (Rule 16.2), wrong green (Rule 13.1f) or no play zone (Rules 16.1f and 17.1e), or in taking relief under certain Local Rules.

It is the estimated point where the ball would lie that is:

- Nearest to the ball's original spot, but not nearer the hole than that spot,
- In the required area of the course, and
- Where the condition does not interfere with the stroke the player would have made from the original spot if the condition was not there.

Estimating this reference point requires the player to identify the choice of club, stance, swing and line of play he or she would have used for that stroke.

The player does not need to simulate that stroke by taking an actual stance and swinging with the chosen club (but it is recommended that the player normally do this to help in making an accurate estimate).

The nearest point of complete relief relates solely to the particular condition from which relief is being taken and may be in a location where there is interference by something else:

- If the player takes relief and then has interference by another condition from which relief is allowed, the player may take relief again by determining a new nearest point of complete relief from the new condition.
- Relief must be taken separately for each condition, except that the player may take relief from both conditions at the same time (based on determining the nearest point of complete relief from both) when, having already taken relief separately from each condition, it becomes reasonable to conclude that continuing to do so will result in continued interference by one or the other.

Outside Agency

In match play, an “outside agency” is any agency other than either the player’s or opponent’s side, any caddie of either side, any ball played by either side at the hole being played or any equipment of either side.

In stroke play, an outside agency is any agency other than the competitor’s side, any caddie of the side, any ball played by the side at the hole being played or any equipment of the side.

An outside agency includes a referee, a marker, an observer and a forecaddie. Neither wind nor water is an outside agency.

Stipulated Round

The “stipulated round” consists of playing the holes of the course in their correct sequence unless otherwise authorized by the Committee. The number of holes in a stipulated round is 18 unless a smaller number is authorized by the Committee. As to extension of stipulated round in match play, see Rule 2-3.

Teeing Ground

The starting place for the hole to be played. It is a rectangular area two club-lengths in depth, the front and sides of which are defined by the outside limits of two tee-markers. A ball is outside the teeing ground when all of it lies outside the teeing ground.

Through the Green

The whole area of the course except:

- a. The teeing ground and putting green of the hole being played; and*
- b. All hazards on the course.*

Water Hazard*

Any sea, lake, pond, river, ditch, surface drainage ditch or other open water course (whether or not containing water) and anything of a similar nature on the course. All ground and water within the margin of a water hazard are part of the water hazard. ... Stakes or lines used to define the margin of or identify a lateral water hazard must be yellow.

Lateral Water Hazard*

A water hazard or that part of a water hazard so situated that it is not possible, or is deemed by the Committee to be impracticable, to drop a ball behind the water hazard in accordance with Rule 26-1b. All ground and water within the margin of a lateral water hazard are part of the lateral water hazard. ... Stakes or lines used to define the margin of or identify a lateral water hazard must be red.

* Selected portions of the Definition

Outside Influence

Any of these people or things that can affect what happens to a player’s ball or equipment or to the course:

- Any person (including another player), except the player or his or her caddie or the player’s partner or opponent or any of their caddies,*
- Any animal, and*
- Any natural or artificial object or anything else (including another ball in motion), except for natural forces.*

Round

18 or fewer holes played in the order set by the Committee.

Teeing Area

The area the player must play from in starting the hole he or she is playing.

The teeing area is a rectangle that is two club-lengths deep where:

- The front edge is defined by the line between the forward-most points of two tee-markers set by the Committee, and*
- The side edges are defined by the lines back from the outside points of the tee-markers.*

The teeing area is one of the five defined areas of the course.

All other teeing locations on the course (whether on the same hole or any other hole) are part of the general area.

General Area

The area of the course that covers all of the course except for the other four defined areas: (1) the teeing area the player must play from in starting the hole he or she is playing, (2) all penalty areas, (3) all bunkers, and (4) the putting green of the hole the player is playing.

The general area includes:

- All teeing locations on the course other than the teeing area, and*
- All wrong greens.*

Penalty Area*

An area from which relief with a one-stroke penalty is allowed if the player’s ball comes to rest there.

A penalty area is:

- Any body of water on the course (whether or not marked by the Committee) including a sea, lake, pond, river, ditch, surface drainage ditch or other open watercourse (even if not containing water), and*
- Any other part of the course the Committee defines as a penalty area.*

There are two different types of penalty areas distinguished by the color used to mark them:

- Yellow penalty areas (marked with yellow lines or yellow stakes) give the player two relief options (Rules 17.1d(1) and (2)).*
- Red penalty areas (marked with red lines or red stakes) give the player an extra lateral relief option (Rule 17.1d(3)), in addition to the two relief options available for yellow penalty areas.*

* Selected portions of the Definition