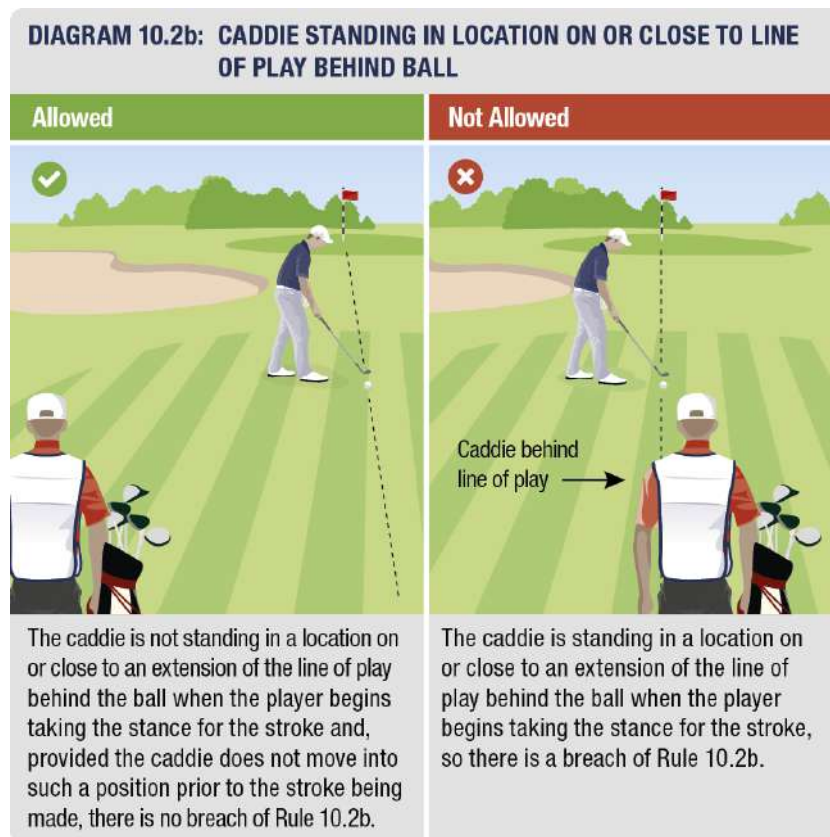


2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Alignment (Rule 10.2b)

What is new?

- Nobody can help you with your alignment for the stroke. This is an essential skill which you must do for yourself.
- This is a new rule and the key is that it affects you once you **BEGIN** to take your stance. At this moment, you must make sure that your caddie is not deliberately standing directly behind you. If he or she is there deliberately – for any reason – you will be in breach of the rule. There is no way out of this breach, which means you cannot avoid the penalty by backing away and starting again. The penalty is two strokes.



- But, there is one limited exception which only applies when your ball is on the putting green.
- The penalty can be avoided when your ball is on the putting green if you back away and start again without your caddie directly behind you.
- This is designed to recognise that on a putting green, help in reading the putt - which is allowed - is often done from behind the ball or player and this may take place when the player is simulating the stroke in the address position. Provided you back away and start again without your caddie positioned behind you, you are not in breach.
- There is also a new rule – No Setting Down Object to Help in Taking Stance (10.2b.3) -which prevents you from setting something down (such as a club) to help you with lining up your feet or body. Once this is done, again there is no way out of the penalty (two strokes or loss of hole).
- The key point here is you must always align your feet and body yourself. It is an essential skill and you cannot get help in any form.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Ball in Motion Issues (Rule 11.1) and Striking The Ball (Rule 10)

What is the same?

- If your ball in motion accidentally hits any person or outside influence, the outcome of where the ball comes to rest is random and the ball will be played as it lies.
- There is still a penalty in stroke play if a stroke from on the putting green hits another ball that is also on the putting green.
- The allowed method of making a stroke has not changed. Anchoring the club is still not allowed.

What is new?

- There will be no penalty if your ball in motion accidentally hits you, your caddie or your equipment. There is only a penalty if the deflection is deliberate. There is a penalty if you deliberately position equipment to backstop a ball if it is hit too hard and the ball then hits the equipment.
- If your ball accidentally hits your opponent in match-play, the option to replay the stroke has been removed and the ball will be played as it lies with no penalty to anyone.
- All accidental deflections are now treated the same way. The double hit, the ball striking you or your caddie, your opponent or an outside influence all have the same result – no penalty and play the ball as it lies.
- It is not allowed to make any stroke ANYWHERE while standing on or across the line of play. Previously, this only applied to a stroke on the putting green.
- You can now mark your ball on the putting green at any time including when another ball is in motion.

For example: if you have not marked your ball and you now think another ball played from on the putting green may hit it, under the new rules, you or your caddie can lift it and there will be no penalty to either player (just as you can lift a flagstick that is laying on the ground).

- Your putt is no longer cancelled and replayed if your ball in motion strikes a moving but inanimate object, such as a leaf. Your stroke will count and the ball will be played wherever it now lies. However, your stroke must still be cancelled and replayed if your ball accidentally strikes a person (other than the person attending the flagstick) or any animal.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: The Ball (Rule 4.2)

What is the same?

- If a ball breaks into pieces, the stroke does not count and it must be replayed.
- You must still mark the spot of a ball before you lift it to see if it is cut or cracked. If you do not mark it, there is a penalty of one stroke.
- The European Tour and all major Tours around the world will continue to use the one ball rule.
- You still need to have good reason to lift the ball to see if it is cut or cracked. If you lift it without good reason, there is still a penalty of one stroke.
- You are not allowed to clean the ball.

What is new?

- There is no longer a requirement in the rule for you to announce that you are lifting the ball either to see if it is cut or cracked or for identification.

But it is still good practice to do so and you must still mark it before you lift it.

- The ball can no longer be changed if it is out of shape.

A ball can only be changed if it is CUT or CRACKED and this damage has happened during the hole being played. This is a very simple judgement to make and it will be rare now to change a ball as modern balls do not cut or crack very often.

They often scuff or get scratched but this is not enough to take a ball out of play.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Ball Moved Issues

Ball Moved During Search (Rule 7.4)

What is the same?

- The central principle that you play the ball as it lies remains a key part of the new rules and the ball should generally be played from the spot where it came to rest after the last stroke.
- There continues to be no penalty if a ball is moved during search by another player in stroke-play or an opponent in match-play.

What is new?

- There is no penalty if a ball is moved by the player or his caddie during search.
- In all cases, the ball will be replaced. It will **NEVER** be dropped.
- If the spot is not known, it will be **ESTIMATED** and the ball will be replaced as it was before it was moved, including being under or against any growing or attached natural object.
- If all that you knew was that the ball was somewhere under the grass and was barely visible before you or anyone found it by kicking it or standing on it, then the ball must be replaced under the grass in a barely visible spot. The exact spot does not need to be known to allow replacement.

Ball moved by an Outside Influence (Rule 9.6)

What is the same?

- There continues to be no penalty when your ball is moved by a spectator but it must be replaced.
- The standard of proof needed that an outside influence moved your ball remains high. It must be known or virtually certain which means 95% likely or, put another way, only a very small doubt exists.

What is new?

- If your ball has been moved, you (or the person who moved it) must replace it in all cases including when the spot is not known. It will NEVER be dropped. This is a **BIG CHANGE** which may affect you.
- If the spot is not known, it must be estimated and the original ball (if it is still readily available) must be replaced on this estimated spot. We repeat for clarity - the ball will never be dropped and substitution is not allowed.

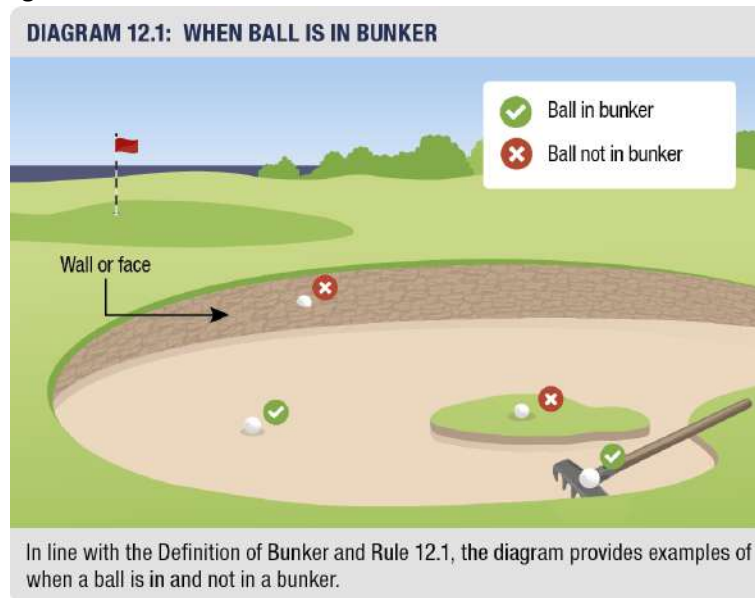
2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Bunkers (Rule 12)

What is the same?

- You cannot touch the sand in a bunker when making a practice swing or in the backswing for the stroke.
- You cannot deliberately touch the sand in the bunker with a hand, club or rake or other object to test the condition of the sand to learn information for the stroke.
- You cannot touch the sand in a bunker with a club in the area right in front of or right behind the ball.
- You can still dig into the sand with your feet when taking a fair stance but you still cannot build a stance.
- You can still place your clubs in the bunker without penalty.
- You still get relief from temporary water or an immovable obstruction in a bunker and can still declare your ball unplayable in a bunker.

What is new?

- A soil lip or face of a bunker is no longer part of the bunker. This is now part of the General Area or what we today call “through the green”.



- You can touch or move loose impediments in a bunker provided the ball does not move. We will no longer need a hard card rule for stones in bunkers as the rules will allow their removal but be careful that the ball does not move! If it does, there will be a penalty of 1 stroke and the ball will need to be replaced.
- You will not be penalised for striking the sand in anger or frustration or for leaning on a club whilst waiting to play provided you are not deliberately trying to learn information for your stroke.
- The new rules allow you to generally touch the sand in a bunker with a hand or a club but the limitations prevent any testing anywhere in the bunker.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Caddies (Rule 10.3)

What is the same?

- Most of the things a caddie can do now he or she will be able to do under the new rules but there are a few changes.
- The caddie still cannot:
 - concede a stroke, a hole, or a match.
 - Replace your ball unless the caddie himself had moved or lifted it.
 - drop or place a ball in a relief area.
 - decide to take relief under a rule.

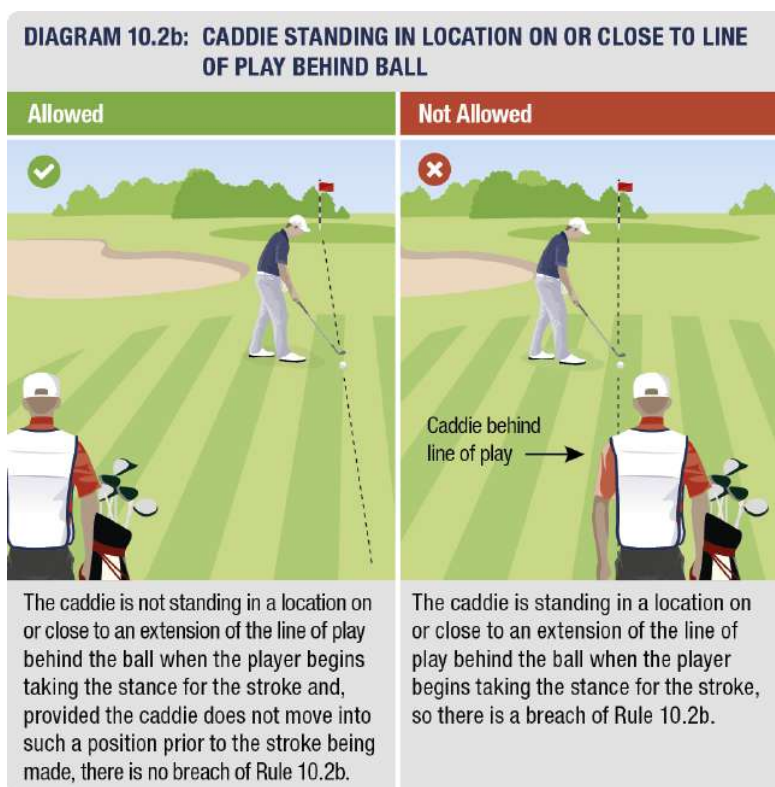
What is new?

- A caddie will now be able to mark and lift your ball without authorisation but only on the putting green.
- A caddie will no longer be able to align you for any stroke.

There are strict rules about where the caddie may deliberately stand when you begin to take your stance and you should know that other than on the putting green, there is no way out of the penalty if your caddie is deliberately standing directly behind you when you begin to take your stance.

This will become a very dangerous practice and having your caddie standing behind the ball will lead to penalties if you and your caddie get the timing wrong.

See fact sheet on Alignment or Rule 10.2b(4) for more information.



2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Fixed Distances Used for Measuring

What is the same?

- Club-lengths will still be used for measuring relief areas within the rules. Relief areas are either one or two club-lengths from the reference point which defines the nearest point of relief.

What is new?

- A club-length is now a defined term and it means the length of the longest club in your bag other than a putter. If your driver is your longest club and it is 43 inches long, then your relief area is either 43" or 86" from the reference point dependent on your relief situation.
- You are not required to physically measure out your relief area from the reference point and there is no penalty for using another club other than your longest club as a guide to measure, but this does not change your relief area. This will always be determined by your longest club (other than a putter).
- Best practice will always be to measure using your longest club and make your choice of where to drop within that area if you choose to take relief.

For example: if you use your wedge to measure the area and the ball rolls out of the area defined by your wedge but is still in the area that your longest club would define, the ball is in play and you must not touch it.

We repeat – best practice is always to measure with the longest club (other than the putter) so that you do not create a trap for yourself into lifting a ball thinking it has rolled out of your relief area when, in fact, it hasn't.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Clubs (Rule 4.1)

What is the same?

- You are still limited to starting the round with no more than 14 clubs but you can add to your number to bring the total up to 14 if you started with less.
- If you start with more than 14 clubs, you must immediately declare any excess clubs out of play and not use them.
- The penalty for a player in breach of the 14 club rule remains capped at a maximum of 4 strokes per round with the penalties added to the first two holes played.
- Performance characteristics must not be changed deliberately during the round.
- A play off in stroke-play is still a new round so a club that becomes non-conforming during a round cannot be used in the playoff. It is important to remember this because in a stroke-play playoff, you might find yourself using a club on hole 18 that you cannot use minutes later. The permission to use a damaged club which otherwise would not conform only lasts for the remainder of the round in which it was damaged.

What is new?

- There is now no penalty for carrying a non-conforming club - only for making a stroke with one - but this club still counts as one of your 14.
- No matter how you damage a club during a round - even if it is done by abusing it - you can continue to use the club in its damaged state, but you will not be allowed to change it.
There will be no replacement of clubs at all in the new rules with the only exception being the rare case of the damage being caused by an outside influence.
- You will be allowed to repair the damaged club as best you can, but you are limited to the original components of the club - the same grip, the same shaft and the same head. You can still have someone try to repair it for you, but they must also use the same parts of the damaged club.
- Whilst performance characteristics must not be changed deliberately during the round, if they are changed by using an adjustable feature and this is restored to the original setting before a stroke is made, there is no penalty. The restriction on changing playing characteristics also applies when play is suspended as you are still playing the same round.
- If you find that you have more than 14 clubs shortly before starting the round, there is no penalty provided you clearly declare the club (or clubs) out of play and take some other action such as turning them upside down in the bag and do not use them!! Clubs carried in this way will not count towards your total of 14, but you will be disqualified if you use any of them.



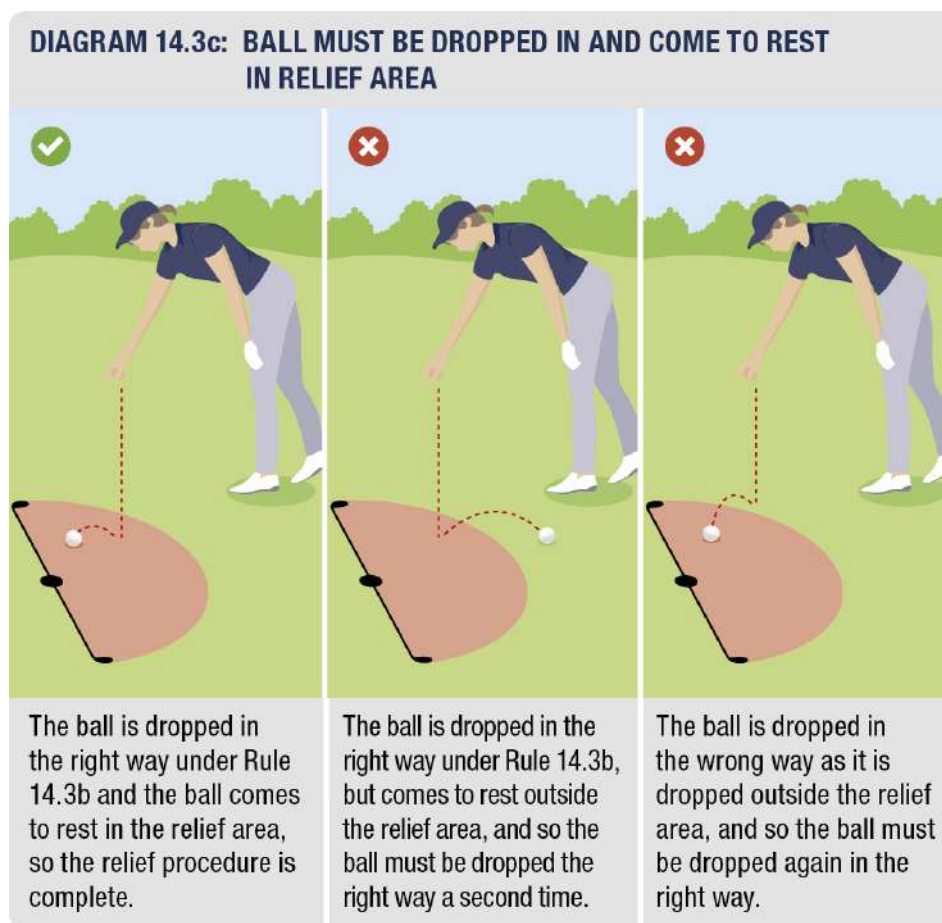
[2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Use of Distance Measuring Devices \(Rule 4.3\)](#)

Although the new rules will allow the general use of DMD's, The European Tour will be adopting a local rule on our Hard Card which will prevent their use during any tournament rounds. They will be permitted in pre-tournament proams. PGA Tour will also be adopting this local rule.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Dropping and The Relief Area (Rule 14)

What is the same?

- Dropping height is still regulated.
The ball must be dropped in the right way. There is a penalty if you drop in the wrong way and play your ball without correcting your mistake.
- The ball when dropped must first hit the ground or anything growing in the relief area.



- The act of lifting your ball takes the ball out of play and the act of dropping your ball puts it back into play.
- If you make a mistake, you can still correct the error before you make the next stroke.
- If you play from the wrong place, there is a penalty. If it is a serious breach (which means you could gain a significant advantage), the mistake must be corrected for you to have an acceptable score.

What is new?

- The ball must now be dropped from KNEE HEIGHT.

Knee height means the height of the player's knee when in a standing position but you do not need to be in a standing position when you drop the ball. Your knee height is a matter of fact. It cannot be manipulated.



The ball must be dropped straight down so it falls to the ground without the player throwing it, spinning it or rolling it and it must not touch any part of your body or equipment BEFORE it hits the ground.

If your ball accidentally rolls against your foot or equipment AFTER it hits the ground, this is ok and your ball is in play so don't touch it!! You are only at risk of a penalty if the action of stopping the ball is deliberate.

- The ball must come to rest in the relief area. This is a key change and we say it again for emphasis... THE BALL MUST COME TO REST IN THE RELIEF AREA.

If it rolls outside the relief area, it must be dropped again and if it happens again, the ball must be placed where it first hit the ground on the second drop, just as we do today.

If the ball will not stay at rest on that spot, it must be placed on that spot again and if it still will not stay there, it must be placed on the nearest spot, not nearer the hole, where it will stay at rest. Depending on the circumstances, this spot may have to be outside the relief area.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY A BALL CAN END UP BEING PLAYED FROM OUTSIDE THE RELIEF AREA.

- A new ball may be dropped when taking any form of relief.
Substitution of the ball is allowed when taking relief from temporary water, an immovable obstruction, ground under repair, a hole made by an animal, a penalty area, an embedded ball or a TIO. The original ball can be used but it no longer must be used. You must still comply with the one ball rule if it is in effect and it will be in effect on The European Tour.
- If your ball is deliberately stopped before it leaves the relief area, there is no penalty if it is clear there is no reasonable chance your ball could have come to rest in the relief area. This change may be helpful when it is very clear that your ball will roll outside the relief area into a penalty area, but it must be very clear that this will happen. It will get rid of a needless penalty if a caddie or player acts logically, but a bit too quickly.
- The concept of the relief area is new to a few rules where previously the ball had to be dropped as near as possible to a spot. It runs throughout the new rules and is something to get used to - and expect - as it provides a level of consistency to the process of putting your ball back into play when you are anywhere on the course other than on a putting green (no relief area on a putting green, just the spot).

Some examples follow:

Stroke and distance – in 2019, you will find the spot where you last played from and drop in a 1 club-length relief area measured from that spot, but not nearer the hole.

Back-on-the-line relief for an unplayable ball and for penalty areas – in 2019, you will choose a spot on the line and drop in the 1 club-length relief area measured from that spot, but not nearer the hole.

Embedded ball relief – in 2019, you will drop in the 1 club-length relief area which is measured from the spot immediately behind where the ball was embedded, but not nearer the hole.

Ball on a movable obstruction such as a spectator chair, bag or jacket – in 2019, you will drop in the 1 club-length relief area which is measured from the spot on the ground directly under where the ball was originally at rest, but not nearer the hole.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Dropping Zones

The combination of new rules for dropping and having the ball stay in the Relief Area have some implications for dropping zones which, as we know, are widely used in professional golf.

In 2019, the dropping zone will be the Relief Area - no matter what size or shape it is – and your ball must be dropped in it and COME TO REST IN IT.

If your ball rolls outside the drop zone, you must not play it and you must be drop it again. If it happens again, place the ball where it hit the ground on the 2nd drop. If you play from outside the dropping zone, you have played from a wrong place and will get two strokes penalty.

This is a significant change from the 2016 Rules where a dropped ball can roll 2 club-lengths from where it hit the ground, even if this is outside the dropping zone and even if this is nearer the hole.

To operate properly:

- drop the ball correctly from knee height in the drop zone.
- if it comes to rest in the dropping zone – anywhere in the dropping zone - hit it!!
- If it rolls out of the relief area – drop it again.

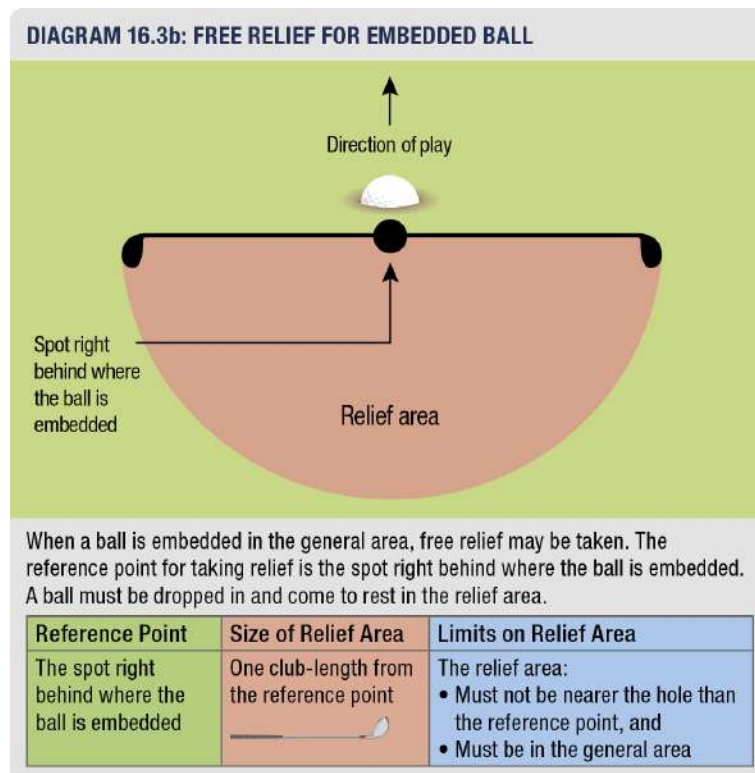
2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Embedded Ball (Rule 16.3)

What is the same?

- Relief is still available for a ball embedded in the General Area, the new term for through the green. But this relief is now provided in the rules themselves and we will not need a hard card local rule.
- The ball must still be embedded in its own pitch-mark.
- The ball must still be embedded in the ground which means it must break the surface of the earth and not just be wrapped up in the grass or in loose impediments.
- You are still entitled to lift the ball to see if it is embedded and you are still required to first mark the ball and it must not be cleaned.
- There is still no relief for a ball embedded in sand in a part of the General Area which is not cut to fairway height or less (meaning not on the fairway) and other exceptions still apply if the ball is unplayable due to something else (such as a bush).
- The European Tour will continue to not allow relief for a ball which is embedded in the stacked turf face of a bunker.

What is new?

- There is no longer a requirement to announce to your marker or another player in your group or your opponent that you intend to mark and lift the ball to check if it is embedded, but it is still good practice to do so.
- If the ball is embedded, the way to take relief is different. You don't have to drop as near as possible to where it was embedded. You now have a relief area and you must drop anywhere in this 1 club-length relief area, but not nearer the hole. The relief area is measured from the spot immediately behind where your ball was embedded. See diagram
- A new ball may be dropped when taking relief. The original ball can be used but it no longer must be used.



[2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Lost Ball \(Rule 18.2\)](#)

What is the same?

- Everyone is allowed a period of time to find their ball.
- If the ball is lost, the stroke and distance penalty will apply.
- Time of search still starts when the player or caddie begin to search.
- If the original ball is found, the provisional ball must be abandoned.

What is new?

- The time for search is reduced to **3** minutes.
- There is now no penalty for moving a ball during search.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Penalty Areas (Rule 17)

What is the same?

- Water hazards change name to penalty areas but the treatment of them for relief purposes is largely the same (with one exception which is listed as the first new point below).
- Yellow and red penalty areas will still exist.
- The standard of proof needed to say your ball is lost in a penalty area is still very high. It must still be known or virtually certain (which is now a defined term) and means that it has to be 95% likely that your ball is in the penalty area (only a very small doubt exists).
- Normal rules about improving the lie of the ball still apply in a penalty area and are now call Conditions Which Affect The Stroke (CATS).
- You still cannot declare your ball unplayable in a Penalty Area.

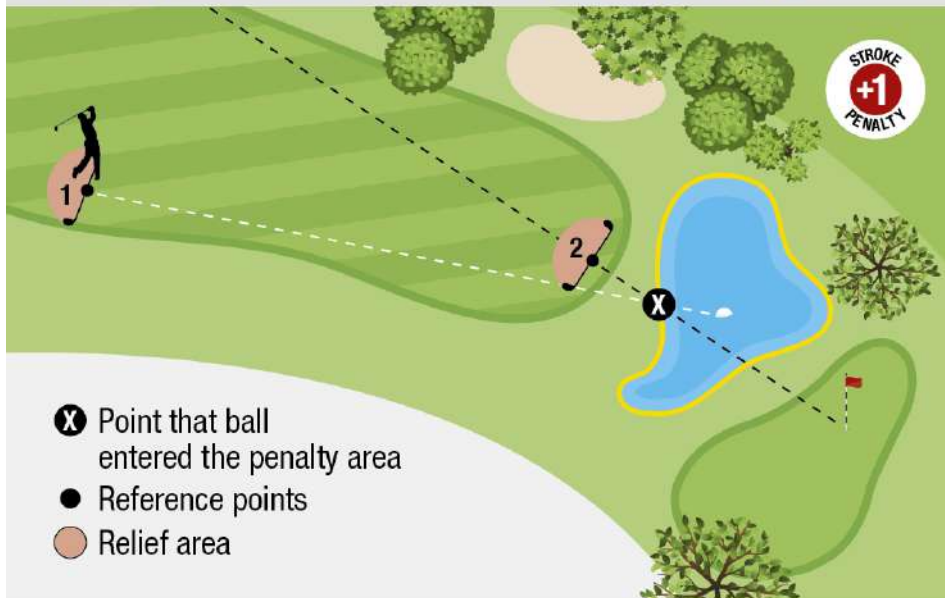
What is new?

- The opposite margin drop option will no longer automatically apply to a penalty area marked red. It can only be used on specific red penalty areas where the committee has preauthorised it by local rule. You will find the red penalty areas we declare that have this option on the weekly local rules sheet. We don't anticipate there will be many and some weeks the Local Rules may just say... Penalty Areas which have an equidistant margin option - none this week! Your mindset on this should be that it will be very rare that this option will now be available.
- There are no longer any specific rules which apply to playing a ball in a penalty area. Whatever you can do in the General Area you can do in a Penalty Area but this is specific to playing the ball – you still cannot get relief from any abnormal course conditions such as GUR, immovable obstructions or an embedded ball when your ball is in a Penalty Area.

For example, when playing your ball from inside a penalty area, you can now ground the club lightly behind the ball, move a loose impediment or take a practice swing which touches the ground or water. What you cannot do is improve the conditions which affect your stroke.


See Diagrams Below.

DIAGRAM #1 17.1d: RELIEF FOR BALL IN YELLOW PENALTY AREA




When it is known or virtually certain that a ball is in a yellow penalty area and the player wishes to take relief, the player has **two options**, each for one penalty stroke:

- (1) The player may take stroke-and-distance relief by playing the original ball or another ball from a relief area based on where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 and Diagram 14.6).

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The spot where the player's previous stroke was made (which if not known must be estimated)	One club-length from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • Must be in the same area of the course as the reference point

- (2) The player may take back-on-the-line relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in a relief area based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through point X.

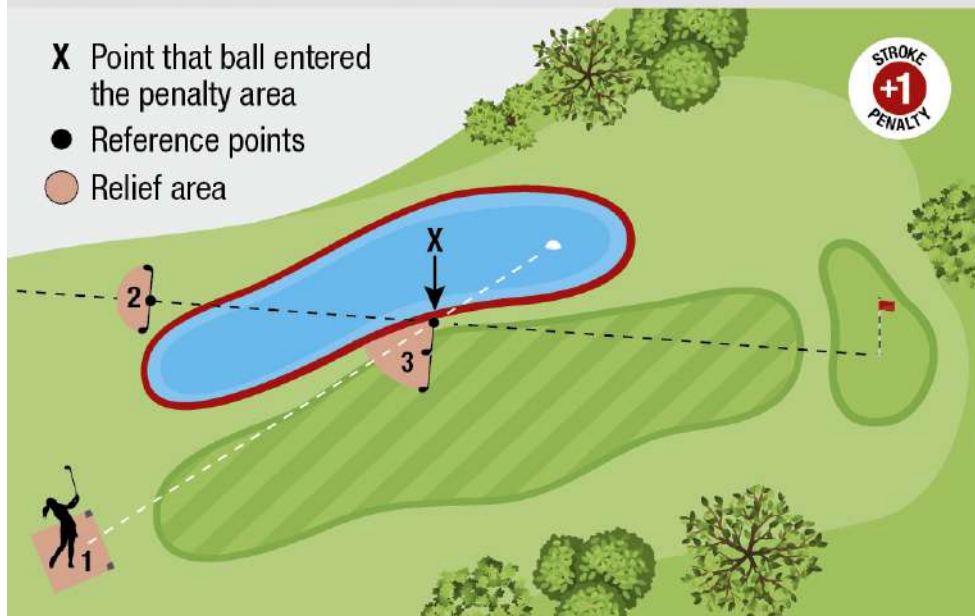
Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A point on the course chosen by the player that is on the reference line through point X (the point where the ball last crossed the edge of the yellow penalty area). There is no limit on how far back on the line the reference point may be	One club-length from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • May be in any area of the course except the same penalty area

Player Notes:

In choosing this reference point, you should indicate the point by using an object (such as a tee).


And for red Penalty areas:

DIAGRAM #2 17.1d: RELIEF FOR BALL IN RED PENALTY AREA



When it is known or virtually certain that a ball is in a red penalty area and the player wishes to take relief, the player has **three options**, each for one penalty stroke:

- (1) The player may take stroke-and-distance relief (see point (1) in Diagram #1 17.1d).
- (2) The player may take back-on-the-line relief (see point (2) in Diagram #1 17.1d).
- (3) The player may take lateral relief (red penalty area only). The reference point for taking lateral relief is point X.

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the red penalty area (point X)	Two club-lengths from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • May be in any area of the course except the same penalty area

2019 Rules: Fact Sheet: Play Suspensions. (Rule 5.7)

What is the same?

- If the suspension is not for a dangerous situation, you can finish a hole you or anyone in your group has started.
- If the suspension is for a dangerous situation, such as lightning, you must stop immediately.
- You don't have to lift the ball, you can just leave it there if you and your marker can clearly see it at rest, but this is not recommended as balls often get taken and if you do decide to lift the ball, it must first be marked.
- When play is to restart, you must place either your original ball or another ball on the spot you marked.

If you ever drop a ball in this situation you are getting it wrong and will be penalised! If the spot is not known (for example, the marker has been removed) the spot must be estimated and a ball must be placed on that spot.

What is new?

- If your lie in sand has been altered, there is no longer a requirement to recreate the original lie. If the original lie is still there, then you place the ball back in it, but if it is not, then all you do is replace the ball on the spot you lifted it from.

For example, if your ball is embedded in a bunker when play is stopped, if the embedded lie is still there when play resumes, if the ball was lifted, then the original ball or another ball must be placed back in the embedded lie.

However, if the greenstaff have raked the bunker and the embedded lie no longer exists, then the requirement is to simply place the original ball or another ball on the spot from which it was lifted, which if not known, must be estimated.

THE BALL WILL ALWAYS BE PLACED.

If your lie or other conditions affecting your stroke are worsened during the suspension, there are some circumstances (such as changes made by an animal or a spectator) where you will be allowed to restore the worsened conditions, but this is not something you should do without first consulting a referee.

- The immediate stop requirement is now written into the rules and we will no longer need a local rule to implement this.

2019 Rules fact Sheet: Preferred Lies

What is the same?

- Each committee has the power to decide:
 - where the rule will operate (which is likely to be a closely mown area only)
 - the size of the relief area the ball can be placed in (whether that be 6 inches, a scorecard length or one club-length).

It is likely that when we use this local rule on the European Tour, we will continue to use a scorecard length in stroke-play or six inches in match-play as our default position and we will only move to a club-length on those rare occasions where courses are extremely wet or fairways are very sparse on grass cover.

- The ball can be placed only once and it is then in play.
- The ball can be cleaned when lifted but see below for an alternative option.

What is new?

There are two main changes to the preferred lies rule:

- The ball no longer must be marked before it is lifted. This is because the ball is not being replaced on its original spot. You are allowed to mark your ball - and it is still good practice to do so - but you will not breach the rule if you don't. You are totally responsible for getting the ball back in the right area if you elect to use this rule. Marking the ball first will help you get it right every time.
- Another ball may be substituted for the original ball just like all other relief rules in the new code but remember to comply with the one ball rule, which will continue to operate on the European Tour.

2019 Rules Fact sheet: Provisional Ball (Rule 18.3)

What is the same?

- You must still announce that the ball about to be played is a provisional ball.
- You cannot play a provisional ball for a ball that you know is in a penalty area.

What is new?

- The restriction on walking forward – which had already been relaxed – has now been removed completely. You can now go back and play a provisional at anytime before the original ball is found. Once you realise that the ball may be hard to find, you can now go back and play a provisional even if you are now a long way forward from the teeing area and even if you have started your search.
- The provisional ball will become the ball in play if it is played from a spot nearer the hole than where the original is likely to be. This is a minor and very subtle change but you can now play the provisional from the spot where the original is likely to be.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Putting Green Rules (Rule 13)

What is the same?

- Relief must be taken if your ball is on a wrong putting green.
- There is no penalty for any accidental movement of a ball or ball marker on a putting green provided the ball or ball marker is replaced.
- Sand and loose soil can be moved only on a putting green.
- Deliberate testing of a green is not allowed by rubbing the surface or rolling a ball.
- You are not allowed to improve your line of putt (but see below re damage).
- You can continue to putt with the flagstick removed or attended.
- If your ball overhangs the hole, you still have only 10 seconds to see if your ball is at rest. If you wait any longer and your ball falls into the hole, the penalty is still one stroke.

What is new?

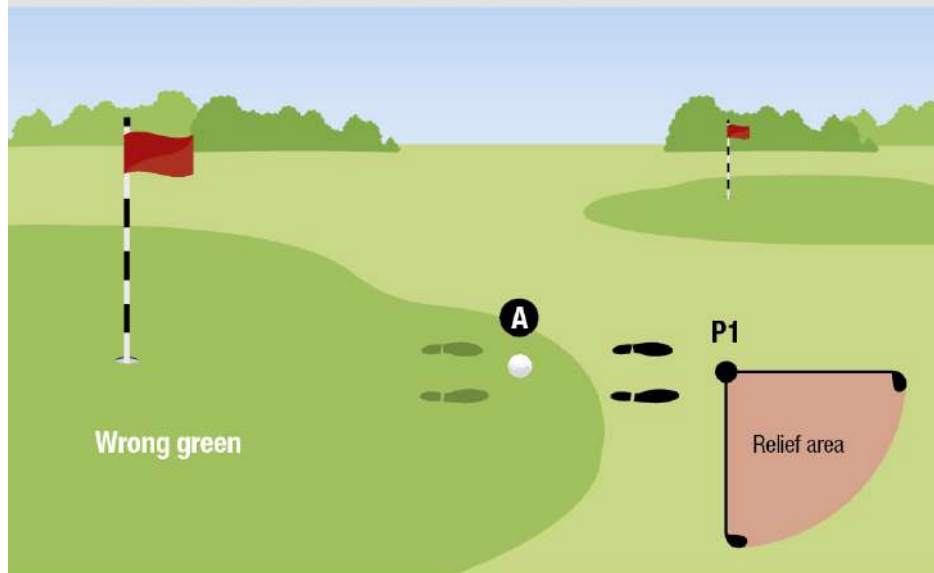
- When your ball lies on a putting green, your line of play may be touched by you or your caddie, including when pointing out the line. But you must not improve your line beyond what is now permitted under the rules (see below re damage).
- You can now putt with the flagstick in the hole when your ball is on the putting green. There is no penalty if your ball strikes the flagstick after a stroke made on the putting green. But if you choose to putt with the flagstick in the hole, it must not be moved to affect where a ball in motion may come to rest. Leave it alone!
- Your caddie is now allowed to lift your ball on a putting green without your prior permission provided the ball is marked first.
- Damage to a putting green may be repaired. Damage is defined in the rules and it means any damage caused by a person or outside influence and includes ball marks, shoe damage (such as spike marks), scrapes or indentations caused by equipment or the flagstick and old hole plugs or turf plugs. IT DOES NOT INCLUDE NATURAL SURFACE IMPERFECTIONS OR NATURAL WEAR TO THE HOLE. Any repair must be done promptly and if you are being timed, we will only allow a small amount of time for repairs to be made, just as we do today.
- Once a ball has been marked and lifted from the putting green, the marked spot is where you will play your next stroke from. This is true even if your ball, when replaced, is moved to another place by any natural force, such as wind. The spot is fixed!
- If your ball rests against a flagstick in the hole and at least part of the ball is below the level of the lip, your ball is holed and your play of the hole is over. There is no longer a requirement to move the flagstick to see if your ball will fall into the hole. You can now just pick it up.
- You still have 10 seconds to determine if your ball overhanging the hole is at rest, but if your opponent in match-play moves your ball before your 10 seconds has expired, he now does not get a loss of hole penalty, but your ball is treated as holed.

If this happens in stroke-play, the player who moved the ball too quickly is penalised two strokes and the ball must be replaced, but there is no more waiting time.

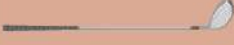
- Interference by a wrong putting green now includes stance.
If you are standing on a wrong putting green to play your ball which lies off the green, you now must not play your ball.

You must take relief so that you are not standing on the wrong green and you will be penalised if you play your ball with your feet on a wrong green.

DIAGRAM 13.1f: FREE RELIEF FROM WRONG GREEN



When there is interference by a wrong green, free relief must be taken. The diagram assumes a right-handed player. Ball A lies on the wrong green, and the nearest point of complete relief for Ball A is at P1, which must be in the same area of the course where the original ball came to rest (in this case, the general area).

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The nearest point of complete relief (P1)	One club-length from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • Must be in the same area of the course as the reference point

Player Notes:

You must take complete relief from all interference by the wrong green.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Reasonable Judgement Standard (Rule 1.3b (2))

The new rules introduce a “reasonable judgement” standard which all Tours are using today by decision. The emphasis will always be on whether what you did was reasonable and if there was just no way you could do it any better.

When a you estimate or measure:

- a spot,
- a point,
- a line,
- an area or other location,

your reasonable judgement is accepted provided you did all that could be reasonably expected under the circumstances to make a prompt and accurate estimation or measurement.

This means that your reasonable judgement is upheld even if it is later proven to be wrong by other information (such as video technology).

Provided the judgement you made was reasonable, there will be no penalties added for small inaccuracies.

In certain situations, there will be no penalty when your estimation was significantly wrong, but the location meant there was effectively no way to do a better job than the one you did.

Examples of the above:

- defining the spot where your ball entered a penalty area when viewed from a considerable distance away.
- declaring your ball unplayable and going back on the line when the view to the hole is significantly obscured.
- where your ball was at rest before being moved by an outside influence and the spot is estimated.

[2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Avoiding a Penalty by Restoring Improved Conditions \(Rule 8.1c\)](#)

What is new?

- If you improve the condition(s) affecting your stroke by moving, bending or breaking something, you may avoid penalty if you restore the condition as nearly as possible to its original position so that the improvement is eliminated before the stroke is made.
- However, the opportunity to avoid penalty is limited to restoring growing or attached natural objects, immovable obstructions, integral objects or boundary objects.
- Examples of restoring include:
 - replacing a removed boundary stake back into its original position,
 - returning a tree branch or growing grass after moving them out of the way,
 - replacing an immovable obstruction or TIO to its original position.To avoid the penalty, only the original object can be used and the improvement must be eliminated completely.
- Improvements that cannot be restored resulting in a penalty include:
 - replacing divots in a hole,
 - removing or pressing down divots and eliminating holes,
 - removing or pressing down sand or loose soil,
 - removing dew, frost or water.

Once these actions have been done, they cannot be undone and penalties will apply.

[2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Standard for Deciding Why A Ball Moved \(Rule 9.2\)](#)

What is the same?

- In most cases, if a ball is moved other than by natural forces, it must be replaced.
- A weight of evidence standard is used to decide what caused the movement.

What is new?

- The standard test for determining what caused a ball to move has been “more likely than not”. This means that if it is 51% likely that you caused your ball to move then you are treated as being the cause.
- The standard in the new rules will be raised to “known or virtually certain” - which is a defined term - and means 95% likely that a person caused that ball to move for that person to be treated as the cause. It is a much higher standard and should lead to fewer penalties for players causing their ball to move.

For example:

where there is no doubt at all that your ball has moved after you have addressed it but there is a noticeable time lag between your actions and the movement of your ball, the time lag means there is a significant doubt over what was the actual cause of the movement and the likely result will be no penalty.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: Temporary Immovable Obstructions

The new TIO rule is largely unchanged but we highlight a few subtle differences.

- “Intervention” will now be termed “Line of Sight”.
This phrase was already commonly used but it is now the correct and official term for when a TIO is directly between you and the hole (including when your ball is IN the TIO).
“Directly” continues to mean on a straight line.
- When your ball is in a position where you have both “physical interference” and “line of sight interference” (such as when your ball is in a grandstand):
 - You are entitled to take relief from both forms of interference (physical and line of sight) by using the one club-length corridor and dropping “more than one, but less than two” from the TIO, or
 - You can choose to take relief from just the physical interference by treating the TIO like any normal immovable obstruction.

It is up to you to choose which one you want to take but once you have dropped your ball, that choice is final. There will be no further relief beyond the choice you made.

- The difference between UNDER and IN.

There is a distinction between a ball that is “UNDER” a TIO with no sides (such as the pedestal type TV towers at Augusta) and a ball that is “IN” a TIO.

A ball that is “under” a TIO will no longer have physical interference unless the TIO does actually interfere.
A ball “under” a TIO will always have the right to “line of sight” relief - which will continue to be more than one, but less than two club-lengths - but physical interference will be a matter of fact.
This means that the exceptions to relief apply and relief may be denied if your ball is unplayable in a bush when it is “under” a TIO.

- You no longer have a choice of which club to use in measuring the club-length corridor for more than one, but less than two relief. The longest club in your bag (other than a putter) must be used. You cannot use a putter or a wedge to provide a smaller area.
- A new ball may be substituted when taking relief as in all other relief rules in the new code.

2019 Rules Fact Sheet: UNPLAYABLE BALL (Rule 19)

What is the same?

- You remain the only person who can declare your ball unplayable.
- You cannot declare your ball unplayable in a penalty area.
- The stroke & distance option remains available.
- The 2 club-length lateral relief option not nearer the hole remains available.
- The back-on-the-line option remains available but is slightly modified as to where you can drop (see below).
- When your ball is in a bunker, if you are taking relief under one penalty stroke by either dropping laterally within two club-lengths or back-on-the-line, you must still drop in the bunker.
- A new ball may be used as long as you comply with the one ball rule if it is in effect.

What is new?

- When you declare your ball unplayable, it must stay in the relief area when dropped.
This is important - and we repeat it for emphasis – IT MUST STAY IN THE RELIEF AREA WHEN DROPPED!!

It can no longer roll 2 club-lengths from where it hits the ground. If it rolls out of the relief area, it must be dropped again. If it happens again, place the ball on the spot where the 2nd drop hit the ground. You should consider this when making your choice of relief option (such as when the 2 club-length relief area only just reaches the edge of a bush).

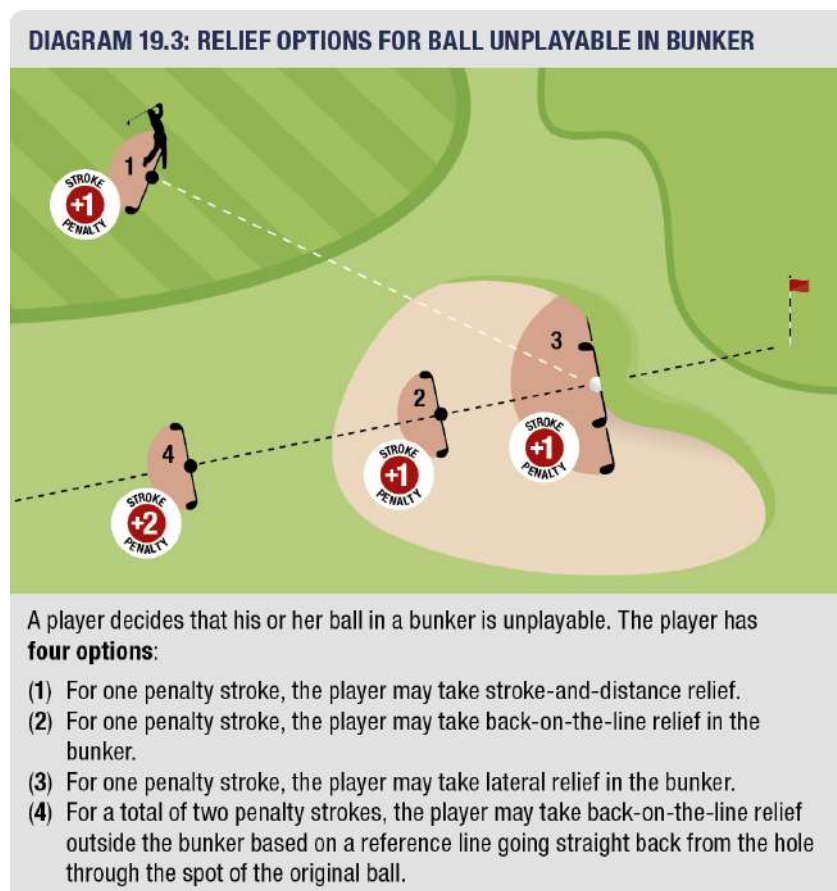
- When you choose to drop back- on-the-line (or keeping the place where the ball lies between you and the hole), you can now drop in a one club-length relief area rather than on the line itself as you do today.

So, go back-on- the-line as far as you want, choose your spot - and it is still good practice to mark that spot before dropping - and drop a ball within one club-length of that spot, but not nearer the hole. If this option is taken in a bunker, the ball must be dropped in the bunker as the rules are today.

If you do not mark the spot on the line you have chosen as your reference point before you drop, the rules will assume that your chosen spot is the spot on the line the same distance from where you did drop. (This matters because if the ball rolls nearer the hole than your reference point after dropping, you must drop again).

See diagrams below for examples.

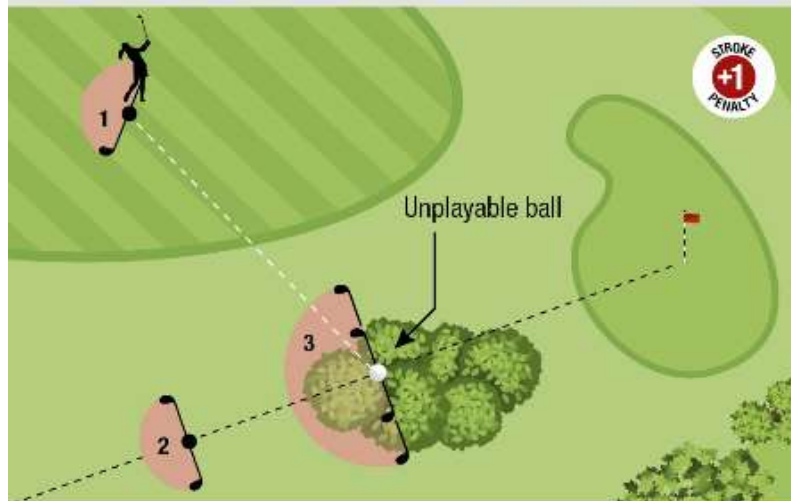
- There is a new option when you declare your ball unplayable in a bunker. For a total of two penalty strokes, the ball may be taken back-on- the- line and dropped outside the bunker in the relief area which is measured from the spot you choose.



- Because a dropped ball must stay in the relief area, if there is more than one part of the course in the relief area, the ball must stay in the part of the course it first hit when dropped.


For example, if it is dropped in a penalty area, it must stay in the penalty area and if it is dropped in the general area (the new term for through the green), it must stay in the general area and if it is dropped in a bunker, it must stay in the bunker.

DIAGRAM 19.2: RELIEF OPTIONS FOR BALL UNPLAYABLE IN GENERAL AREA




A player decides that his or her ball in a bush is unplayable. The player has **three options**, in each case adding one penalty stroke:

- (1) The player may take stroke-and-distance relief by playing the original ball or another ball from a relief area based on where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 and Diagram 14.6).

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The spot where the previous stroke was made (which if not known must be estimated)	One club-length from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • Must be in the same area of the course as the reference point


- (2) The player may take back-on-the-line relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in a relief area based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through the spot of the original ball.

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A point on the course chosen by the player that is on the reference line and is farther from the hole than the spot of the original ball (with no limit on how far back on the line)	One club-length from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • May be in any area of the course

Player Notes:

In choosing this reference point, you should indicate the point by using an object (such as a tee).

- (3) The player may take lateral relief.

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The spot of the original ball	Two club-lengths from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • May be in any area of the course