

### **Rule #1 THE GAME**

Golf is a game. (that means have fun!) You hit the ball from the teeing area into the 4 1/4 inch hole in the fewest strokes possible and don't interfere with others! If something happens during play not covered by the rules be FAIR! That means if your ball ends up next to a 10 foot alligator (which isn't specifically mentioned in the rules) it's only fair you get a free drop in safety!

### **Rule #2 & #3**

deal with the difference between stroke play and match play. In Match play you win or lose the hole. The fewest strokes wins the hole. The person or team who win the most of the 18 holes wins the match. A lot of fun! Stroke play is like most tournaments you see on Television where the fewest total strokes for the round or rounds wins.

### **Rule #4 Clubs**

You are allowed 14! In 1936 in the Walker Cup match the US player Lawson Little was found to have 32 clubs in his bag which was legal at the time. The next year the USGA and St. Andrews got together and changed the rule to 14 clubs!

### **Rule #5 BALL**

You need one! (but start with 8 or 10 in your bag and mark them!)

### **Rule #6 PLAYER**

Be a good one!

### **Rule #7 PRACTICE**

Can't during a stroke play match...and can during a match play match...read the rule!

### **Rule #8 ADVICE**

Keep it to yourself--always!

### **Rule #9 INFORMATION AS TO STROKES TAKEN**

Have a good memory and tell the truth! Sometimes it's easy to forget a stroke isn't it!

### **Rule #10 ORDER OF PLAY**

Flip a coin on the first hole. Lowest score plays first after that!

### **Rule #11 TEEING GROUND**

To begin each hole hit from between the 2 tee markers. Not in front of them. You can go backwards up to 2 clublengths.

### **Rule #12 SEARCHING FOR & IDENTIFYING BALL**

You can move things looking for your ball. If you accidentally move your ball in a hazard you have to put it back exactly the way it was. Make sure it's your ball!

**Rule #13 BALL PLAYED AS IT LIES**

You can't touch or move your ball from the time you hit it off the tee until you putt it into the cup! (even if no one is looking. Remember there are no umpires in golf!)

**Rule #14 STRIKING THE BALL**

Don't push the ball or hit it while it's moving!

**Rule #15 SUBSTITUTED BALL; WRONG BALL**

If you hit the wrong ball in a hazard it's not a penalty. Go back and hit the right ball. If you hit the wrong ball anywhere else it's a 2 stroke penalty. You know it's the wrong ball if it's not yours! (mark your ball)

**Rule #16 THE PUTTING GREEN**

You're allowed to remove loose impediments such as leaves and twigs in your putting path. You can mark and clean your ball on the putting green only. (you can't anywhere else) You have 10 seconds to wait to see if a ball overhanging the edge of the cup will fall into the hole. You can't tamp the grass down with your putter!

**Rule #17 THE FLAGSTICK**

If you are putting on the green and hit the flagstick it's a two stroke penalty. Make sure you have someone attending the pin(flagstick) if you leave it in. If you're off the green and hit the flagstick it's a good thing (because the ball would have probably gone over the green!) There is no penalty if you hit the flagstick from off the green!

**Rule #18 BALL AT REST MOVED**

If something moves your ball then put it back. If you yourself accidentally move your ball it's a 1 stroke penalty. (there is no penalty if you accidentally move your ball while searching for it in a hazard)

**Rule #19 BALL IN MOTION DEFLECTED OR STOPPED**

Tough. Play it where it lies.

**Rule #20 LIFTING, DROPPING AND PLACING; PLAYING FROM THE WRONG PLACE**

Don't touch your ball except on the putting green. If for any reason according to the rules you have to drop your ball back into play drop it shoulder height at arms length.

**Rule #21 CLEANING BALL**

You can mark and clean the ball on the putting green only. If you have a big glob of mud on the ball you can't clean it off till you get to the green.

**Rule #22 BALL ASSISTING OR INTERFERING WITH PLAY**

If someone's ball is in your way anywhere you can ask them to mark it! They can't clean it unless they are on the putting green.

**Rule #23 LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS**

In a hazard you can't move leaves or sticks or the like. Tough...you have to play it as it lies. But everywhere else you can remove loose impediments as long as they are not imbedded or stuck to the ground.

#### **Rule #24 OBSTRUCTIONS**

Trees, hills and rocks are not obstructions. There are part of the game of golf. Water fountains, sprinkler control boxes and cart paths are not part of the normal natural difficulties one faces with a shot that goes astray. You get a free drop with no penalty to the nearest point of relief not nearer to the hole!

#### **Rule #25 ABNORMAL GROUND CONDITIONS; EMBEDDED BALL AND WRONG PUTTING GREEN**

If you have standing water as after a rainstorm, ground under repair or disturbed earth made by a burrowing animal or insect you get a free drop. If you are in a bunker you have to drop it in the bunker. If you are on the wrong putting green you have to drop at the nearest point of relief not nearer the hole off the green. The greenskeepers get upset if you take a divot out of their lovely greens! If you are within the bounds of a hazard--tough. Play it as it lies!

#### **Rule #26 WATER HAZARDS**

If you can find your ball you can play it within the hazard. The hazard is marked by red or yellow stakes. If you see red or yellow stakes with green tips it's an environmental hazard. That means you can't go into the hazard at all. Not one step or the hazard police may escort you off the golf course. Watch out for the green tipped stakes! Many times there will also be a spray painted red or yellow line! If you lose your ball in a water hazard you can... a. Play from where you played your last ball and add one stroke...OR b. Drop a ball 2 club lengths from where the ball entered the water hazard. Most golf courses will have yellow stakes for a water hazard and red stakes for a lateral water hazard and add one stroke.

#### **Rule #27 BALL LOST OR OUT OF BOUNDS**

If you lose your ball in a water hazard you play it two club lengths from where it crossed the line into the hazard. If your ball is lost and it ***didn't go into a hazard*** you must go back to where you played the ball from and hit another ball. You count the first stroke and add a penalty stroke. You will be hitting 3. This isn't good if you want a low score. Out of bounds on the golf course will be marked with white stakes or a fence etc. On one hole a road may be out of bounds. On another hole it might be a fence or a rock wall! This is the edge of the golf course. If you hit your ball on the other side of the white stakes into someone's yard remember that their yard is their private property. ***You may not retrieve your golf ball.*** The out of bounds police may arrest you if you are spotted trespassing in someone's yard. The golf ball isn't worth that much. If you hit a ball out of bounds you must go back to where you hit that last ball from and hit another and add a stroke! You will be hitting 3 if that first shot was your tee shot! If you think you may have lost your ball not in a hazard or you are not sure if your ball went out of bounds you should, according to the rules, play a second provisional ball. This speeds play and keeps you from having to be embarrassed by going all the way back to where you hit the last ball from. This is especially

embarrassing if someone is waiting behind you. If you are not sure if your ball is out of bounds are lost you should hit a provisional ball. If you are lucky and the first ball is not out of bounds you simply pick up the second provisional ball and you only count the strokes of the first ball! Neat!

### **Rule #28 BALL UNPLAYABLE**

If you hit a ball in a place where it cannot be hit you will declare you have an 'unplayable lie'. It is only you who can declare a ball unplayable. Your partner may say, "you can't hit that ball!" You may take exception to his lack of faith in your ability and have a go and maybe hit it right up on the green or may miss it entirely. It's your call and no one else! If you declare it unplayable you have 3 options. a. Hit another ball from the last spot you hit! b. Drop a ball behind the spot where the ball lies keeping the spot where the unplayable ball is between you and the flag. You can go back as far as you wish! (nice) c. Drop a ball 2 clublengths from the spot where the unplayable ball lies but not nearer the hole!

### **Rule #29 THREESOMES AND FOURSOMES**

Better than playing by yourself!

### **Rule #30 THREE-BALL, BEST-BALL AND FOUR-BALL MATCH PLAY**

Compete whenever you can. But be ready. These people know the rules!

### **Rule #31 FOUR-BALL STROKE PLAY**

Great fun to play partners!

### **Rule #32 BOGEY, PAR AND STABLEFORD COMPETITIONS**

Well, you can read the rules for this yourself but there is a way here to win by having the highest number of points. But be warned I think they may still want you to take fewer strokes. Doesn't make sense does it?

### **Rule #33 THE COMMITTEE**

Whoever they are they make all the final decisions!

### **Rule #34 DISPUTES AND DECISIONS**

All disputes and decisions must be taken to the committee. I challenge you to find them to give them a dispute! (smile)

There are some further additions to the rules in the appendix. (I had mine removed) You will want to get a rule book and if you don't want to read them keep the book under your pillow. That works just about as well as reading.  
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