

Category	Sub-category	Topic	Description of change
	Putting green	Repairing damage on the putting green	New rule: A player may repair almost any damage (including spike marks and animal damage but not including natural imperfections) on the putting green. Current rule: A player may only repair ball-marks or old hole plugs on the putting green. New rule: No penalty, so long as doing so does not improve the conditions for the player's stroke. Current rule: Loss of hole/2-stroke penalty (with exceptions). New rule: No penalty if a ball played from the putting green (or anywhere else) hits the unattended flagstick in hole. Current rule: Loss of hole/2-stroke penalty if the ball is played from the putting green and hits the unattended flagstick in hole.
	Penalty areas	Areas the Committee may mark as a penalty area (where relief with 1-stroke penalty is allowed)	New rule: Red- and yellow-marked "penalty areas" may now cover areas of desert, jungle, lava rock, etc, in addition to areas of water. Current rule: The Committee may only mark an area of water as a "water hazard". New rule: No penalty. Current rule: Loss of hole/2-stroke penalty (with exceptions).
Areas of the course (continued)	Penalty areas	Player moves loose impediments, touches the ground with hand or club or grounds the club in a penalty area when the ball is in the penalty area	New rule: 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). Current rule: All water hazards should be marked yellow, except where their location on the course makes it impossible or unreasonable to drop behind the hazard; only when this is the case may these water hazards be marked red as lateral water hazards.
	Penalty areas	Expanded use of red-marked penalty areas	New rule: 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). Current rule: All water hazards should be marked yellow, except where their location on the course makes it impossible or unreasonable to drop behind the hazard; only when this is the case may these water hazards be marked red as lateral water hazards.

Category	Sub-category	Topic	Description of change
	Penalty areas	Elimination of the opposite side relief option for red penalty areas	New rule: A player is no longer allowed to take relief from a red penalty area on the opposite side from where the ball last entered that penalty area, unless the Committee adopts a Local Rule allowing it. Current rule: A player is always allowed to take relief from the opposite side of a red-marked lateral water hazard. New rule: No penalty. Current rule: Loss of hole/2-stroke penalty (with exceptions).
	Bunkers	Player moves or touches a loose impediment in a bunker when the ball is in the bunker	New rule: No penalty except when a player touches sand (1) with his or her hand or club to test the conditions of the bunker, (2) in making a practice swing, (3) with the club in the area right behind or in front of the ball or (4) in making the backswing for the stroke. Current rule: Any touching of sand with hand or club results in loss of hole/2-stroke penalty (with exceptions).
	Bunkers	Player touches sand in a bunker with his or her hand or a club when the ball is in the bunker	New rule: A player may take relief outside the bunker back on the line from the hole through where the ball was at rest for 2 penalty strokes. Current rule: No relief outside the bunker (other than in playing from where the player's last stroke was made). New rule: A player may keep using any damaged club, no matter the nature or cause of the damage, even if the player damaged it in anger. Current rule: A player may use the damaged club only if it was damaged in the "normal course of play".
Equipment	Damaged clubs	Use of clubs damaged during round	New rule: A player may not replace a damaged club, unless the player was not responsible for the damage. Current rule: A player may replace a damaged club if it is "unfit for play" and was damaged in the "normal course of play."
	Damaged clubs	Adding clubs to replace a club damaged during round	New rule: A player may not replace a damaged club, unless the player was not responsible for the damage. Current rule: A player may replace a damaged club if it is "unfit for play" and was damaged in the "normal course of play."



Repairing Spike Marks

You will be allowed to repair spike marks and any other damage on the putting green caused by a person, an animal or maintenance practices.

Leaving Flagstick in the Hole

If you make a stroke from on the green and your ball hits the flagstick in the hole, there will be no penalty.



Relaxed Rules in Penalty Area

You will be allowed to ground your club and move loose impediments in a penalty area (an expanded concept of water hazards that does not include bunkers).

