

Effective January 1, 2020



The USGA Rules of Golf govern all play except as noted below.

1. **Improving Lie:** A player may Lift, Clean & Place their ball and improve their lie anywhere on the course except on a putting green, in a bunker, in a penalty area or if the grass is more than 6” long, by moving their ball no farther than one foot. In doing so, a player must not move their ball from one cut of grass to another (ie, rough to fairway) or improve their line of play or the area of their intended stance or swing.
2. **Out of Bounds:** When a ball is hit out of bounds a player may take relief as if the ball had been lost in a red penalty area. The player should determine the point where the ball last crossed the boundary and proceed with 2 club lengths no closer to the hole, for a penalty of one stroke. The ball may not be played from out of bounds.
3. **Lost Ball:** When a player loses their ball in an area that is not out of bounds or in a penalty area, they may drop a ball within 2 club lengths of where they believe it was likely lost, for a penalty of one stroke.
4. **Bunkers:** Improving lies in bunkers is not allowed, unless the ball is in a footprint, wet sand, or other depression not caused by the impact of the ball itself; then the ball may be lifted, sand smoothed with a rake, and the ball replaced as close to the original spot as possible. A ball in standing water may be lifted and placed in the bunker, no closer to the hole, without penalty. If there is no spot in the bunker without standing water, the player may take back-on-the-line relief outside of the bunker, without penalty. (Back on the Line) This is not the line the ball traveled, but the line that goes back from the hole.
5. **Unplayable Ball in Bunker:** As an additional measure to deal with poorly maintained bunkers, a player may at any time declare their ball unplayable and take back-on-the-line relief outside of the bunker for a penalty of one stroke.
6. **Penalty Area Carry Over Procedure:** An additional option of relief from penalty areas has been adopted to help players who may not be able to hit their ball all the way across. If a player’s ball is lost in or comes to rest in a penalty area, the player may drop their ball “across” the penalty area from where it went in, no more than two club lengths from the margin of the penalty area. The use of this option will incur a three stroke penalty. For example, if a player hits their tee shot into a lake in front of the tee, they may place their ball across the lake. They will have taken one actual stroke plus three penalty strokes, for a total of four. This option does not preclude a player from taking other, possibly more favorable, relief options, such as dropping in a designated drop zone.
7. **Cleaning The Ball and Substituting:** A player may lift, clean, and place their ball back at its original spot at any time except when it is in a bunker or penalty area. If a player is taking relief from a bunker or penalty area, the ball may be cleaned at that time. Unless abnormal course conditions exist, this type of relief comes with a 1 stroke penalty. Any time a ball is legally lifted another ball may be substituted.
8. **Putts on Temporary Greens:** Score no more than two (2) putts on any designated temporary green.

The following local rules of competition are adopted for our tournaments.

Maximum of Nine Strokes Per Hole: Once a player has reached a score of eight strokes on a hole (including penalty strokes), the player must discontinue play, pick up their ball, and score a nine on the hole.

1. **Unmarked Areas are Declared Penalty Areas:** All wooded areas, native grass areas, waste areas, weeds or grass more than 6” tall etc. are to played as red penalty areas.
2. **All Penalty Areas are RED Penalty Areas:** All penalty areas, whether marked red, yellow, or unmarked, will be played as RED penalty areas. This enables the two-club-length relief option, and also allows a player to take relief from the far side of the penalty area if the ball carries over the penalty area and rolls back into it.

Metro St. Louis Seniors Golf - Rules Of Play

Effective January 1, 2019



The following rules are consistent with USGA rules, but are stated here for emphasis. These are rules that every player should be familiar with and must follow WITHOUT EXCEPTION. Some of these are new rules for 2019.

1. There are no “mulligans”. Every stroke counts.
2. There are no “gimmes”. Make putts until your ball is in the hole or your score is eight. If you pick up your ball without marking it before you hole out, put it back down where you think you picked it up from and continue playing. Add a penalty stroke for illegally lifting your ball. If you pick up your ball without holing out and move on to the next hole without correcting your mistake, score a 9 for that hole and continue to the next hole.
3. You may search for your ball for 3 minutes. If you don't find it in 3 minutes drop a ball where you think it should be and continue playing. Add a penalty stroke for a lost ball. If you find your original ball after you have dropped a new ball you must not play the original ball! Once you hit another ball it becomes your ball in play.
4. There is no penalty for hitting the flagstick in the hole. For example, if a player is off the green but not ready to play, and you wish to make a putt, you may do so without the delay of removing the flagstick and then replacing it for the other player.
5. A ball that is accidentally hit more than once when a player makes their stroke no longer incurs a penalty. Play the ball from where it comes to rest.
6. A player may move loose impediments (stones, twigs, leaves, etc) in a bunker.
7. If you accidentally move your ball or ball marker on the putting green, there is no penalty. Just put it back in its original location.