

# New Golf Rules 2023

Yves C. Ton-That is an official referee and author. His award-winning books on the rules of golf have been translated into more than 20 languages and more than 2.5 million copies have been sold. His handy rules guide "Golf Rules Quick Reference" is the world's best-selling golf book.



## As of 2023, new golf rules apply worldwide.

We have summarized the most important changes for you.



### Handicap (Rule 3)

Previously, the player was responsible for applying the correct handicap. A wrong handicap on the scorecard might have resulted in disqualification.

**Now, the committee, not the player, is responsible for calculating the score and applying the correct handicap.**

Good to know: It is still advisable for players to check the handicap shown on their scorecard.

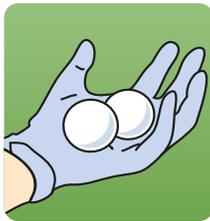


### Damaged clubs (Rule 4)

Previously, only under special circumstances was replacing or repairing a damaged club during the round allowed.

**Now, players are permitted to replace or repair damaged clubs during a round, provided that they have not damaged the club willfully or through abuse.**

Good to know: Players must make sure they don't unreasonably delay play when replacing or repairing a damaged club.



### Substituting the ball (Rule 6)

In principle, the ball may not be substituted while a hole is being played (unless a rule allows it, e.g. if the ball is damaged or the player is taking relief). The penalty for prohibited substitution of another ball used to be 2 penalty strokes.

**Now, the penalty for prohibited substitution of the ball has been reduced to 1 penalty stroke.**

Good to know: If a ball is going to be dropped, it may always be cleaned, or a new ball may even be used.

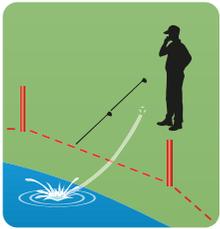


### Dropping back-on-the-line (Rules 14, 16, 17 and 19)

With the relief procedure where the player goes back on the extension of the line from the hole to the ball or from the hole to the entry point (in the case of a penalty area), the player previously had to take a drop within 1 club-length, not nearer to the hole.

**Now, the ball must be dropped on the line itself and it may roll up to 1 club-length in any direction, including nearer to the hole.**

Good to know: This applies to the "Unplayable ball", "Abnormal course condition in a bunker" and "Penalty area" rules.

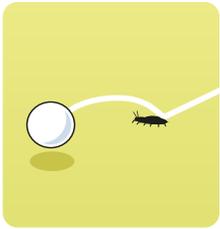


### Ball at rest moved by the wind or gravity (Rule 9)

If the ball is moved by a gust of wind or if it moves by itself, it must, in principle, be played from its new position. An exception to this is on the green if the ball was previously marked, picked up and replaced.

Now, another exception has been added in the event that the ball was previously picked up for a rules procedure. The rule now states that if a ball comes to rest after being dropped or placed and it then rolls into another area of the course (e.g. bunker or penalty area) or out of bounds, it must be put back without penalty.

Good to know: This rule has more significance for players on the professional tour where the grass is cut very short and thus a ball might roll away after coming to rest.



### Ball on the green deflected by an insect (Rule 11)

Previously, the following applied – if, after a stroke on the green, the ball hits an animal, the stroke must be replayed without penalty.

Now, this no longer applies if the ball hits a worm or an insect. In this case, the stroke counts and the ball is played as it lies.

Good to know: Worms and insects are classed as loose impediments and may be removed from the line of play before putting.

11	5	6	
15	4	6	
7	4	X	
3	3		

### Stableford (Rule 21)

In Stableford, some penalties resulted in points being deducted from the overall score.

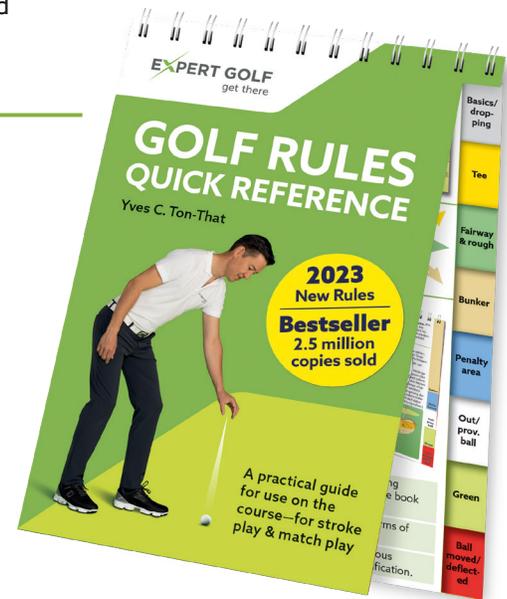
Now, points are only deducted at the hole where the rules infringement took place.

Good to know: If, for example, zero points were scored at the hole in question, the penalty does not affect the result.

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The rules guide for use on the course: "Golf Rules Quick Reference 2023-2026", by Yves C. Ton-That, 50 pages, 180+ colored illustrations, spiral-bound, ISBN 978-3-906852-39-3, US\$ 19.90

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