

USGA/R&A RULES OF GOLF RELIEF OPTIONS QUICK REFERENCES

Rule 14.3b – Ball Must Be Dropped in Right Way

1. The ball must be dropped straight down from knee height (See Diagram 14.3b)
2. The ball must be dropped in and come to rest in the relief area (See Diagram 14.3c)

Rule 16 – Abnormal Course Conditions (Immovable Obstruction/ Embedded Ball/ Dangerous Animal/ Temporary Water)

1. There must be physical interference with lie of ball, stance, or area of intended swing path - FREE DROP, NO PENALTY
2. Determine nearest point of *Complete Relief* using club player would use if *Abnormal Course Condition* or *Obstruction* not present (i.e., 150 yard-7 iron)
3. Establish *relief area* one *Club-Length* from reference point, no closer to hole - Free drop in *General Area* and Bunkers
4. Additional option is to keep point where ball lies unplayable directly between flagstick and point on which ball is dropped - player may go back on reference line as far as desired (*Back-on-the-Line Relief*)
5. If ball is in bunker, player must drop in bunker; 1 Penalty Stroke, player may take *Back-on-the-Line* relief outside bunker

Rule 17 – Penalty Areas (Defined as Yellow or Red) - When it is known, or virtually certain ball is in Penalty Area

1. Play ball where it lies without penalty – Rule 17.1b
2. Return to location of previous stroke (*Stroke and Distance Relief*), *relief area* is within one *Club-Length* of *Reference Point* – 1 Penalty Stroke

A. 17.1d - Additional Relief Option for Ball in Yellow Penalty Area – 1 Penalty Stroke

Option is to drop behind hazard on reference line, keeping point where ball last crossed edge of hazard directly between flagstick and reference point from which player drops ball - player may go back on reference line as far as desired (*Back-on-the-Line Relief*)

B. 17.1d - Additional Relief Options for ball in Red Penalty Area – 1 Penalty Stroke

- 1.) Drop within one *club length relief area* behind hazard on reference line, by keeping point where ball last crossed edge of hazard between flagstick and reference point from which player drops ball
- 2.) Establish *relief area* within two *club-lengths* of reference point where ball last crossed edge of hazard

Rule 18.3 - Provisional Ball

1. Played to save time, only if ball may be lost outside Penalty Area or *Out of Bounds*
2. If played solely in belief original ball is in *Penalty Area*, Provisional Ball is ball *In Play*, lying 3
3. If played without announcement, Provisional Ball is ball *In Play*, lying 3
4. If original ball is found before end of 3-minute search in *General Area* and/or it is in bounds, PROVISIONAL MUST BE PICKED UP!!; after 3minutes, the Provisional Ball is ball *In Play*, lying 3
5. If original ball is found before end of 3-minute search in Penalty Area, provisional ball must be abandoned, and Rule 17 applies
6. Player may play provisional ball multiple times UP TO POINT WHERE ORIGINAL IS LIKELY TO BE. If player plays provisional from that point or closer to hole, Provisional Ball becomes ball *In Play*.

Rule 19 - Unplayable Ball – 1 Penalty Stroke

1. 19.2a - Return to location of previous stroke (*Stroke and Distance Relief*), *relief area* is within one *Club-Length* of *Reference Point*
2. 19.2b - Additional option is to keep point where ball lies unplayable directly between flagstick and reference point from which ball is dropped in *Reference Area* - player may go back on *reference line* as far as desired (*Back-on-the-Line Relief*) to establish *Reference Area*
3. 19.2c - Lateral Relief-Drop in *reference area* within two *Club-Lengths* of where ball lies unplayable, no closer to hole
4. Additional option is to keep point where ball lies unplayable directly between flagstick and reference point from which ball is dropped in *Reference Area* - player may go back on *reference line* as far as desired (*Back-on-the-Line Relief*) to establish *Reference Area*.
19.2/5 - Player must find ball to use *Back-on-the-Line* relief option.
5. 19.2a/b - If ball is in bunker, player must drop in bunker; for an additional 1 Penalty Stroke (total of 2 Penalty Strokes), player may take *Back-on-the-Line* relief outside bunker

Virtual Certainty

To be virtually certain on something occurring is to consider the event in question at least 95% likely to have happened or there is conclusive evidence that the event in question happened to the player's ball, such as when the player or other witnesses saw it happen.