

MINTHIS HILLS GOLF CLUB – LOCAL RULES

1. OUT OF BOUNDS (Rule 27)

A ball is out of bounds if it is a.) Over any boundary fence, hedge or wall b.) Beyond any line of white stakes

2. WATER HAZARDS (Rule 26)

a.) Water hazards are defined by yellow stakes b.) Lateral water hazards are defined by red stakes c.) The extent of the concrete water hazards are defined by the walls/concrete, the extent of all other water hazards are defined by the line of the yellow or red stakes.

3. GROUND UNDER REPAIR (Rule 25)

Is defined by blue stakes and/or sign – relief must be taken in all situations.

4. IMMOVABLE OBSTRUCTIONS (Rule 24.2)

a.) Tarmac and gravel paths b.) Walls adjacent to paths/ditches/hazards c.) Stone tees and directional information plaques d.) Irrigation pipes and covers e.) Bridges f.) Staked trees and trees with stakes adjacent - relief must be taken g.) Drainage pipes and covers. h.) Fixed sprinkler heads. i.) Gravel or stone areas around tees j.) Access paths to and from tees and greens. In addition, if the ball lies off the putting green but not in a hazard and is within two club-lengths of an immovable obstruction that is on or within two club-lengths of the putting green and that intervenes on the line of play between the ball and the hole, the player may take relief without penalty as follows: the ball may be marked, lifted, cleaned and dropped at the nearest point to where the ball lay that: i.) is not nearer the hole, ii.) avoids such intervention and iii.) is not in a hazard or on a putting green.

5. MOVABLE OBSTRUCTIONS (Rule 24.1)

Stones in bunkers, bunker rakes and all stakes on the course with the exception of boundary markers and out of bounds stakes.

6. ALLOWING PROVISIONAL BALL TO BE PLAYED ON 13TH HOLE.

If there is doubt whether a ball has come to rest in, on or touching the water hazard surrounding the 13th green, the player may play another ball provisionally under the options of Local Rule 7. If the original ball is subsequently found outside the water hazard, the player must continue to play with it. If the original ball is subsequently found in the water hazard, or if it has not been found or identified within the five minute search period, the player must continue with the ball played provisionally.

7. ISLAND GREEN – HOLE 13

A ball coming to rest on the stones, water lining (but not the wall) or entering the water surrounding the 13th green must with a penalty of one stroke be a.) Dropped in the designated drop zone or b.) On the Teeing Ground: - The ball to be played must be played from within the teeing ground. It may be played from anywhere within the teeing ground and may be teed. C.) Through the green – The ball to be played must be dropped and when dropped must first strike a part of the course through the green.

8. USE OF DISTANCE MEASURING DEVICES (RULE 14.3)

A player may obtain distance information by using a device that measures distance only. If, during a stipulated round, a player uses a distance-measuring device that is designed to gauge or measure other conditions that might affect his play (e.g. gradient, wind speed, temperature, etc.), the player is in breach of Rule 14-3, for which the penalty is disqualification, regardless of whether any such additional function is actually used. If the device is capable of making and receiving phone calls, then it must be configured in such a way as to disable this feature for the duration of the round.

**PENALTY FOR BREACH OF LOCAL RULE: MATCH PLAY - LOSS OF HOLE AND IN STROKE PLAY – 2 STROKES
OTHER TEMPORARY/SEASONAL LOCAL RULES ARE DISPLAYED ON THE NOTICE BOARD**

FAQ 1:

What am I allowed to do if my ball lands on the stones in the hazard surrounding the 13th green?

Applicable Rule(s): Local Rule 7 (Island Green - Hole 13)

A ball coming to rest on the stones, water lining (but not the wall) or entering the water surrounding the 13th green must with a penalty of one stroke be a)

Dropped in the designated drop zone, or

b) On the teeing ground – The ball to be played must be played from within the teeing ground and may be teed. c) Through the green – The ball to be played must be dropped and when dropped must first strike a part of the course through the green.

Answer:

What the local rule means is that you have two options (and only two options), both of which incur a penalty of one stroke. You may:

1. drop the ball in the dropping zone (see also FAQ 2), or
2. drop the ball as near as possible to the spot from where you played the ball that ended up in the water. This is commonly known as “Stroke and Distance”.

You do **not** have the option that is normally available with a water hazard, namely going as far back as you wish on a line keeping the point at which the ball last crossed the boundary of the hazard in line with the hole. **Nor do you have the option of entering the hazard and playing the ball as it lies.**

If it was your tee-shot that ended up in the hazard and you elect to use the “stroke and distance” option instead of using the dropping zone, you may play the new ball from anywhere within the teeing ground and may tee-up the ball. Note that the “teeing ground” is the rectangular area two club-lengths in depth, the front and sides of which are defined by the outside limits of the two tee-markers.

An extreme example of this could be that you are over-zealous in putting a ball that is on the green and manage to send it all the way across the green and into the water. You still have only two options, at the cost of a penalty stroke, you either use the dropping zone, or you place another ball on the putting green (you never drop a ball on the putting green) as close as possible to where the previous ball was when you putted it.

Please be aware that the drainage ditch on the 13th hole is not part of the water hazard that surrounds the green and as such the “normal” rules for dropping the ball apply. If a ball lands in here, the dropping zone is **not** an option.

FAQ 2: *If I drop a ball in a drop zone and it rolls outside the zone do I have to re-drop it?*

Applicable Rule(s): Appendix I part B section 8 (Dropping Zones)

When using a dropping zone the following provisions apply regarding the dropping and re-dropping of the ball:

- (a) The player does not have to stand within the dropping zone when dropping the ball.
- (b) The dropped ball must first strike a part of the course within the dropping zone.
- (c) If the dropping zone is defined by a line, the line is within the dropping zone.
- (d) The dropped ball does not have to come to rest within the dropping zone.
- (e) The dropped ball must be re-dropped if it rolls and comes to rest in a position covered by Rule 20-2c(i-vi).
- (f) The dropped ball may roll nearer the hole than the spot where it first struck a part of the course, provided it comes to rest within two club-lengths of that spot and not into any of the positions covered by (e).
- (g) Subject to the provisions of (e) and (f), the dropped ball may roll and come to rest nearer the hole than:
 - its original position or estimated position (see Rule 20-2b);
 - the nearest point of relief or maximum available relief (Rule 24-2, Rule 25-1 or Rule 25-3); or
 - the point where the original ball last crossed the margin of the water hazard or lateral water hazard (Rule 26-1).

Answer:

Not necessarily.

Although the official wording for the provisions applying to dropping zones appears quite complicated it can be simplified to the following:

- It doesn't matter where you stand when you drop the ball, so long as the ball lands within the dropping zone or on the line bounding the dropping zone.
- After landing, it is permissible for the ball to roll out of the dropping zone and it is also allowed to roll closer to the hole.
- You have to re-drop the ball if it:
 - rolls and comes to rest more than two club-lengths from where it was dropped;
 - rolls into and comes to rest in a hazard;
 - rolls and comes to rest out of bounds;
 - rolls and comes to rest in a position where there is interference by the condition from which relief was taken (e.g. the area of vines between the first and ninth holes).

FAQ 3: *In the past I've had conflicting advice, what is the correct procedure for taking a "free drop"?*

Applicable Rule(s): Rule 20-2 (Dropping and Re-dropping)
 Rule 24-2 (Immovable Obstruction)
 Rule 25-1 (Abnormal Ground Conditions)

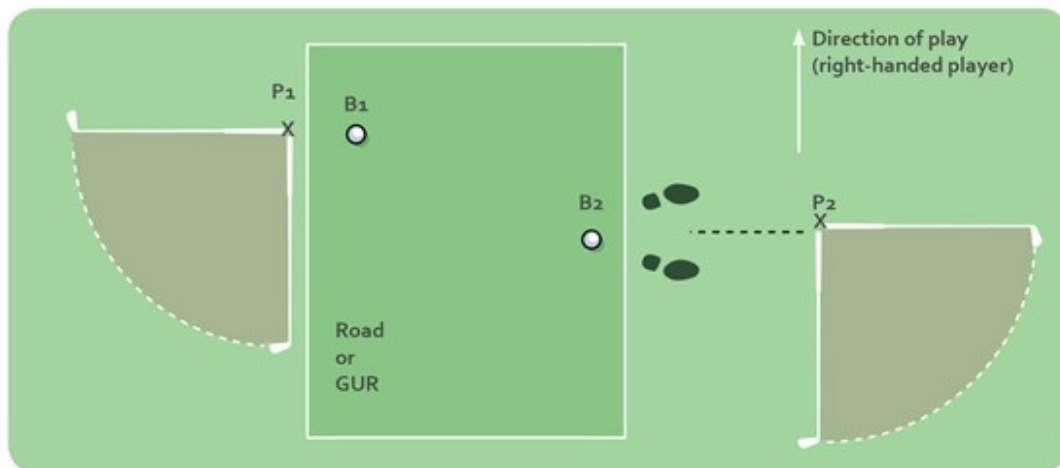
Nearest Point of Relief (taken from the Rules of Golf)

The "nearest point of relief" is the reference point for taking relief without penalty from interference by an immovable obstruction, an abnormal ground condition or a wrong putting green. It is the point on the course nearest to where the ball lies:

- (i) that is not nearer the hole, and
- (ii) where, if the ball were so positioned, no interference by the condition from which relief is sought would exist for the stroke the player would have made from the original position if the condition were not there

Answer:

The following diagram (courtesy of the R&A) illustrates the term "nearest point of relief" that is used in Rules 20-2, 24-2 and 25-1 in the case of a right-handed player. It shows two ball positions (B_1 and B_2) on a road or in GUR and their respective nearest point of relief (P_1 and P_2) as an example. Instead of a road/GUR it could just as well be a staked tree or a sprinkler head or any immovable obstruction.



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|-------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| B_1 | = position of ball on road, in ground under repair (GUR), etc. | | = notional stance required to play at P_2 with club with which player would expect to play the stroke |
| P_1 | = nearest point of relief | | |
| P_1 shaded area | = area within which ball to be dropped, radius of one club-length from P_1 measured with any club | P_2 | = nearest point of relief |
| B_2 | = position of ball on road, in ground under repair (GUR), etc. | P_2 shaded area | = area within which ball to be dropped, radius of one club-length from P_2 , measured with any club |

The simple answer is that you drop within one club-length of the nearest point of relief (the grey area shown above) and the ball can then roll up to two club-lengths from where it struck the ground.

There are conditions attached to dropping the ball depending upon where the original ball lay. e.g. the ball must be re-dropped if it:

1. rolls into and comes to rest in a hazard;
2. rolls out of and comes to rest outside a hazard;
3. rolls onto and comes to rest on a putting green;
4. rolls and comes to rest out of bounds;
5. rolls and comes to rest in a position where there is interference by the condition from which relief was taken;
6. rolls and comes to rest more than two club-lengths from where it struck the ground;
7. rolls and comes to rest closer to the hole than the nearest point of relief.

Note that if you are taking a “free drop” in a bunker, the dropped ball must remain in the bunker. If there is nowhere in the bunker to drop (e.g. it is completely full of water) then you may drop outside the bunker, but at the cost of a penalty stroke.

If your original ball was “through the green” (i.e. on the course but not on the teeing ground, putting green of the hole being played or in a hazard) you cannot drop the ball on the putting green.

One last important point – you cannot claim a “free drop” from interference by an immovable obstruction if that interference would occur only through use of a clearly unreasonable stroke, or an unnecessarily abnormal stance, swing or direction of play.

FAQ 4: *Some trees have stakes next to them, but aren't connected to them, can I still get relief?*

Applicable Rule(s): Local Rule 4 (Immovable Obstructions)

Answer:

Yes.

The relevant point in local rule 4 is:

f) Staked trees **and trees with stakes adjacent** – relief must be taken.

FAQ 5: *If my ball lands in a bunker that is GUR do I have to drop the ball back in front of the bunker?*

Applicable Rule(s): Rule 20-2 (Dropping and Re-dropping)
Rule 25-1 (Abnormal Ground Conditions)

Answer:

Not necessarily.

There is nothing special about a bunker that has been designated “ground under repair” as opposed to any other abnormal ground condition.

Quite a few people mistakenly believe that the point at which the ball entered the bunker needs to be taken into consideration. It doesn't, unless you can't find the ball.

You simply determine the nearest point of relief from where the ball lies in the bunker and follow the procedure described in FAQ 3.

FAQ 6:

Do I get relief if my ball is touching the wall of the drainage ditch in front of the 15th green?

Applicable Rule(s): Local Rule 2 (Water Hazards)

a) Water hazards are defined by yellow stakes b) Lateral water hazards are defined by red stakes c) The extent of the concrete water hazards are defined by the walls/concrete, the extent of all other water hazards are defined by the line of yellow or red stakes

Local Rule 4 (Immovable Obstructions)

The relevant part of Local Rule 4 is:

b) Walls adjacent to paths/ditches/hazards.

Rule 20-2 (Dropping and Re-dropping)

Rule 24-2 (Immovable Obstruction);

Answer:

No.

The wall is part of the hazard and since the ball is touching the hazard it is by definition in the hazard and as such you do not get relief from any immovable obstructions.

If however your ball was not touching the wall and not in the hazard and the wall would physically interfere with your stance or your swing then you can obtain relief without penalty, under Local Rule 4 and Rule 24-2 . You should drop the ball following the procedure described in FAQ 3.

Also, note the wording in point c) of Local Rule 2. The stakes for this type of hazard are not part of the hazard, they are only there to tell you whether the hazard is a water hazard (yellow) or a lateral water hazard (red). So if your ball comes to rest behind the stakes but is not touching the wall or in the ditch then it is not in the water (or lateral water) hazard and so it is highly likely that you will be able to claim relief without penalty.

One other point about the stakes – the stakes are movable obstructions (Local Rule 5) so they may be removed to play a shot from within the hazard, e.g. if your ball is on top of the wall and you elect to play it from there.

FAQ 7:

a) Someone told me you can't hold the flagstick while tapping in a two inch putt, is that right?

b) Someone I was playing with removed an out-of-bounds stake. When I told him that wasn't allowed he replaced it before playing his shot, what is the ruling on this?

Applicable Rule(s): a) Rule 14-3 (Unusual Use of Equipment)

Applicable Rule(s): b) Local Rule 5 (Movable Obstructions)

b) Rule 13-2 (Improving Lie, Area of Intended Stance or Swing, or Line of Play)

Answer:

a) Not necessarily.

You may hold the flagstick while you putt out without penalty provided that you hold it in the air and do not rest it on the ground. If you do rest it on the ground then you are in breach of rule 14-3 **the penalty for which is disqualification!**

b) He incurs a two-stroke penalty (or loss of hole if it was matchplay).

Objects defining out of bounds are fixed, not movable obstructions, and so may not be moved. The player was in breach of Rule 13-2 the moment he moved the post and there was nothing he could then do to avoid the penalty. The replacement of the post before the next stroke was irrelevant.

FAQ 8:

a) In greensomes what do you do if both players on a team drive their ball out of bounds?

b) In foursomes what do you do if player does an "air shot"?

Applicable Rule(s): Rule 29-1 (Threesomes and Foursomes)

In a threesome or a foursome, during any stipulated round the partners must play alternately from the teeing grounds and alternately during the play of each hole. Penalty strokes do not affect the order of play.

Answer:

a) You nominate one of the balls as the one you choose and if it is Player-A's ball then Player-B plays the next shot and vice-versa.

If in this instance it is a mixed greensomes and Player-A is a man, then his lady partner must play the next shot from the men's tee from which he played.

The Rules of Golf do not mention "greensomes" specifically, but greensomes is a special case of foursomes once both players have teed-off and nominated their chosen ball.

b) If Player-A did the "air-shot" then Player-B must play the next stroke and vice-versa.

An "air-shot" is a stroke, since the player intended to strike the ball, so the rule of alternate strokes means that the player's partner must play the next shot.

However, if Player-A deliberately did an "air shot" (e.g. to give his team some sort of advantage – say when playing over water), then he has not made a stroke and if Player-B takes the next shot he has played out of turn and would incur a 2-stroke penalty (or loss of hole in matchplay). In strokeplay, if before teeing off on the next hole Player-A did not play the ball from where Player B hit it, **their team would be disqualified**.

FAQ 9:

a) Are you allowed to remove leaves and sand from a putting green even if your ball is not on the green?

b) Are you allowed to remove sand on a green using the palm of your hand?

Applicable Rule(s): a) Rule 23-1 (Loose Impediments – Relief)

Except when both the loose impediment and the ball lie in or touch the same hazard any loose impediment may be removed without penalty.

b) Rule 16-1a(i) (Putting Green - General)

the player may remove loose impediments, provided he does not press anything down.

Answer:

a) Yes.

Leaves (stones, twigs branches, dung, worms, insects and the casts and heaps made by them) are natural objects and as such, provided they are not fixed or growing, solidly embedded or adhering to the ball, they are loose impediments.

Snow and NATURAL ice, other than frost, are either casual water or loose impediments, at the option of the player.

Dew and frost are NOT loose impediments.

Sand and loose soil are loose impediments on the putting green, but not elsewhere.

As rule 23-1 says, you are allowed to remove loose impediments so long as they and your ball are not in the same hazard.

b) Yes.

If in removing loose impediments from the green you cause the surface to be roughened then, so long as it was not your intention to test the surface of the green, there is no penalty, provided of course that you did not press anything down.

FAQ 10:

Is your ball out of bounds if you hit it off the 10th tee over the out of bounds area between holes 10, 11 and 18 and it lands on the 18th fairway or in the rough next to it?

Answer:

No.

There is no local rule stipulating this and since the ball came to rest on the course it is not out of bounds.

Some golf clubs do have a local rule to prevent players hitting down adjacent fairways such as:

“A ball which crosses the white stakes separating holes 6 and 7 and comes to rest beyond those stakes is out of bounds, even though it may lie on another part of the course.”

But this is generally done for reasons of safety to stop players deliberately hitting onto the wrong fairway, rather than to speed up play.

FAQ 11:

What are my options if I hit my ball off the 8th tee into the protected area in front of that tee?

Answer:

The protected area is classed as ground under repair. You therefore get relief without penalty.

If the ball is found then locate the nearest point of relief from there. If you cannot find ball then locate the nearest point of relief from where it entered the area. Then follow the procedure detailed in FAQ 3. Don't forget, the nearest point of relief may not necessarily be between the tee and the protected area.

If the ball cannot be found then you have to know or be virtually certain that it is in the protected area in order to get relief.

Another option is to use "stroke and distance" at the cost of one penalty stroke. In this case you go back to the teeing ground, and "play 3 off the tee". In this case you have the option of teeing up the ball if you wish.