

Easy Guide to the Etiquette and Rules of Golf

by Golf Canada



Based on the 2012-2015 Rules of Golf

RULES EDUCATION

Golf Canada offers several programs to learn the Rules of Golf. The Rules Education Program is designed for all golfers wishing to improve their level of knowledge about the Rules of Golf including recreational golfers, competitive golfers, professionals and Rules officials.

Level 1 — The introductory online program designed to introduce the basic Etiquette and Rules of Golf.

Level 2 — Begin to learn the details of the Rules including the specific language and words needed to understand the Rules of Golf.

Level 3 — A three-day seminar available across the country, through your provincial golf association. Learn how to become a Rules official and gain practical experience on the golf course.

Level 4 — A thorough four-day seminar for experienced Rules officials to gain the highest level of certification in Canada.

Whether you have an interest in learning the basics or wish to pursue national certification as a Rules official, visit golfcanada.ca for more information.

HANDICAP MANUAL

This manual is the complete book of information and instruction about the Handicap System in Canada. You will find the purpose and requirements of the Handicap System followed by definitions of important terms.

The responsibilities of the player are covered along with the responsibilities of the Handicap Committee (every Golf Canada member club must have a Handicap Committee).

The manual also details checks and balances of the System, course rating, golf course set-up, par computation and allocation of handicap strokes. Handicap Decisions follow each section of the manual.

Use this manual whenever a question arises about the Handicap System in Canada. Knowing the proper procedure will help provide a framework for fair and enjoyable games.



Easy Guide to the Etiquette and Rules of Golf



Based on the Rules of Golf
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Easy Guide to the Etiquette and Rules of Golf is not the official **Rules of Golf**. Golf Canada also publishes the official **Rules of Golf** and **Rules of Amateur Status** which may be purchased by ordering online at www.golfcanada.ca.

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Love the game. Grow the game.

As the governing body of golf in Canada, our mission is to grow participation, excellence and passion in the sport while upholding the integrity and traditions of the game.



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In the Easy Guide to the Etiquette and Rules of Golf, the gender used in relation to any person is understood to include both genders.

etiquette

THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Golf is played, for the most part, without the supervision of a referee or umpire. The game relies on the individual to show consideration for other players and to play by the Rules. All players should show courtesy and sportsmanship at all times, no matter how competitive they may be. This is the spirit of the game of golf.



1. If you're playing with people you don't know, introduce yourself on the first tee.
2. After finishing play and leaving the last green, thank them for their company and shake their hand.

SAFETY

1. Make sure no one is near you when you swing your club.
2. Make sure no one is in front of you and make sure the group in front is clearly out of range before you make a shot.
3. Always shout "Fore" when your ball is in danger of hitting someone.
4. Do not stand directly behind the player, the ball or the hole when a player is making a stroke.



etiquette

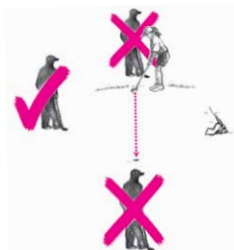
ETIQUETTE AND RULES

CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS



1. Make sure you follow the dress code of the golf course.
2. Do not use cellular phones on the course. Some clubs may allow cellular phones in the clubhouse. Be aware of the club policy.
3. Stand still and don't talk when another player is playing.
4. Do not stand directly behind the ball or on the opposite side of the hole when a player is making a stroke.

PUTTING GREEN



Do not stand directly behind the player, the ball or the hole.

1. Do not stand on another player's line of putt.
2. Stay on or around the putting green until everyone in your group has holed out.
3. Mark your score card on the next tee, not on the putting green.
4. Replace the flagstick carefully when your group has finished playing the hole.
5. Do not stand directly behind the player, the ball or the hole when a player is making a stroke.

etiquette

PACE OF PLAY

1. Be ready to play when it is your turn.
2. One practice swing is normally enough.
3. Keep up with the group in front of you.
If you are slow, try to catch up or let the group behind play through.
4. Watch the shots of everyone in your group.



5. Play ready golf if your group is falling behind.
6. Line up your putt while others are putting and be ready to play when it's your turn.
7. Don't replay missed putts.
8. Record scores on the next tee, not on the putting green.
9. When playing from a cart: place your bag or park your cart between the green and next tee.

Place your cart between the
green and the next tee.

etiquette

ETIQUETTE AND RULES

CARE OF THE COURSE



Fix ball marks on the putting green and fix any others you see.



Remove and replace the flagstick carefully to avoid damaging the hole.

1. Always wear golf, tennis shoes or sneakers.
2. Replace your divots.
3. Rake bunkers after you play from them. Leave them in the condition you would like to play from.
4. Fix your ball marks on the putting green and fix any others you see.
5. Keep your golf bag off the putting green. Remove and replace the flagstick carefully to avoid damaging the hole.
6. Keep pull carts and power carts away from greens and tees.



Rake bunkers after you play from them.

definitions

ETIQUETTE AND RULES



Addressing the Ball

Grounding the club immediately in front of or immediately behind the ball.

Abnormal Ground Condition

Any ground under repair, casual water or hole made by a burrowing animal, a reptile or a bird.

Ball in Play

The ball you started the hole with, unless lost, out of bounds, lifted or substituted.

Caddie

A person who assists a player and/or carries a player's clubs.

Competitor

A player in stroke play.

Committee

The committee in charge of the competition.

Ground under Repair

Any part of the course marked as such by the Committee including material piled for removal and any hole made by a greenkeeper, even if not marked.

Hazard

Any bunker or water hazard.

Loose Impediment

Any natural objects such as leaves or stones that are not fixed or growing and are not solidly embedded.

definitions

ETIQUETTE AND RULES

Nearest Point of Relief

The point nearest to where the ball lies that is not nearer the hole and which completely avoids interference when taking relief from an immovable obstruction, abnormal ground condition or wrong putting green.

Obstruction

Anything artificial including roads and paths. Does not include anything defining out of bounds such as stakes or fences, anything which is out of bounds, or anything the Committee declares to be an integral part of the course. An obstruction is movable if it is easily moved without causing damage, otherwise it is immovable.

Opponent

A player against whom you are having a match.

Outside Agency

Anyone or anything not part of the match or, in stroke play, not part of the competitor's side. For example, a spectator or a fellow-competitor's equipment. Wind or water are not outside agencies.

Partner

A player who is playing on the same side.

Stroke

The forward movement of the club with the intention of striking the ball.

LOCAL RULES

In addition to the 34 Rules of Golf, most courses have Local Rules which apply only to their course. These Rules are usually listed on the back of the scorecard or posted in the clubhouse or proshop.

THE GAME

- a. Golf is playing a ball from the tee-ground into the hole by a stroke or strokes.
- b. You must always play by the Rules.

MATCH PLAY

- a. In match play, each hole is a separate contest. Each hole counts as one. A hole is won by completing the hole in fewer strokes than your opponent.
- b. The person you are playing against is your "opponent".
- c. If you win the first hole, you are "one up", if you lose the first hole, you are "one down", if you tie the first hole, the match is "all square".
- d. The match is over when someone is up more holes than there are holes left to play.

HOLE	1	2	3	4
+/-	+1	+2	+1	+1
Alex	6	3	5	5
Kelsey	7	4	4	5
RED TEES	323	386	145	293
PAR	5	4	4	4
HANDICAP	13	5	17	3

rule 3

STROKE PLAY

6	7	8	9	OUT
4	6	7	5	44
6	4	5	6	39
174	112	252	288	2544
4	5	4	4	36
7	15	19	1	

- In stroke play, the winner is the player with the lowest number of strokes for the round.
- All other players in your group are your fellow-competitors.
- You must play the ball into the hole before starting the next hole.
- If you are not sure how to proceed under the Rules, you may drop a second ball and play it in addition to your original ball. You must first tell your fellow-competitor which ball you would like to count and you must report this to the Committee before returning your score card.

rule 4

CLUBS



- You may carry no more than fourteen clubs. You may not add or borrow clubs from any other player playing on the course.
- If you damage a club in the normal course of play, you may use it, repair it or replace it. Clubs damaged by abuse or mistreatment may not be replaced or used for the rest of the round.

rule 5



THE BALL

- a. You should mark your ball with a permanent marker pen so that you can always identify it on the course.
- b. You may change balls between play of holes, but not normally during the play of a hole.
- c. You may change your ball during a hole only if it becomes cut, cracked or out of shape or if the Rules otherwise permit.

rule 6



THE PLAYER

- a. You are responsible for knowing the Rules.

You should:

- b. Always read the notices given to you by tournament officials.
- c. Use your proper handicap.
- d. Show up on time.
- e. Check your score for each hole before turning in your score card.
- f. Keep up with the group in front of you.

rule 7



PRACTICE

- a. In stroke play, do not practice on the Competition course any day of the Competition.

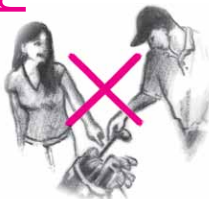
Read the Local Rules of the Competition which may prohibit you from any practice during the round.

- b. You may chip or putt around the teeing ground of the next hole to be played, but not from a hazard.

If there is no Local Rule to prohibit practicing during the round, then you may:

- c. Practice putting on the putting green of the hole last played.

rule 8



ADVICE

- a. You may only ask for advice from your caddie or partner. Do not ask your opponent or fellow-competitor for advice.
- b. You may only give advice to your partner. Do not give advice to your opponent or fellow-competitor.
- c. It is okay to ask about positions of flagsticks, hazards, sprinkler heads, etc., or the distance between any two objects.

rule 9

INFORMATION
AS TO STROKES TAKEN

- a. In match play you must tell your opponent how many strokes you have taken whenever he asks, and inform him of any penalty strokes you incur unless he obviously knows.

rule 10

ORDER OF PLAY

- a. On the tee, the player with the lowest score on the last hole plays first. This is called the "honour."
- b. Everywhere else, the player whose ball is farthest from the hole plays first (whether or not the ball is on the green).
- c. If you play out of turn in stroke play, there is no penalty. In match play, your opponent **may** immediately cancel your stroke and make you play again in proper order.



rule 11

TEEING GROUND



Tee between the markers and within two club lengths behind them.

- a. You must tee your ball between the markers and within two club-lengths behind them.
- b. If your ball accidentally falls off the tee, you may re-tee it without penalty.
- c. If you "whiff" your shot and the ball falls off the tee, the stroke counts and you must play the ball as it lies.

rule 12



You must announce and mark the position of the ball before lifting it.

IDENTIFYING YOUR BALL

- You may lift your ball to identify it anywhere on the course. However, you must tell your opponent or fellow-competitor before you mark it, lift it and replace it.
- The ball must not be cleaned beyond the extent necessary to identify it.

rule 13

CORRECT



INCORRECT



INCORRECT



Do not press anything down behind your ball.

PLAY THE BALL AS IT LIES

Play the ball as it lies and the course as you find it, unless the Rules permit otherwise.

- You must play the ball as it lies. Do not touch it or move it unless permitted under the Rules.
- Do not press anything down behind your ball.
- You may not do anything to improve the lie of your ball, the area of your intended stance or swing or line of play, including bending or breaking grass, weeds or branches of trees.
- You may not touch the ground in a hazard or water in a water hazard with your hand or club.

rule 14

STRIKING THE BALL



Range finders may only
be used by Local Rule.

- a. You must fairly strike the ball with the head of the club. You may not push, spoon or scrape it.
- b. You may not accept any physical assistance when making a stroke like having an umbrella held over your head or a club laid on the ground to guide you.
- c. You must not play a moving ball, except when it is being moved by water.
- d. You must not use any artificial device to assist your stroke or play.
- e. Range finders or distance devices may not be used unless a Local Rule is in place permitting their use.

rule 15

WRONG BALL

- a. A wrong ball is any ball other than:
 - i. your ball in play;
 - ii. a provisional ball;
 - iii. a second ball dropped under Rule 3
- b. In stroke play, if you play a wrong ball, you must add a two-stroke penalty and continue play with the correct ball. Strokes made with a wrong ball do not count in your score.
- c. In match play, if you play a wrong ball, you lose the hole.

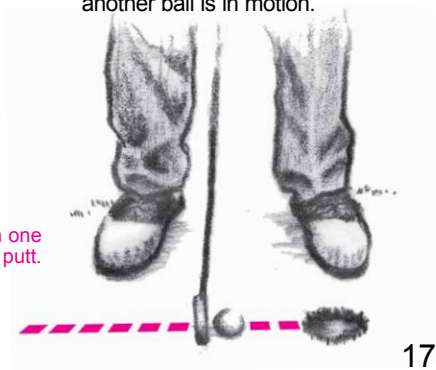
rule 16

PUTTING GREEN



You may repair ball marks,
but you may not repair
marks made by spikes
or shoes.

- a. Your ball is on the putting green when any part of it touches the green.
- b. You may mark and lift your ball when it is on the putting green. You should use a small coin or ball-marker placed behind the ball.
- c. You may repair ball marks anywhere on the putting green, but you may not repair marks made by spikes or shoes before you putt.
- d. You may not test the surface by rolling a ball or roughening or scraping the grass.
- e. You must stand on one side of the line of putt. You may not use a croquet-style stance.
- f. You must not make a stroke when another ball is in motion.



You must stand on one
side of the line of putt.

rule 17

THE FLAGSTICK

- a. If you play a stroke when your ball is on the putting green, it must not hit the flagstick. Either remove the flagstick before you play or have someone else attend it and take it out before your ball reaches the hole.
- b. You may have the flagstick attended whether your ball is on or off the putting green.
- c. Your ball must not strike an attended flagstick.
- d. If your ball strikes the flagstick when played from the putting green or when attended, in match play you lose the hole and in stroke play you add a two-stroke penalty.



Either remove the
flagstick before you play

or have someone else
attend it and take it out
before your ball reaches
the hole.

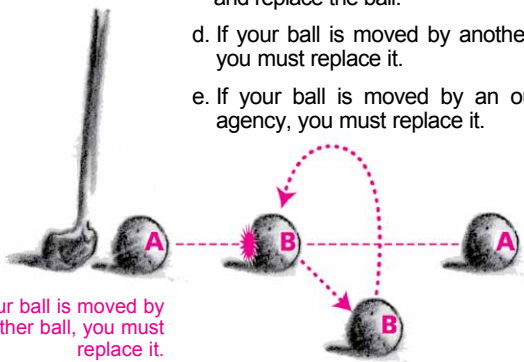
rule 18



If your ball is moved by an outside agency, you must replace it.

BALL AT REST MOVED

- a. If you move your ball other than by making a stroke, add one penalty stroke and replace your ball.
- b. There is no penalty if your ball moves as a result of:
 - i. marking and lifting your ball;
 - ii. removing a loose impediment when your ball is on the putting green
 - iii. removing a movable obstruction;
 - iv. placing or replacing your ball;
 - v. repairing a ball mark;
 - vi. measuring.
- c. Once you address your ball, if you cause it to move, add a penalty stroke and replace the ball.
- d. If your ball is moved by another ball, you must replace it.
- e. If your ball is moved by an outside agency, you must replace it.

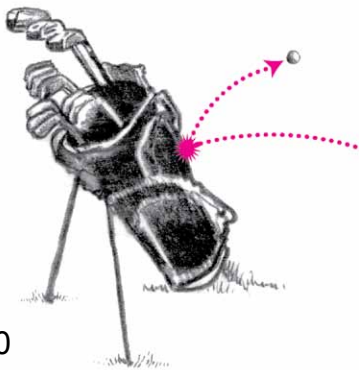


If your ball is moved by another ball, you must replace it.

rule 19

BALL IN MOTION DEFLECTED

- a. If your ball is deflected or stopped by an outside agency, there is no penalty and you play the ball as it lies.
- b. If your ball hits another ball, the other ball must be replaced and you play your ball as it lies. In stroke play, if both balls are on the putting green when you play, you are penalized two strokes, otherwise, there is no penalty.
- c. If your ball hits you, your partner, your caddie, or your equipment, add a one stroke penalty and play the ball as it lies.
- d. If your ball hits your opponent or his equipment in match play, there is no penalty and you may play the ball as it lies or cancel the stroke and replay it.



If your ball hits you, your partner, your caddie, or your equipment, add a one stroke penalty and play the ball as it lies.

rule 20



You must mark your ball before it is lifted.

LIFTING AND DROPPING

- a. If you are going to lift your ball and it will need to be replaced, you must mark it before it is lifted. You should mark it by placing a small coin or ball-marker behind the ball.
- b. If you need to drop the ball, you must stand erect, hold your arm out at shoulder height and drop it.
- c. If you drop or place a ball incorrectly, you may lift it without penalty and drop it again.
- d. A dropped ball must be re-dropped if:
 - i. it rolls into or out of a hazard;
 - ii. it rolls onto a putting green;
 - iii. it rolls out of bounds;
 - iv. it rolls back into the condition from which relief was taken such as ground under repair or an immovable obstruction;
 - v. it rolls more than two club-lengths from where it first strikes the course when dropped;
 - vi. it rolls closer to the hole than its original position, the nearest point of relief, or the point where the original ball last crossed the margin of the water hazard.



Stand erect, hold your arm out at shoulder height and drop the ball.

rule 21

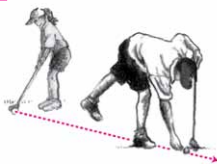
CLEANING THE BALL



- a. You may clean your ball when you lift it from the putting green.
- b. Everywhere else you may clean your ball anytime it is lifted except when you lift it to identify it, determine whether it is unfit for play, or when it is interfering or assisting play of someone else.

rule 22

BALL ASSISTING OR INTERFERING WITH PLAY



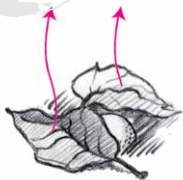
- a. If another ball is interfering with your area of intended stance or swing, or your line of play, you may ask the owner to mark and lift it.
- b. If you think your ball may assist another player, you may mark and lift it.
- c. Do not clean your ball when lifted, unless it is on the putting green.



rule 23

LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS

- a. A loose impediment is any natural object not fixed or growing and not solidly embedded.
- b. Except when both your ball and the loose impediment are in a hazard, you may remove a loose impediment. If your ball



Except when your ball is in a hazard, you may remove a loose impediment.

LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS CONTINUED

moves as a result of moving the loose impediment, you must replace it and add a one-stroke penalty. If your ball is on the putting green, there is no penalty.

- c. Removing a loose impediment on your line while your ball is in motion results in a two stroke penalty in stroke play or loss of hole in match play.

rule 24



Artificial objects on the course may be moved

OBSTRUCTIONS

- a. An obstruction is anything artificial such as bottles, rakes and roads, unless the Committee deems it to be an integral part of the course.
- b. A movable obstruction anywhere on the course may be moved. If your ball moves it must be replaced without penalty.
- c. **Except when your ball is in a water hazard**, if an immovable obstruction, such as a road or bridge, interferes with the lie of your ball or the area of your intended stance or swing, you may find the nearest point of relief which avoids the interference, and drop a ball within one club-length of that point. The nearest point of relief must not be nearer the hole than where your ball lies, and must completely avoid interference by the obstruction for both your stance and swing.

ABNORMAL
GROUND CONDITIONS

- a. Ground under repair is any part of the course which has been marked by the Committee. It is usually marked with a white line. Casual water is any temporary visible accumulation of water on the course outside a water hazard. Mud or soft ground are not necessarily casual water.



- b. If your stance or swing are interfered with or your ball lies in casual water, ground under repair or a hole made by a burrowing animal, you may play the ball as it lies, or find the nearest point of relief and drop a ball within one club-length of that point, without penalty.

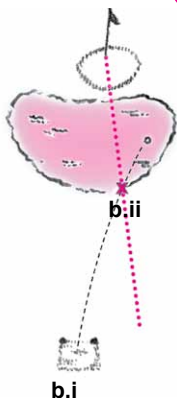
- c. If your ball is on a wrong putting green, you **must** find the nearest point off the green that is not nearer the hole and drop the ball within one club-length of that point. Note: the collar is not part of the putting green.



- d. If your ball is embedded (plugged) in its own pitchmark in any closely-mown area (grass that is cut to fairway height or less), you may lift it and drop it as near as possible to where it was embedded. You must not fix the pitch-mark before playing.

rule 26

b.
WATER
HAZARD
MARKED
YELLOW

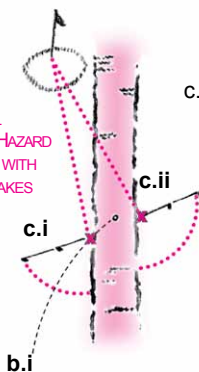


a. Water hazards are marked by stakes or lines. Yellow markings identify water hazards and red markings identify lateral water hazards.

b. If your ball is in a water hazard (yellow lines or stakes), you may play it as it lies. If it is lost in the hazard or you do not wish to play it, you may take relief from the hazard with a one stroke penalty by:

- dropping and playing a ball from where you last played;
- drop a ball behind the hazard keeping the point where the ball last crossed the margin of the hazard between you and the hole. You may go back as far as you like.

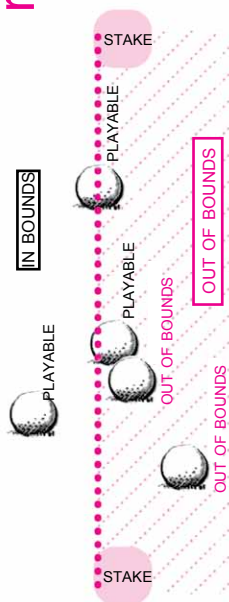
c.
LATERAL
WATER HAZARD
MARKED WITH
RED STAKES



c. If your ball is in a lateral water hazard (red lines or stakes), in addition to the options above, you may:

- drop a ball within two club-lengths of where your ball last crossed the margin of the hazard, but not nearer the hole than that point;
- if possible, do the same on the other side of the hazard at a point that is exactly the same distance from the hole.

rule 27

LOST BALL AND
OUT OF BOUNDS

- a. A ball is lost if it is not found within five minutes of you, your partner or your caddie beginning a search for it.
- b. A ball is out of bounds if **all** of it lies out of bounds. If **any** part of the ball is within the course, it is still in play.
- c. When out of bounds is marked by lines, the line itself is out of bounds.
- d. When out of bounds is marked by stakes or fences, the nearest inside point of the stake or fence, at ground level, defines the out of bounds line.
- e. If you think your ball may be lost other than in a water hazard, or you think your ball may be out of bounds, you should play a provisional ball. You must tell your opponent or fellow-competitor that you are playing a provisional ball and **play it before you go forward to search for your first ball.**

If your first ball is lost or out of bounds, you count the strokes taken with both the first ball and the provisional ball, add a penalty stroke and continue play with the provisional ball.

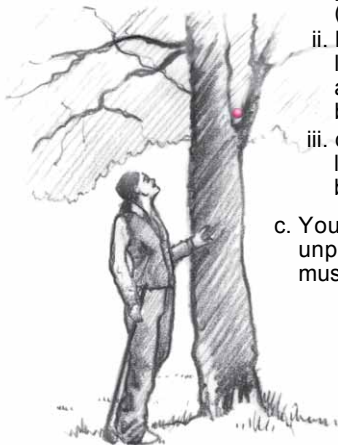
- f. If you play a stroke with the provisional ball from a spot where your original ball is, or a point closer to the hole than where it

**LOST BALL AND
OUT OF BOUNDS** CONTINUED

should be, your original ball is lost and you must continue with the provisional ball.

rule 28**BALL UNPLAYABLE**

- a. If you are unable to play a shot for any reason you may deem your ball unplayable anywhere you like, except in a water hazard.
- b. If you deem your ball unplayable, you must add a penalty stroke and:
 - i. play another ball from the spot you played your last stroke (stroke and distance); or
 - ii. keep the spot where your ball lies between you and the hole and drop a ball on that line as far back as you like;
 - iii. drop a ball within two club-lengths of where your ball lies, but not nearer the hole.
- c. You may not deem your ball unplayable in a water hazard. You must proceed under Rule 26.



FOR MORE INFO...

Rules 29-34 cover other forms of play and administrative aspects of the game. For more information, please refer to the official Rules of Golf.





handicapping

ETIQUETTE AND RULES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Golf Canada Handicap System is to make the game of golf more enjoyable by enabling players of differing abilities to compete on an equitable basis.

Two basic premises underlie the Handicap System, namely that each player will try to make the best score at every hole in every round, regardless of where the round is played, and that the player will post every acceptable round for peer review. The player and the player's Handicap Committee have a joint responsibility for adhering to these premises.

DEFINITIONS

Handicap Factor – indicates a player's scoring ability compared to a scratch golfer.

Active Season – the period during which scores are accepted for the scoring record. Contact your Provincial Association to verify your Active Season



handicapping

ETIQUETTE AND RULES

DEFINITIONS

Course Rating – the mark that indicates the playing difficulty of a course for a scratch golfer. It is based on yardage and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of the golfer.

Course Handicap – the mark that indicates the number of handicap strokes a player receives from a specific set of tees.

Slope Rating – the mark that indicates the playing difficulty of a course for a player that is not a scratch golfer compared to the Course rating. It is based on the yardage and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of the player.

Equitable Stroke Control – the downward adjustment of individual hole scores to be more representative of the player's scoring ability.

Course Handicap	Max per Hole
9 or less	Max 2 over par
10 to 19	Max score of 7
20 to 29	Max score of 8
30 to 39	Max score of 9
40 or more	Max score of 10



handicapping

ETIQUETTE AND RULES

DEFINITIONS

Most Likely Score - is the score a player must post for handicap purposes if a hole is started but not completed or if the player is conceded a stroke. The most likely score consists of the number of strokes already taken plus, in a player's best judgment, the number of strokes the player would need to take to complete the hole. This number may not exceed the player's Equitable Stroke Control limit.

Scoring Record – a file composed of the most recent 20 scores posted, plus any eligible tournament scores along with the Course Rating, Slope Rating, Course name and date.

Peer Review - is the process of providing a reasonable and regular opportunity for members of a golf club to play golf with each other (see Decision 2/8) and of providing access to scoring records and a Handicap Factor list for inspection by others, including, but not limited to, fellow members and the club's Handicap Committee.



DEFINITIONS

Course Rating – the mark that indicates the playing difficulty of a course for a scratch golfer. It is based on yardage and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of the golfer.

Course Handicap – the mark that indicates the number of handicap strokes a player receives from a specific set of tees.

Slope Rating – the mark that indicates the playing difficulty of a course for a player that is not a scratch golfer compared to the Course rating. It is based on the yardage and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of the player.

Equitable Stroke Control – the downward adjustment of individual hole scores to be more representative of the player's scoring ability.

Course Handicap	Max per Hole
9 or less	Max 2 over par
10 to 19	Max score of 7
20 to 29	Max score of 8
30 to 39	Max score of 9
40 or more	Max score of 10

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Tournament Score - is a score made in a competition organized and conducted by the committee in charge of the competition. The competition must identify a winner(s) based on a stipulated round(s), and must be played under the principles of The Rules of Golf.



handicapping

ETIQUETTE AND RULES

DEFINITIONS

POSTING SCORES:

- Post a 9-hole score if only 7 holes are played
- Post an 18-hole score if 13 or more holes are played.
- Post all scores on courses that have a Course and Slope Rating.
- Post all Tournament scores with a "T".
- Post all away scores.

DO NOT POST A SCORE:

- When fewer than 7 holes are played.
- When made on a course during the inactive season.
- When course length is less than 3000 yards for 18 holes (or less than 1500 yards for 9 holes)
- When the condition of the competition does not allow for the use of 14 clubs.
- When the course has no Course and Slope Rating
- When player uses non-conforming clubs, balls or tees.
- When an artificial device is used.

DEFINITIONS

Unfinished Holes – If a player starts but does not complete a hole or has been conceded a stroke the player shall record the ‘most likely score’. Score will not exceed ESC.

Holes not played / Not played under the rules of golf – If a player does not play a hole or does not play it under the rules of golf (E.g.: Mulligan) the player shall record par plus any eligible handicap strokes. Score will not exceed ESC.

Handicap Competitions – In singles and partner competition, the low handicapper shall play off scratch while the competitor plays off the difference in the course handicaps. The player receiving the strokes shall take them in the order assigned on the scorecard. When players are competing from different tees remember to add the additional strokes for the difference in the Course Ratings. In mixed competitions players receive strokes based on the respective gender stroke allocations.

Allocation of Handicap Strokes – Please see Section 17 of the Golf Canada Handicap Manual.



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ETIQUETTE AND RULES

COURSE RATING

The Course Rating is based on yardage or the effective playing length and obstacles to the extent that they affect the player's scoring ability. The EPL can be affected by a number of factors: Roll, Wind, Elevation, Doglegs, and Altitude. The obstacles used for a course rating are:

- Topography – difficulty of the stance in the fairway.
- Fairway – effective width of the landing area.
- Green Target – the size and shape of the green in relation to the length of the approach shot.
- Rough and Recoverability – the existence of rough in the landing areas
- Bunkers – the existence of bunkers and the difficulty of recovery.
- Out of Bounds/Extreme Rough – the existence of Out of Bounds and Extreme rough in the landing areas.
- Water – the existence of water in the landing areas.
- Trees – the strategic location, size, height, density and the difficulty of recovery.
- Green Surface – the contour and the normal speed of the greens.
- Psychology – the mental effect on play created by the presence of a combination of difficult obstacles.



Other publications available from Golf Canada:

Rules of Golf

The definitive document containing the official Rules of Golf used by all golfers.

Decisions on the Rules of Golf

An essential reference book for all golf clubs, Rules officials and tournament organizers. Includes answers to over 1200 questions about the Rules of Golf.

Handicap Manual

This manual includes a complete description of the Golf Canada Handicap System including the Course Rating System.

Questions?

Submit your questions about the Rules directly to Golf Canada by visiting the Golf Canada website. The “Ask the Expert” link can be found under the Rules of Golf menu.

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