



What Should I Know About Local Rules

As provided in USGA Rule 33-8a, the **Rules Committee** may make and publish Local Rules for local abnormal conditions if they are consistent with the policies established with the USGA. That being said, according to Golf Digest most golfers violate the USGA rules of golf in some way, it may be a mulligan off the first tee, or a gimme putt, a root rule or the use of winter rules. Some groups use the mulligan exception where as another group may use the root rule exception. In an effort to level the playing field for all groups of golfers the following suggestions shall be submitted to the local rules committee for consideration.

- 1. A mulligan shall be allowed on the first tee. If it is not used on the first tee, it may be used at any time during the round.**
- 2. You may improve your lie thru the green on the golf course. You may place the ball no further than 2 club lengths from the original ball position.**
- 3. If you hit your ball in a water hazard and can retrieve it with your golf club then there shall be no penalty. If you are unable to retrieve your ball with a club then there will be a 1 shot penalty.**
- 4. If your ball hits an object (a tree) and results in negative yardage (goes backwards), you may subtract 1 shot from your score. Negative yardage should reflect a negative score.**
- 5. If you loose your ball, the penalty is the cost of the ball. You may without penalty drop somewhere near the lost ball, as provided by suggested rule number 2.**
- 6. Should you need to hit your driver for your second shot on a par 5 or a long par 4, you may use a tee. Drivers are just too difficult to hit off the fairway.**
- 7. If you find yourself in a sand trap, you may improve your lie as outlined in suggested rule number 2. No one deserves a buried lie in the trap.**
- 8. If you hit your ball out of bounds and you can retrieve it with a golf club while staying in bounds there shall be no penalty. If you are unable to retrieve your ball with your club while still on golf course property then you should proceed as in suggested rule number 2, with a 1 shot penalty. There shall be no loss of distance.**

9. Any putt “in the leather” will be considered good and should be picked up. A golfer can use any club in the bag to determine if the putt is in his leather. Many will shave a few inches off the driver grip to make the putt easier to make.

10. In the event of a tie score, the tie will be broken by the golfer who lost the fewest golf balls.

The game of golf is tough enough even using the above suggested local rules. One can only wish the Gentlemen Golfers of Edinburgh would have thought this way when they established the original rules of golf.

*** These suggested rules were inspired by the book The Mulligan’s.**