



TOMGC Rules and Greens

June 2019

Each of us, as golfers, has a duty to ourselves and the others who play this game, to know the rules by which the game is governed. These Rules of play, are the one constant we find, no matter the country or venue we might be playing in and on. Effective January 1st of this year, an abundance of changes were made to the Rules of Golf. As such, each of us has a duty to revisit our rule book and to be cognoscente of the changes made. Don't I have a way with words?

Your rule book is divided into the 24 basic Rules and subdivisions, along with Definitions and other procedures and local rules modifications. The divisions relevant to our everyday use are:

*I. Fundamentals of the Game - **Rules 1-4**, II. Playing the Round and a Hole – **Rules 5-6**, III. Playing the Ball – **Rules 7-11**, IV. Specific Rules for Bunkers and Putting Greens – **Rules 12-13**, V. Lifting and Returning a Ball to Play – **Rule 14**, VI. Free Relief – **Rules 15-16**, VII. Penalty Relief – **Rules 17-19**, VIII. Procedures for Players and Committee When Issues Arise in Applying the Rules – **Rule 20**, IX. Other Forms of Play – **Rules 21-24**.*

In addition to the standard sections of reference mentioned above, there are also four sections under *Committee Procedures*, as well as a section outlining *The Modified Rules of Golf for Players with Disabilities*. (Many might believe that the rules for my play would be found under this heading.)

Now, you are probably wondering where I'm going with this; as well as whether or not I've been taking my medication. There is, however, some bit of method to my madness. That is to say, that when we have a question about a particular area of the rules of golf, we should have a bit of quick reference as to where to start our investigation as to a solution. For example, last month's query as to where to take relief after a ball has been hit into a penalty area. Well, right away, we know that there is going to be a penalty associated with this relief, and as such, we will probably want to start our search in section VII. Penalty Relief – Rules 17-19. If our ball is on the cart path and we are wondering how to take proper relief in this situation, we would look into section VI. Free Relief – Rules 15-16, and so on.

The Rules of Golf, along with our handicapping system, are there to keep our competitions fair and equitable. As such, we should do our best to get familiar with the general rules of this game so that we don't get ourselves into trouble, and that we might also be able to assist our fellow players should an issue arise. It is tough to memorize all of the rules, but some general understanding of the basics is a good and firm foundation. You may remember that I included a link to the top 9 changes that went into effect on January first. For your assistance, I have included that link again here.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lucf8lvmwbp7pk6/AADX6KW6MC6GSKGWHXmjS2Hwa/4.%20Video%20on%20top%20changes?dl=0&preview=Top+9+Changes.mp4>

Best wishes. Good day, and good golf.