



LOCAL RULES and TERMS OF COMPETITION for GOLF AUSTRALIA AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIPS – 2025

The following Local Rules & Terms of Competition apply until further notice to all Amateur competitions conducted under the auspices of Golf Australia (and designated competitions conducted by any other Committee that adopts this publication).

Note: A committee may modify this Hard Card for any of its events.

For the full text of any Model Local Rule referenced below, please refer to the Committee Procedures section in the current version of an official app containing the R&A's Rules of Golf.

Unless otherwise noted, the penalty for breaching a Local Rule is the general penalty (stroke play – two penalty strokes; match play – loss of hole).

1. Eligibility

Players must meet the eligibility provisions established in the relevant Terms of Competition for the specific event.

2. Out of Bounds (Rule 18.2)

- Beyond the inside line of any wall, fence (or the extension of such wall or fence line) or line of white stakes and/or white lines defining the boundary of the course.
- A ball which crosses a public pathway/roadway area that is defined as out of bounds and comes to rest beyond that area is out of bounds, even if it lies on another part of the course.
- Closed gates attached to boundary walls and fences are part of the boundary object. Relief is not allowed from such a gate under Rules 15.2 or 16.1. An open gate is not treated as part of the boundary object and may be closed or moved to a different position.

Note: Angled supports of a boundary fence are obstructions. Where boundary fence posts have concrete bases, out of bounds is defined by the posts (NOT the bases) – additionally, the concrete bases are NOT obstructions.

3. Dropping Zones are Relief Areas

Dropping zones are relief areas. When a player is using a dropping zone to take relief, they must drop a ball in the dropping zone, and it must come to rest in the dropping zone.

4. Seams of Cut Turf

If a player's ball in the general area lies in or touches a seam of cut turf, or a seam interferes with the player's area of intended swing, the player may take relief under Rule 16.1b. But interference does not exist if the seam only interferes with the player's stance. When taking relief, all seams within the area of cut turf are treated as the same seam.

5. Penalty Areas (Rule 17)

- When a penalty area adjoins a boundary, the penalty area edge extends to and coincides with the boundary. When a player's ball is found in, or is known or virtually certain to have come to rest in, any penalty area where the ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area at a point coinciding with the course boundary, opposite side relief is available under Model Local Rule B-2.1.
- Where a dropping zone is marked for a penalty area, it is an additional option for relief under penalty of one stroke.

6. Immovable Obstructions (e.g. Sprinkler Heads) Close to Putting Greens – Line of Play Interference

Rule 16.1b applies to immovable obstructions close to putting greens. In addition to the types of interference described in Rule 16.1a, at the player's discretion, interference under 16.1a is also considered to occur from an immovable obstruction when all of the following are true:

- It is on the player's line of play, AND
- It is within two club-lengths of the putting green, AND
- It is within two club-lengths of the ball.

(Exception: There is no relief under this Local Rule if the player chooses a line of play that is clearly unreasonable.)

7. Integral Objects

The following are integral objects from which free relief is not available:

- Bunker liners in their intended position.
- Wires, cables, wrappings, or other objects when closely attached to trees or other permanent objects.
- Artificial retaining walls and pilings located in penalty areas.
- All roads and paths that are not artificially surfaced.
- Wood-chipped areas are integral objects unless another local rule applies (individual woodchips are loose impediments).

8. Temporary Power Lines or Cables

Model Local Rule F-22 is in effect.

9. Ball Deflected by Permanent Power Lines

If it is known or virtually certain that a player's ball hit a power line, the stroke does not count. The player must play a ball without penalty from where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 for what to do). If the player replays the stroke but does so from a wrong place, they get the general penalty under Rule 14.7. If the player does not replay the stroke, they get the general penalty and the stroke counts, but the player has not played from the wrong place. (Note: This Local Rule does not apply when a ball only strikes a power line located out of bounds, or only strikes the supporting pole/pylon.)

10. Temporary Immovable Obstructions

Model Local Rule F-23, with any additions or amendments in the additional Local Rules published by the Committee, is in effect.

11. Player May Remove Animal Not Defined as Loose Impediment from Near Ball

Model Local Rule E-13 is in effect.

12. Abnormal Course Conditions (Rule 16)

a. Ground Under Repair

- Any area bounded by a continuous or dotted white line, including spectator crossing points where marked.
- An area of ground (e.g. caused by crowd or vehicle movement) ruled by a referee to be abnormally damaged.
- Clearly-defined wheel ruts.
- Washaways in bunkers and at the margins of bunkers.
- Grass-covered cable trenches.
- Stone-filled drainage ditches.
- Ground affected by tree roots on surfaces cut to fairway height or less, or within two club-lengths of surfaces cut to fairway height or less.
- Painted lines or dots on the putting green, or in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less. Model Local Rule F-6 is in effect prohibiting relief when only stance interference exists.
- Restriction on Relief from Stance on Animal Hole. Model Local Rule F-6 is in effect prohibiting relief when only stance interference exists.
- Holes left by movable obstructions in parts of the general area cut to fairway height or less. Model Local Rule F-6 is in effect prohibiting relief when only stance interference exists.

b. Immovable Obstructions

- The artificial surfaces and artificial edges or borders of roads and paths (includes gravel paths, wood-chipped paths, etc).
- When two artificially-surfaced paths are adjoining, they are treated as the one path.
- When white-lined areas tie into an immovable obstruction, the two conditions are treated as a single abnormal course condition.
- Landscaped garden areas, and everything growing in them that are surrounded by an immovable obstruction, are treated as a single abnormal course condition.
- Mats that are secured and all ramps covering cables.
- Staked trees/shrubs (includes the stake and any wrapping).

13. Practice (Rule 5.2)

In stroke play, Rule 5.2b is modified in this way: On any scheduled day of the competition, a player must not practise before or between rounds on a course currently in use for the competition, or that will be used in future in the competition.

Exception: All recognised practice areas within the bounds of the course may be used by players for practice on any competition day.

14. Clubs and Balls

- List of Conforming Driver Heads: Model Local Rule G-1 is in effect. Penalty for making stroke with club in breach of Local Rule: Disqualification.
- List of Conforming Golf Balls: Model Local Rule G-3 is in effect. Penalty for breach of Local Rule: Disqualification.

Go to www.randa.org for Current List of Conforming Clubs and Balls.

15. Pace of Play (Rule 5.6)

In the absence of mitigating circumstances, a group is liable to be timed if it is in excess of the time allowed and, in the case of second or subsequent groups, out of position. From the commencement of timing, if any player exceeds 50 seconds on a 'first to play approach shot (including Par 3 tee shot), chip or putt', or 40 seconds if it is a tee shot or 'second or third to play shot', they have had a bad time. The time allowed will be determined by the Committee and will be available prior to play. Out of position is defined as being more than the starting interval behind the group in front.

A player whose group is timed will have a bad time carried forward in the round even if the group subsequently arrives back in position or within time.

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF LOCAL RULE:

1 Bad Time Verbal warning from referee

Stroke Play

Match Play

2 Bad Times One-Stroke Penalty

One-Stroke Penalty

3 Bad Times Additional Two Penalty Strokes

Loss of Hole

4 Bad Times Disqualification

Disqualification

Note:

- It is not necessary for players to be advised they are being timed.
- Timings will be taken from the moment it is deemed by the Official that it is the player's turn to play.
- Where evidence suggests that an individual player, or two of the players in a group, should be timed instead of the entire group, the official will be authorised at their discretion to officially time only a select member, or select members, of the group.

When Timing Commences:

Other than on the putting green, the timing of a player's stroke begins when it is their turn to play and they can play without interference or distraction. Reasonable time spent by the first player to play to determine their yardage will not count as time taken for the stroke.

On the putting green, the timing of a player's stroke begins after a player has been allowed reasonable time to mark, lift, clean and replace their ball, repair damage to the green, and remove loose impediments on their line. Time spent looking at the line from beyond the hole, and/or behind the ball, will count as part of the time taken for the next stroke.

16. Transportation

During a round, a player or a caddie must not ride on any form of motorized transportation except when doing so in accordance with the Golf Australia policy listed in the Terms of Competition for the event, or when later approved by the Committee. A player who will play, or has played, under penalty of stroke and distance is always authorized to ride on motorized transportation. The player gets the general penalty for each hole during which there is a breach. A breach between two holes applies to the next hole.

17. Deciding Ties

The method for deciding ties is provided within the relevant entry conditions or is published at the golf course by the Committee.

18. Returning of Scorecard

- a. A player's scorecard is considered to have been returned to the Committee once 15 minutes have elapsed from the time it was accepted into the electronic scoring system. **Except:**
- If a scorecard mistake is discovered before the scorecard is accepted into the electronic scoring system, and the player is not in the scoring area to correct that mistake, the player's scorecard is considered to have been returned 15 minutes after the time the mistake was discovered.
 - If the player is in the scoring area when the 15-minute time limit expires, the player's scorecard is considered to have been returned at the time they leave the scoring area.
 - Even if the 15-minute time limit has not expired, or the player is still in the scoring area, a player's scorecard will be considered to have been returned if any of these four events occur:
 - The starting times are released after a cut is made.
 - The player begins their next round.
 - Any player has made a stroke to begin a play-off.
 - The competition has closed.

Note i: This modification of the interpretation of when a player's scorecard is considered to have been returned will not apply for rounds where a 'shot-gun' start is involved.

Note ii: When applying the Exception to Rule 3.3b(3), or under any Rule where a player must correct a mistake before returning their scorecard (such as Rule 14.7b), the player's scorecard is returned when the player has left the scoring area.

- b. In a situation where a player has returned an incorrect scorecard, a specific mistake will be treated as a 'committee error' (which means the player will be exempt from any penalty for this mistake under Rule 3.3b and this mistake must be corrected on the scorecard, regardless of whether the error is discovered before or after the competition has closed) when ALL of the following are true:
- The committee in charge of the competition had appointed a 'scorecard return official/s'.
 - The 'scorecard return official' would reasonably be expected to have identified the mistake.
 - The player left the scoring area only after having received some sort of advice from the 'scorecard return official' to the effect the scorecard was returned in full compliance with Rule 3.3b.
- c. In a situation where Hard Card Local Rule 18b does not apply, Rule 3.3b(2) is modified in this way: if a player returns a scorecard without the hole scores being certified either by the player, the marker or both, the player gets two penalty strokes. The penalty applies to the last hole of the player's round.

19. Advice in Team Competitions (Rule 24)

Each team may have one advice giver from whom players in the team may ask for advice and receive advice during the round. The team must identify the advice giver to the Committee before any team member receives advice from that person.

20. Suspension of Play (Rule 5.7)

The following signals will be used to suspend and resume play:

- Immediate stop for imminent danger – one prolonged note of a siren.
- Stop for a non-dangerous situation – three consecutive notes of a siren.
- Resumption of play – two consecutive notes of a siren.

Note: When play is stopped for imminent danger, all practice areas will be immediately closed.

21. Squeegee Policy (when brought into effect by the Committee)

If a player's ball lies on the putting green and there is interference by temporary water on the putting green, the player may take relief under Rule 16.1d or have the Committee squeegee their line of play. The Committee may squeegee greens until players are nearby and if conditions deteriorate, to keep play going, they may authorise a combination of all the above measures.

Any squeegeeing should be done across the line of play, must extend at least one club-length beyond the hole, and may only be carried out by Committee-authorized personnel.

22. Code of Conduct

If a Committee adopts a Code of Conduct for an event under the specific authority of Rule 1.2b, the following penalty structure will apply:

First breach	Warning or committee sanction
Second breach	One-stroke penalty
Third breach	General penalty
Fourth breach, or any serious misconduct	Disqualification

23. Drugs

All competitors agree to be bound and abide by the Australian National Anti-Doping Policy, which is the anti-doping policy adopted by Golf Australia. Under the policy, all competitors are subject to testing for prohibited substances, as undertaken by Sport Integrity Australia or a third-party service provider. Any violation of the policy may result in an Anti-Doping Rule Violation. The policy and the WADA Prohibited list are available via www.golf.org.au/competitionpolicies. Clarification on medication and prohibited substances can also be obtained through the Sport Integrity Australia hotline 13 000 27232.

24. Results of Match or Championship – Competition Closed

Match Play: The result of a match is officially announced when it has been recorded in the Championship Office.

Stroke Play: The results of the competition are officially announced, and the competition is closed, when the Championship trophy is presented to the winner (unless the committee establishes otherwise). In stroke play qualifying followed by match play, Rule 20.2e(2) stipulates that the stroke-play portion of the competition is closed when the player has teed off to start their first match.