



ERLESTOKE GOLF CLUB - LOCAL RULES:

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF LOCAL RULE:

MATCHPLAY – GENERAL PENALTY (LOSS OF HOLE).

STROKEPLAY - GENERAL PENALTY (TWO STROKES).

OUT OF BOUNDS (Rule 18)

A ball is out of bounds when:

- It is beyond the line between the course-side points at ground level of white boundary stakes or lines
- It is beyond any hedge, ditch or fence forming the boundary of the course
- It is on or beyond the Entrance Road, Clubhouse Surrounds and Car Park, Putting Green and Practice Net Area, or Driving Range.
- Note: The Driving Range outfield is Out of Bounds and for safety, players are strictly forbidden to enter this area.

ABNORMAL COURSE CONDITIONS, including Immovable Obstructions (Rule 16)

(i) Ground Under Repair

- (a) Areas encircled by white lines
- (b) Gravel or sunken drainage channels in the General Area
- (c) Animal Holes (including flattened molehills)
- (d) Deep vehicle/tractor marks (not including light indentations made by normal Greenkeeper's machinery)

(ii) Immovable Obstructions

- (a) All artificially surfaced pathways on the course
- (b) All permanent course signage and furniture.

(iii) Immovable Obstructions Close to Putting Green.

In addition to the types of interference described in Rule 16.1a, when a ball lies in the General Area, interference also exists if an Immovable Obstruction is on the player's line of play, is within two club-lengths of the Putting Green and is within two club-lengths of the ball. Relief may be taken under Rule 16.1b (Exception - There is no relief under this Local Rule if the player chooses a line of play that is clearly unreasonable.)

(iv) No Play Zones

- (a) Staked trees
- (b) Newly turfed or seeded areas (except for seeded divots) that are marked with a "No Play Zone" sign.

NB: In all cases, if interference exists with the lie of the ball, the player's stance or area of intended swing, the player **must** take relief under rule 16.1f.



(v) Abnormal Conditions Above Sleepers by Hole 7 Green

Should the ball come to rest within a club length of the edge of the sleepers ABOVE the green on hole 7 then this will be marked as GUR and player may take relief under Rule 16.1

PENALTY AREAS (Rule 17)

Penalty Areas are indicated by red and yellow stakes and defined by respective lines when present.

If no line is present, the edge of a Penalty Area is defined by its natural boundaries (that is, where the ground slopes down to form the depression), or a clear change in vegetation.

Any body of water on the course, including any lake, pond, stream, river or ditch (even if not containing water) that does not have stakes is treated as a Red Penalty Area

Dropping Zone on Hole 15

If a ball is in the Penalty Area on hole 15, including when it is known or virtually certain that a ball that has not been found came to rest in the Penalty Area, the player has these relief options, each for one penalty stroke:

- Take relief under Rule 17.1, or
- As an additional option, drop the original ball or another ball in the Dropping Zone. The Dropping Zone is a relief area under Rule 14.3, meaning a ball must be dropped in, and come to rest, in the relief area.

OVERHEAD WIRES

If it is known or virtually certain that a player's ball hits an overhead power line or supporting structure, the player **must** replay the stroke with the original ball, or another ball from the spot where the last stroke was made.

If the player replays the stroke, but does so from the 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.

AERATION HOLES/SLITS (MLR-E4)

If a Player's ball lies in or touches an aeration hole:

- Ball in General Area – The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b (drop from knee height). If the ball comes to rest in another aeration hole/slit the player may take relief again under this Local Rule.
- Ball on Putting Green – The player may take relief under Rule 16.1d (place).

But interference does not exist if the aeration hole only interferes with the player's stance or area of intended swing or, on the Putting Green, on the player's line of play.

INTEGRAL OBJECTS

Wooden Retaining Sleepers



A Defibrillator is available at the clubhouse – 01380 830300

Guidance:

Recommend use of R&A Phone app or <https://www.randa.org/en/rog/the-rules-of-golf>

General Area (Rule 2)

2.2a

The General Area

The general area covers the entire course except for the four specific areas of the course described in [Rule 2.2b](#). It is called the "general area" because:

- It covers most of the course and is where a player's ball will most often be played until the ball reaches the putting green.
- It includes every type of ground and growing or attached objects found in that area, such as fairway, rough and trees.

2.2b

The Four Specific Areas

Certain Rules apply specifically to the four areas of the course that are not in the general area:

- The teeing area the player must use in starting the hole they are playing ([Rule 6.2](#)),
- All penalty areas ([Rule 17](#)),
- All bunkers ([Rule 12](#)), and
- The putting green of the hole the player is playing ([Rule 13](#)).

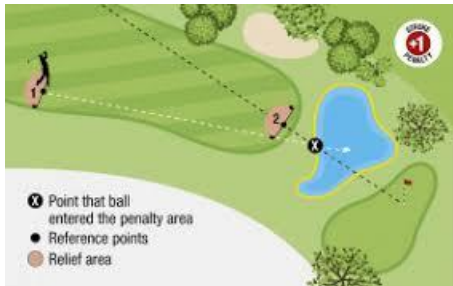
Penalty Area

Golf courses have two different types of penalty areas which are distinguished by the colour used to mark them. Penalty areas usually contain water but some rules committees make exceptions. Often times a penalty area is defined as an area where balls easily get lost or are unable to be played. Therefore, penalty areas may not have water.

Yellow penalty areas are marked with yellow lines or yellow stakes and give you two relief options. Red penalty areas are marked with red lines or red stakes and give you an extra lateral relief option. This is in addition to the two relief options available for yellow penalty areas.

Your ball is in a penalty area when any part of it lies inside the edge of the penalty area. Your ball is also considered to be in if it is above or below the edge of the penalty area. You may play the ball as it lies in the penalty area without a penalty or play a ball from outside the penalty area by incurring one penalty stroke.

Yellow Penalty Area Relief

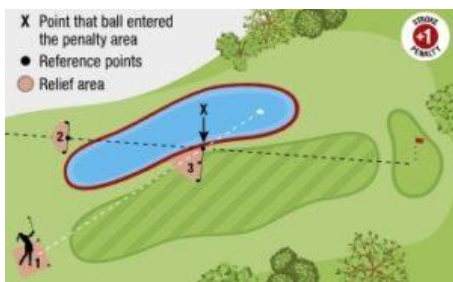


There are two options if your ball is in a Yellow Penalty Area.

- 1) You may take “stroke and distance” relief by playing your next shot as near as possible to the original shot.
- 2) You may take “back on the line” relief. Do this by dropping your ball on a reference line between the flagstick and the point where the ball last crossed into the penalty area.

You may drop on this reference line as far back as you want. You must always keep the penalty area between you and the hole. This is often times the best option as you may choose the yardage to hit your next shot.

Red Penalty Area Relief



There are three options if your ball is in a [Red Penalty Area](#).

You have the two options from the yellow penalty area, plus a “Lateral Relief” option.

- 1) You may take “stroke and distance” relief.
- 2) You may take “back on the line” relief.
- 3) You may take “lateral relief”. With lateral relief, you may drop your ball within two club-lengths of where the ball last crossed into the Red Penalty Area, adding a penalty stroke. You may never drop closer to the hole than the reference point.

You must know or you must be virtually certain that your ball came to rest in a penalty area. If not, you must treat it as a lost ball, which incurs a “stroke and distance” penalty.

Rules

14.3 Dropping Ball in Relief Area

Drop the ball yourself from knee height, make sure it stays inside your relief area, and don't try to spin or throw it.

Three-step checklist details how to execute it on the course without incurring penalties:

1. The Drop (How to do it)

- You must drop it: Your caddie or partner cannot drop it for you.
- Knee height: Hold the ball at the height of your knee while standing straight up, then let it go.
- Straight down: Do not toss, roll, or spin the ball. It must fall freely without hitting your body or clubs on the way down.
- Any ball works: You can use your original ball or substitute it for a fresh one from your bag.

2. The Bounce (Where it lands)

- Must land inside: The ball must hit the ground inside your designated 1 or 2 club-length relief area.
- Accidental hits are fine: If the ball lands in the relief area and then bounces off your shoe, bag, or a tee peg, there is no penalty. As long as it stays in the relief area, it is live.

3. The Result (What to do next)

- If it stays inside: Play it exactly where it rolls and stops.
- If it rolls out: If it rolls outside the relief area, drop a second time using the exact same steps.
- If it rolls out twice: If the second drop also rolls out, stop dropping. Place the ball with your hand on the exact spot where the second drop first hit the ground.



14.7 Playing from the Wrong Place



Playing from a Wrong Place". A simplified breakdown explains how it works, depending on the game format:

1. In Match Play (Simple)

- The Penalty: You automatically lose the hole.
- What to do: Pick up your ball and move on to the next tee. You do not need to correct your mistake.

2. In Stroke Play

If you hit a ball from the wrong spot, you immediately incur a 2-stroke penalty (the General Penalty). Next, you must evaluate the severity of the mistake before teeing off on the next hole:

- Scenario A: It was a Minor Mistake (Not a "Serious Breach")
 - *Example:* You dropped a ball slightly outside your relief area boundaries, but it didn't give you any real competitive advantage.
 - *What to do:* Do not correct it. Finish playing the hole out with that ball, add 2 penalty strokes to your score for that hole, and keep moving.
- Scenario B: It was a Major Mistake (A "Serious Breach")
 - *Example:* Your ball was deep in a penalty area, but you dropped it way up in the fairway to get a clean, open shot at the green, gaining a massive unfair advantage.
 - *What to do:* You must correct it. Go back and play a new ball from the *correct* spot. Count all strokes with the correct ball, plus add a 2-stroke penalty for the original mistake. Throw away the strokes you took with the "wrong spot" ball.
 - *The Trap:* If you fail to correct a serious breach before hitting your tee shot on the *next* hole, you are disqualified.

How to Fix it Before Hitting

If you drop or place your ball in the wrong spot but realize your mistake before you take a swing, you can pick the ball up and move it to the right place with zero penalty.

16 Abnormal Course Conditions

You get a free drop if something artificial, broken, or dangerous on the course messes with your lie, your stance, or your swing.

Official R&A Rule 16 covers "Abnormal Course Conditions, Dangerous Animal Conditions, and Embedded Balls". These elements are not considered part of the natural challenge of golf, so you are allowed free relief.

1. The 4 Things That Qualify for Free Relief (Rule 16.1)

You get a free drop if your ball touches, or if your feet or swing are physically blocked by, any of these four things:



- **Immovable Obstructions:** Man-made objects that cannot be easily moved, like paved cart paths, sprinkler heads, control boxes, or restrooms.
- **Temporary Water:** Any accumulation of water on the surface that isn't a permanent water hazard (like a puddle in the fairway).
- **Ground Under Repair (GUR):** Areas marked by the committee, usually wrapped in white paint or stakes.
- **Animal Holes:** Holes, tracks, or mounds dug by animals, birds, or insects (like a mole hole or an ant mound).

2. How to Take Your Free Drop

To execute your free relief, use this simple sequence:

1. **Find your Nearest Point of Complete Relief:** Find the closest spot on the course where the object or condition no longer interferes with your ball, your stance, or your swing.
2. **Measure your area:** From that exact spot, measure out one club-length using your longest club (usually your driver), no closer to the hole.
3. **Drop the ball:** Stand straight and drop the ball from knee height into that 1 club-length zone.

3. Special Scenarios (Rule 16.2 & 16.3)

- **Embedded Ball (The "Plugged" Ball):** If your ball lands in the general area (fairway or rough) and buries itself in its own pitch mark, you can lift, clean, and drop it within 1 club-length for free.
- **Dangerous Animals:** If a dangerous creature (like a alligator, venomous snake, or ground hornets) is near your ball, you get free relief to drop a safe distance away.

The Major Exceptions

- **No relief from boundaries:** Out-of-bounds stakes and fences are not obstructions. You do not get free relief from them.
- **No free relief in penalty areas:** If your ball lands on a cart path or bridge that is *inside* a red or yellow hazard line, you do not get free relief. You must play it as it lies or take a 1-stroke penalty drop.

16.1b Relief for Ball in General Area

If a player's ball is in the general area and there is interference by an abnormal course condition on the course, the player may take free relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in this relief area (see [Rule 14.3](#)):

- **Reference Point:** The nearest point of complete relief in the general area.
- **Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point:** One club-length, but with these limits:
- **Limits on Location of Relief Area:**

- Must be in the general area,
- Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and
- There must be complete relief from all interference by the abnormal course condition.

16.1c Relief for Ball in Bunker

If a player's ball is in a bunker and there is interference by an abnormal course condition on the course, the player may take either free relief under (1) or penalty relief under (2):

(1) Free Relief: Playing from Bunker. The player may take free relief under [Rule 16.1b](#), except that:

- The nearest point of complete relief and the relief area must be in the bunker.
- If there is no such nearest point of complete relief in the bunker, the player may still take this relief by using the point of maximum available relief in the bunker as the reference point.
- ground when dropped.

(2) Penalty Relief: Playing from Outside Bunker (Back-on-the-Line Relief). For one penalty stroke, the player may drop the original ball or another ball (see [Rule 14.3](#)) outside that bunker, keeping the spot of the original ball between the hole and the spot where the ball is dropped (with no limit on how far back the ball may be dropped). The spot on the line where the ball first touches the ground when dropped creates a relief area that is one club-length in any direction from that point, but with these limits:

- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - Must not be nearer the hole than the spot of the original ball, and
 - May be in any area of the course except the same bunker, but
 - Must be in the same area of the course that the ball first touched when dropped.

16.1d Relief for Ball on Putting Green

If a player's ball is on the putting green and there is interference by an abnormal course condition on the course, the player may take free relief by placing the original ball or another ball on the spot of the nearest point of complete relief.

The nearest point of complete relief must be either on the putting green or in the general area.

- If there is no such nearest point of complete relief, the player may still take this free relief by using the point of maximum available relief as the reference point, which must be either on the putting green or in the general area.

16.1f

Relief Must Be Taken from Interference by No Play Zone in Abnormal Course Condition



In each of these situations, the ball must not be played as it lies:(1) Relief When Ball Is in No Play Zone Anywhere on Course Except Penalty Area. If the player's ball is in a no play zone in or on an abnormal course condition in the general area, in a bunker or on the putting green:

- No Play Zone in General Area. The player must take free relief under Rule 16.1b.
- No Play Zone in Bunker. The player must take free relief or penalty relief under Rule 16.1c(1) or (2).
- No Play Zone on Putting Green. The player must take free relief under Rule 16.1d.

(2) Relief When No Play Zone Interferes with Stance or Swing for Ball Anywhere on Course Except Penalty Area. If a player's ball is outside a no play zone and is in the general area, in a bunker or on the putting green, and a no play zone (whether in an abnormal course condition or in a penalty area) interferes with the player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing, the player must either:

- Take relief if allowed under Rule 16.1b, c or d, depending on whether the ball is in the general area, in a bunker or on the putting green, or
- Take unplayable ball relief under Rule 19.



Rule 17/17.1

If your ball goes into a penalty area (red or yellow stakes), you can try to hit it out for free, or you can take a 1-stroke penalty to drop a new ball outside of it.

Official Rule 17 covers "Penalty Areas" (lakes, ponds, streams, or heavy woods marked by lines or stakes).

1. Knowing Your Colour (Red vs. Yellow)

Your drop choices depend entirely on the color of the stakes or lines defining the area: [1]

-  Yellow Penalty Areas: Give you two choices for your drop.
-  Red Penalty Areas: Give you those same two choices, plus a third lateral choice.

2. The 3 Drop Choices (For a 1-Stroke Penalty)

If your ball is in a penalty area, you can take a 1-stroke penalty and choose one of these options:

- Option 1: Go Back to Where You Just Shot (Red & Yellow)
 - Play a new ball from the exact spot where you hit your last shot (Stroke-and-Distance).
- Option 2: The "Straight Line" Drop (Red & Yellow)
 - Find the exact spot where your ball last crossed into the penalty area.



- Imagine a straight line extending straight backward from the flagstick through that entry spot.
- Go as far back on that line as you want and drop your ball.
- Option 3: The "2 Club-Length" Side Drop (Red Only)
 - Find the exact spot where your ball last crossed into the red penalty area.
 - Measure out two club-lengths from that spot, no closer to the hole, and drop your ball.

3. Rules for Playing it *Inside* the Hazard

If you can see your ball and want to try hitting it out of the hazard without a penalty, you can! The rules are very generous:

- Practice swings are allowed: You can touch the grass or water with your club during practice swings.
- Ground your club: You can let your club touch the ground right behind the ball before you swing.
- Move debris: You can pick up loose leaves, twigs, or stones around your ball, as long as your ball doesn't move.

The Big Trap ❌

If your ball is inside a penalty area, you cannot take free relief from man-made objects like bridges, cart paths, or sprinkler heads. If a bridge blocks your stance, you either have to hit it as it lies or use one of the 1-stroke penalty drop options above.

18 Lost or Unplayable Ball

If your ball is lost or goes out of bounds, you must take a 1-stroke penalty and re-play the shot from where you just hit. If your ball is unplayable, you can take a 1-stroke penalty to drop it nearby.

Official Rule 18 covers "Stroke-and-Distance Relief; Ball Lost or Out of Bounds; Player Unplayable Ball." It handles the three worst-case scenarios for a golf ball.

1. Lost Ball or Out of Bounds (OB)

If your ball goes past the white stakes (OB) or you cannot find it within 3 minutes of searching:

- The Rule: You must take a 1-stroke penalty and go back to the exact spot where you hit your last shot to hit another ball.
 - Pro Tip (The Provisional Ball): If you *think* your ball might be lost or OB, announce to your group that you are hitting a "provisional ball" *before* you walk forward to look. This saves you from having to walk all the way back if it really is gone.
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2. Unplayable Ball (Anywhere Except Penalty Areas)

If your ball is stuck deep in a bush, up a tree, or wedged against a rock, you can declare it "unplayable" at any time. For a 1-stroke penalty, you get three choices to get back into play:

- Choice 1: Go back to the previous spot
 - Re-hit the shot from where you last played.
 - Choice 2: Go straight back on a line
 - Imagine a straight line from the hole through where your ball is stuck. Walk as far back on that line as you want and drop within 1 club-length.
 - Choice 3: Take 2 club-lengths to the side
 - Drop a ball within 2 club-lengths of where it currently sits, no closer to the hole.
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3. Special Case: Unplayable Ball in a Bunker

If your ball is unplayable inside a sand trap, you can use Choices 1, 2, or 3 above, but with a catch: for a 1-stroke penalty, your drop must stay inside the sand.

- *The Escape Route*: If you want to get completely out of the bunker without hitting from the sand, you can go straight back on a line outside the bunker, but it will cost you a 2-stroke penalty.