

10 Golden Rules

1. Play the ball as it lies.
2. Don't move, bend, or break anything growing or fixed, except in fairly taking your stance or swing. Don't press anything down.
3. You may lift natural objects not fixed or growing, except in a water hazard or bunker. No penalty.
4. You may move man-made objects even in a bunker or water hazard. If they are immovable, you may drop within one club-length of the nearest point of relief, no nearer the hole. In a hazard, you must drop in the hazard. No penalty.
5. You may drop away from casual water, ground under repair, burrowing animal holes or casts. On the putting green, place, or in a hazard drop, at the nearest point of relief, no nearer the hole; otherwise drop within one club-length of the nearest point of relief, no nearer the hole. No penalty. (Okay, so they're not all simple.)
6. In a water hazard or bunker, don't touch the water or ground with your hand or club before the stroke.
7. If you hit your ball into a water hazard and cannot play it, either drop behind the hazard or at the place where you played the shot. One penalty stroke. If you hit into a lateral hazard, you may also drop within two club-lengths of the point where the ball last crossed the hazard margin, or a point equidistant from the hole on the opposite margin. One penalty stroke.
8. When you hit your ball out of bounds or lose it, add a penalty stroke, go back and drop a ball at the place where you played the shot. On the tee, you may tee the ball. If you think you have hit your ball out of bounds or lost it outside a water hazard, play a provisional ball before searching for the first one.
9. When you have an unplayable lie, you may drop a ball at the place where you played the previous shot, adding a penalty stroke. On the tee, you may tee the ball. Alternatively, drop within two club-lengths, no nearer the hole, or any distance behind the unplayable spot, keeping it between you and the hole. If the ball is in a bunker, you must drop in the bunker, under either of the alternative options.
10. On the putting green, you may repair ball marks and old hole plugs on the line of the putt, but not spike marks.

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