



THE RULES OF PITCH & PUTT

These Rules are based on the Federation of International Pitch and Putt Associations' (FIPPA) Rules of Pitch and Putt, 1st Edition, January 2008, as modified by the Australian Pitch and Putt Association (APPA).

FIPPA allows member associations and federations to legislate for the game in their own territory and adapt these rules accordingly for local tournaments.

Pitch and Putt is an independent amateur sport controlled worldwide by FIPPA, and throughout Australia by APPA.

The FIPPA Constitution defines Pitch and Putt with the following characteristics:

1. Distances:
 - (a) Length of hole: Maximum of 90 metres.
 - (b) Length of 18 hole course: Maximum of 1,200 metres.
2. Maximum of three clubs (one of which must be a Putter) permitted for use.
3. Use of a Tee on the Teeing Ground is obligatory.
4. The Teeing Ground for the hole to be played is common for all players

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HOW TO USE THESE RULES

It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with these Rules and use them whenever a question arises. If in doubt, play the course as you find it and play the ball as it lies.

Understand the Words

These Rules are written in a very precise and deliberate fashion. You should be aware of and understand the following differences in word use:

may = optional

should = recommendation

must / shall = instruction (and penalty if not complied with)

Know the Definitions

A good knowledge of the defined terms is very important for the correct application of the rules.

Penalties for breach of rules or non-compliance with procedure

In Pitch & Putt, the penalty for a breach of a rule **both** in Stroke-Play and Matchplay competitions is **ONE STROKE** except when otherwise provided.

COURTESY ON THE COURSE

No one should move, talk or stand close to or directly behind the ball or the hole when a player is addressing the ball or making a stroke.

No player should play until the players in front are out of range. Nevertheless, players should play without undue delay.

When the play of a hole has been completed, players should immediately leave the putting green and mark their cards at the next tee.

CARE OF THE COURSE

Putting Greens

A player should ensure that any damage to the green made by a ball is carefully repaired.

Players should ensure that no damage is done to the putting green when handling the flagstick or removing the ball from the hole. The flagstick should be properly replaced in the hole before the players leave the green. Players should not damage the green by leaning on their putters, particularly when removing the ball from the hole.

Bunkers

Before leaving a bunker, a player should carefully fill up and smooth over all holes and footprints.

DEFINITIONS

ADDRESSING THE BALL

The ball has been "addressed" when the player has taken the stance preparatory to making a stroke and has also grounded the club. However, in a hazard, the player has "addressed the ball" when the stance has been taken preparatory to making a stroke.

ADVICE

Advice is any counsel or suggestion that could influence a player in determining his play or method of making a stroke. Information on the rules and matters of public information is not advice.

BALL IN PLAY

A ball is "in play" as soon as the player has made a stroke on the teeing ground. It remains in play (as the player's ball) until holed out, except when it is out of bounds, lost or lifted or another ball has been substituted in accordance with these rules.

A ball so substituted becomes the ball in play.

BALL LOST

A ball is "lost" if:

- a. It is not found within five minutes after the player's side has begun to search for it; or
- b. The player has put another ball into play under the rules.

CASUAL WATER

"Casual Water" is any temporary accumulation of water or snow or natural ice on the course that is not in a water hazard.

COMMITTEE

The "committee" is the duly nominated committee of the club or association organizing the competition. The committee has no power to waive a rule of Pitch & Putt.

COURSE

The "course" is the whole area within which play is permitted.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

"Environmentally Sensitive Areas" are those areas of the course so designated and identified by stakes with red/green tops.

GROUND UNDER REPAIR

"Ground Under Repair" is any portion of the course so marked by order of the committee concerned or so declared by its authorised representative. It includes material piled for removal and a hole made by a green-keeper, even if not so marked. Stakes and lines defining "ground under repair" are within such ground. Such stakes are obstructions. A ball is in *ground under repair* when it lies in or any part of it touches the *ground under repair*.

HAZARDS

A "hazard" is any bunker or water hazard. A ball is in a hazard when it lies in or any part of it touches the hazard. Bare patches, ground under repair, paths, roads, scrapes, tees and tracks are not hazards.

HOLED

A ball is "holed" when it is at rest within the circumference of the hole and all of it is below the level of the lip of the hole.

LINE OF PLAY

The line of play is the direction that the player wishes his ball to take after a stroke, plus a reasonable distance on either side of the intended direction. The line of play extends vertically upwards from the ground, but does not extend beyond the hole.

LINE OF PUTT

The line of putt is the line which the player wishes his ball to take after a stroke on the Putting Green. The line of putt does not extend beyond the hole.

LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS

The term "loose impediments" denotes natural objects not fixed or growing and not adhering to the ball, and includes stones not solidly embedded, leaves, twigs, branches and the like, dung, worms, insects and casts or heaps made by them. Sand and loose soil are loose impediments on the putting green but not elsewhere. Dew and frost are not loose impediments.

NEAREST POINT OF RELIEF

The "nearest point of relief" is the point on the course, nearest to where the ball lies, which is not nearer the hole, and where there is no longer the interference from which relief is permitted.

OBSTRUCTIONS

An "obstruction" is anything artificial, whether erected, placed or left on the course except:

- a. Objects defining out of bounds such as walls, fences, stakes and railings,
- b. Any obstruction declared by the committee to be an integral part of the course.

An obstruction is a movable obstruction if it can be moved without unreasonable effort, without unduly delaying play and without causing damage. Otherwise, it is an immovable obstruction.

OUT OF BOUNDS

"Out of bounds" is defined by all boundary fences and play outside these boundaries is prohibited. A ball is out of bounds when all of it lies out of bounds. A player may stand out of bounds to play a ball lying within bounds.

PRACTICE

Practice is defined as the deliberate striking of a ball in a manner the player may wish to replicate in the course of normal play.

PRACTICE SWING:

A practice swing is not a practice stroke and may be taken at any place, provided the player does not breach the Rules.

PROVISIONAL BALL

A provisional ball is a ball played under these rules in place of a ball which may be lost or may be out of bounds.

PUTTING GREEN

The putting green is all ground of the hole being played which is specially prepared for putting. A ball is on the putting green when any part of it touches the putting green.

STROKE

A stroke is the forward movement of the club made with the intention of striking at and moving the ball. A stroke shall be counted as soon as the downswing commences. But if a player checks his downswing voluntarily before the clubhead reaches the ball he is deemed not to have made a stroke.

TEE

A “tee” is an artificial device, designed to raise the ball off the ground. The minimum height requirement of the device is 5mm.

TEeing GROUND

The teeing ground is the starting place for the hole to be played and is common to all players. If the starting place is a mat, the defined area of the teeing ground is the mat itself. Otherwise, the front and sides must be defined and the back of the teeing area shall be no more than two club lengths from the front.

THROUGH THE GREEN

“Through the green” is the whole area of the course except:

- a. The teeing ground and putting green of the hole being played.
- b. All hazards on the course.

WATER HAZARD

A water hazard is any sea, lake, pond, river, ditch, surface drainage ditch or other open water course (whether containing water or not).

A lateral water hazard is any water hazard or that part of a water hazard so situated that it is deemed impracticable to drop a ball behind the water hazard in accordance with Rule 8b.

It is the duty of the committee in charge of the course to define accurately the extent of the water hazards (with yellow stakes or lines) and lateral water hazards (with red stakes or lines). Stakes and lines defining the margins of hazards are within the hazards.

WRONG BALL

Wrong Ball is any ball other than the player’s ball in play or his provisional ball.

PART I – GENERAL PLAY**1. THE GAME**

- a. The game of Pitch and Putt consists of playing a ball with a club from each Teeing Ground into the associated target hole by a stroke or successive strokes in accordance with these Rules. Except as otherwise allowed by the Committee the holes must be played in sequence, commencing at the first hole.
- b. The ball shall be played as it lies, except as otherwise provided in the rules.
- c. Agreement to Waive Rules: Players shall not agree to exclude the operation of any Rule or to waive any penalty incurred.

PENALTY: *disqualification*

2. PRACTICE

On any day or days of a competition, or during the course of any format of competition itself, players must not practice within the boundaries of the course. This rule is valid both for Matchplay and Strokeplay competitions.

PENALTY: *disqualification*

Play in a different competition on the same day(s) does not constitute practice. Practice on a designated practice range and putting green prior to commencement of any round is permitted.

3. OBSTRUCTIONS

- a. Any movable obstruction may be removed **without penalty**.
- b. Except when the ball is in a water hazard, a player may obtain relief when a ball comes to rest on or near an immovable obstruction so as to interfere with a player's stance or swing.

Procedure:

- Through the green, lift the ball and drop without penalty within one club-length of the nearest point of relief - though not nearer the hole.
- Bunker, lift the ball and drop in the bunker without penalty as above.
- Green, lift the ball and place it without penalty at the nearest point of relief.

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 3b: *one stroke*

4. CASUAL WATER

If a player's ball lies in or touches casual water or when such a condition interferes with the player's stance or swing, the player may obtain free relief.

Procedure:

- Through the green, lift the ball and drop without penalty within one club-length of the nearest point of relief - though not nearer the hole.
- Bunker, lift the ball and drop in the bunker without penalty as above.
- Green, lift the ball and place it without penalty at the nearest point of relief.

PENALTY: *one stroke*

5. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

- a. A ball having entered an Environmentally Sensitive Area must not be recovered if recovery requires a player's entry to that area.
- b. A ball having entered an Environmentally Sensitive Area must be replaced by dropping a ball within one club length of the nearest point of relief **without penalty**.
- c. A ball having entered an Environmentally Sensitive Area and which is recoverable by a player without entry to that area shall be lifted and dropped within one club-length of the nearest point of relief **without penalty**.
- d. If a wire barrier marking an Environmentally Sensitive Area, intervenes with a player's line of play, the player may drop the ball at the nearest point of relief **without penalty**.

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 5a: one stroke

6. GROUND UNDER REPAIR, FLOWER BEDS AND STAKED TREES

- a. The Committee may declare any flower beds, clearly defined vegetative areas or staked trees (if the tree or stake interferes with the player's stance or swing) as Ground Under Repair for the purposes of this Rule.
- b. A ball that comes to rest in or touches a composted flower bed, clearly defined vegetative area or by a staked tree (if the tree or stake interferes with the player's stance or swing) or Ground Under Repair, or when such a condition interferes with the player's stance or swing, the player may:
 - Through the green, lift the ball and drop it without penalty within one club-length of the nearest point of relief - though not nearer the hole. (For the purposes of this rule, the Committee may define where the nearest point of relief is to be located.)
 - Bunker, lift the ball and drop in the bunker without penalty as above.
 - Green, lift the ball and place it without penalty at the nearest point of relief.

PENALTY: one stroke

7. SAND BUNKERS

- a. Before making a stroke at the ball in a sand bunker the player must not
 - touch the ground or the sand with a club.
 - touch or move a loose impediment in the bunker.

Any movable obstruction lying in the bunker may be removed.

- b. A stroke which does not leave the ball clear of the sand is not of itself a breach of Rule 7a but to smooth irregularities before playing a second or any further strokes in the sand is a breach of the Rule.

PENALTY: one stroke

8. WATER HAZARDS

- a. A ball in a water hazard may be played **without penalty**, but the player must not
 - touch the ground or water in the hazard with a club.
 - touch or move a loose impediment in the hazard.

Any movable obstruction lying in the water hazard may be removed.

- b. If a ball is in or is lost in a water hazard (whether the ball lies in water or not), the player may **under penalty of one stroke**:

- Play a ball, as nearly as possible, at the spot from which the original ball was last played; or
- Drop a ball behind the water hazard, keeping the point at which the original ball last crossed the margin of the water hazard directly between the hole and the spot on which the ball is dropped, with no limit to how far behind the water hazard the ball may be dropped; or
- As additional options available only if the ball last crossed the margin of a lateral water hazard, drop a ball outside the water hazard within two club-lengths of and not nearer the hole than:
 - (i) the point where the original ball last crossed the margin of the water hazardor
 - (ii) a point on the opposite margin of the water hazard equidistant from the hole.

PENALTY: one stroke

9. THE TEEING GROUND

- a. The ball must be played off the defined teeing ground or mat by placing it on a tee.
- b. If a player, when starting a hole, plays a ball from outside the teeing ground / mat, he shall incur a **penalty of one stroke** and shall then play a ball from within the teeing ground / mat.
- c. If the ball falls off the tee or is knocked off by the player while addressing it, it shall be re-teed **without penalty**. If a stroke is made at the ball in these circumstances, the stroke shall be counted and the ball played as it lies.

PENALTY: one stroke

10. THE PUTTING GREEN.

- a. A ball on the putting green may be marked and lifted.
- b. On the putting green:
 - loose impediment may be removed by picking it up or by brushing it aside by the back of the hand or with a club, provided that nothing is pressed down.
 - Damage caused by the impact of the ball may be repaired.
- c. If the marker interferes with the line of play of an opponent, if so requested it must be placed one or more club head(s) length, to either side of its original position. If the marker is so placed to either side, it must be replaced in its original position before the ball is replaced.
- d. If a player's ball when played on the putting green strikes another ball also on the putting green, the player shall incur a **one stroke penalty** and his ball is played as it lies. The moved ball must be replaced in the original position.
- e. The player's ball must not strike the flagstick either placed in the hole or having been removed from the hole when the ball is played from the putting surface.
- f. A ball lying on a putting green other than that of the hole being played it must be lifted and dropped **without penalty** within one club-length of the nearest point of relief - though not nearer the hole.
- g. When any part of a ball overhangs the edge of a hole, the owner of the ball may wait 10 seconds to determine whether it is at rest. If by then the ball has not fallen in the hole, it is deemed to be at rest and shall be played accordingly.

h. h. If any old hole plug, or any damage to the green that is not readily repairable, interferes with the line of putt, then with the agreement of the player's marker the ball may be marked, lifted and placed to either side no nearer the hole **without penalty**.

PENALTY: one stroke.

i. Any player whose ball lies within one club length **off** the green may request that any ball on the green within one club length from the hole is marked or holed out. If a player required to mark his ball or play out the hole in such a circumstance fails to do so, **he shall be disqualified**.

j. No club except a putter may be used on a green.

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 10 i / j: disqualification

PART II –EQUIPMENT

11 CLUBS

a. A player shall have a maximum of three clubs (conforming to recognised specifications), one of which must be a putter.

b. Foreign material must not be applied to the club face.

PENALTY : disqualification

c. A club may be replaced, without causing undue delay, only if it has become unfit for use in the normal course of play. The replacement must not be made by borrowing any club which another player playing on the course has selected for play.

d. Partners may share clubs, provided that the total number of clubs does not exceed three.

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 11 c / d : one stroke

12 THE BALL

a. The ball shall not be less than 1.68 inches (42.67mm) and must conform to recognised specifications.

b. A ball must have the manufacturer's name and Identification number or brand clearly legible.

c. Foreign material must not be applied to a ball or otherwise manipulated.

PENALTY : disqualification

PART III –THE GAME

13 PLAYING THE BALL

a. The first player to play from the first teeing ground / mat is decided by the order of the draw (eg: order of handicap), if there is no draw, by lots. Thereafter the side with the lowest score will play first at the next teeing ground / mat.

- b.** Before commencing play (or when the ball is changed), each player must clearly identify the player's ball to their marker/opponent.
- c.** When the balls are in play, the ball furthest from the hole should be played first.
- d.** A player must hole out with the same ball played from the first teeing ground to the last teeing ground unless a rule permits him to substitute another ball (a ball damaged, lost or irrecoverable) at any stage of the game.
- e.** If a player's club strikes the ball more than once in the course of a stroke, the player shall count the stroke and add a penalty stroke, making two strokes in all.
- f.** A player shall not improve, or allow to be improved, the player's line of play or the lie of the ball and shall not move, bend or break anything fixed or growing except as may occur in the course of fairly taking up the player's stance.
- g.** Except when either a loose impediment or the ball touches or lies in a hazard, loose impediments may be removed.
- h.** A ball embedded in its own pitch mark through the green may be lifted, cleaned and dropped **without penalty**, as near as possible to the spot where it lay but not nearer the hole.
- i.** A player may clean his ball without penalty during play of a hole **except** if the ball has been marked and lifted:
- for identification,
 - to determine if it is unfit for play,
 - because it is assisting or interfering (off the green) with play
- j.** If the position of a ball, in any place on the course, interferes with the stance, swing or line of play of another player, the ball must be marked and lifted if so requested and subsequently replaced. The ball shall not be cleaned.
- k.** A player, playing from a wrong teeing ground / mat, shall cancel the shot(s) played and must play from the correct teeing ground / mat. The player shall incur a **penalty of one stroke**. Should the error not be rectified before play of the next hole commences, **he is disqualified**.
- l.** If a player plays a stroke/s with a **wrong ball**, the player shall incur a **penalty of one stroke**, and then play his own ball. Should the error not be rectified before play of the next hole commences, **the player shall be disqualified**. Shots played in a hazard with a wrong ball are not to be counted.
- m.** If a ball, having been struck, is known to have gone out of bounds or to be lost, the player shall add a **one stroke penalty** and must play a ball as nearly as possible to the place from which the original ball was last played :
- from the teeing ground/mat the use of a tee is obligatory.
 - from through the green or from a hazard the ball must be dropped.
 - from on the green the ball must be placed.
- n.** A **Provisional Ball** should be played if the player considers the original ball may be lost (though not in a water hazard) or out of bounds and has so declared to the marker/opponent and identified the provisional ball to that person.
If the original ball is in fact lost or out of bounds, the provisional ball becomes the ball in play and the player adds **one penalty stroke** to the score.
If the original ball is neither lost nor out of bounds, the provisional ball must be abandoned, **without penalty**, and the strokes played with it shall not count. Failure to so abandon the provisional ball constitutes playing with the wrong ball.
- o.** The player may deem his **ball unplayable** at any place on the course, except when the ball is in a water hazard. The player is the sole judge as to whether the ball is unplayable.
If the ball is deemed to be unplayable, the player must, under **penalty of one stroke**:
-

i) play a ball as nearly as possible to the place from which the original ball was last played :

- from the teeing ground / mat the use of a tee is obligatory.
- from through the green or from a hazard the ball must be dropped.
- from on the green the ball must be placed.

ii) drop a ball behind the point where the ball lay, keeping that point directly between the hole and the spot on which the ball is dropped, with no limit to how far behind that point the ball may be dropped; or

iii) drop a ball within two club-lengths of the spot where the ball lay, but not nearer the hole.

If the unplayable ball is in a bunker, the player may proceed under clause i), ii) or iii). If playing under clause ii) or iii), a ball must be dropped in the bunker.

PENALTY: one stroke.

14. BALL MOVED, DEFLECTED OR STOPPED

a. When a player's ball in play and at rest is moved by the player, his partner or their equipment, the player shall incur a **one stroke penalty** and the ball must be replaced.

b. If a ball in play and at rest, moves after the player has addressed it, the player shall be deemed to have caused it to move and shall incur a **one stroke penalty**, and the ball must be replaced. A ball shall be considered to have moved from its original position if it has moved only a fraction of its circumference.

c. If a ball at rest is moved by anything not part of the play, other than wind, or by another player or his equipment, it must be replaced **without penalty**.

d. If the ball moves after any loose impediment has been touched by the player or the player's partner, it shall be replaced **without penalty**.

e. If a ball in motion is stopped or deflected by anything not part of the play, other than wind, or by another player or his equipment, the ball shall be played as it lies.

f. If a ball in motion is stopped or deflected by the player or the player's partner, or their equipment, a **penalty of one stroke** is incurred and the ball must be played as it lies.

PENALTY: one stroke

g. If a ball at rest through the green is struck and moved by the ball of another player it shall be replaced at the position from which it was moved and the other ball shall be played as it lies.

15. RELIEF SITUATIONS

a. A ball to be dropped under the Rules shall be dropped by the player in person. The player shall stand erect, hold the ball at shoulder height and arm's length and drop it to either side not nearer the hole.

PENALTY : one stroke.

b. A dropped ball must be re-dropped, **without penalty**, if it:

- comes to rest more than two club lengths from the nearest point of relief.

- Rolls into and comes to rest in a hazard.
- Rolls out and come to rest outside a hazard.
- Rolls onto and comes to rest on a green.
- Comes to rest out of bounds.
- Comes to rest nearer the hole.
- Comes to rest where the initial interference still exists.

If the ball when re-dropped comes to rest in any of the above positions, it must be placed as near as possible to the spot where it touched the ground when re-dropped.

c. If a ball lies through the green and its position interferes with the stance or swing of another player, then the ball shall be marked. The ball must not be cleaned.

PENALTY: one stroke.

PART IV – THE PLAYER

16. PLAYER'S RESPONSABILITIES

- a. The player shall start at the time laid down by the committee.
- b. The players shall remain during the round in the group arranged by the committee.
- c. The use of a caddie is not permitted at any time.
- d. The player is responsible for the correctness of the score recorded for each hole on his card. After completion of the round, the player must ensure that both he and his marker (one who records the player's score) sign the score card and return it to the committee as soon as possible.

PENALTY: disqualification.

- e. If a player returns a score for any hole lower than actually played, or fails to record a score for any hole, the player **shall be disqualified**. A score higher than actually played shall stand.
- f. A player must not give / ask for advice, except to / of the player's partner.

PENALTY: one stroke

- g. Players of the same group should hand in their scorecards to the competition organisation simultaneously.

PART V – GENERAL RULE

Where these rules do not provide for a specific situation, the relevant Rules and Decisions of Golf must be applied.

PART VI – FORMS OF PLAY

MATCH PLAY

- A match consists of one side playing against another over a stipulated round unless otherwise decreed by the committee.
- In match play the game is played by holes. A hole is won by the side that holes its ball in fewer strokes. In a handicap match the lower net score wins the hole.
- A hole is halved if each side holes out in the same number of strokes.
- A match is won when one side leads by a number of holes greater than the number remaining to be played.
- A player may concede an opponent's next stroke at any time provided the opponent's ball is at rest. The opponent is considered to have holed out with the next stroke and the ball may be removed by either side.
- A player may concede a hole at any time prior to the start or conclusion of that hole.
- A player may concede a match at any time prior to the start or conclusion of that match.

FORMS OF MATCH PLAY**Single Match Play**

A match in which one player plays against another.

Four Ball Match Play

A match in which two players play their better ball against the better ball of two other players.

Foursome Match Play

A match in which two players playing as partners against two other players, and each side plays with one ball. The partners must play alternately from the teeing grounds/mats and alternately during the play of each hole.

STROKE PLAY

- A Stroke Play competition consists of playing a stipulated round unless otherwise decreed by the committee.
- The competitor or side playing the stipulated round or rounds in the fewest strokes is the winner. In a handicap competition, the competitor or side with the lowest net score for the stipulated round or rounds is the winner.

Forms of Stroke play :**Single Stroke Play**

A Stroke Play competition in which each player plays against the other competitors.

Four Ball Stroke Play

A Stroke Play competition in which two players, playing as partners, score with their better ball.

Foursome Stroke Play

A Stroke Play competition in which two players, playing as partners, play with one ball. The partners must play alternately from the teeing grounds/mats and alternately during the play of each hole.

Stableford competitions

A Stableford competition is a form of Stroke Play. The scoring in such a competition is made by points awarded in relation to a fixed score at each hole.

Appendix I

GUIDELINES ON AMATEUR STATUS

Pitch and Putt is essentially an amateur sport.

A player may not:

- Compete for prize money.
- Receive payment or compensation for giving instruction other than as part of an approved programme.
- Accept a prize or prizes of a retail value in excess of \$1,000.
- Exchange any prize for cash.
- Accept honorary membership, or membership at a reduced rate, as an inducement to play for a Club.

A player may:

- Enter a voluntary Sweepstake (a club members pool competition).
- Give instruction on a voluntary basis.
- Accept symbolic prizes which are permanently and distinctively engraved and are, therefore, exempt from the prize limit of \$1,000.
- Accept free food and beverage at a competition, provided the same is offered to all competitors.
- Receive expenses for participating in team, promotional and international events.
- Accept prize vouchers to the value of less than \$1,000 for any competition.

Infringement of these guidelines will result in automatic exclusion from registration for competition. Reinstatement will only be considered by the player's association on written application, but only after one year of the event giving rise to the loss of amateur status.