

USGA
SHORT COURSE

Required Penalty Relief

1. You make a stroke from the teeing area that may be lost in a tall grassy area off the fairway, so you properly announce and play a provisional ball. You search for two minutes and find your ball in tall grass and walk away to get your clubs. When you return, you are unable to find your original ball and search again for another minute without finding it. Because the original ball is now lost you go over and play your provisional ball into the hole. Before starting the next hole another player in the group questions the situation and you both summon a referee. What is the ruling?
 - a. You have proceeded correctly and the provisional was your ball in play under penalty of stroke and distance.
 - b. When you first found the original ball, the provisional ball could no longer be used. You must return to the tee and put another ball into play from there. You get only the one penalty stroke for stroke and distance and no penalty for playing the provisional ball into the hole.
 - c. When you first found the original ball, the provisional ball could no longer be used. You get two penalty strokes for playing a wrong ball and must return to the teeing area and put another ball into play, getting an additional penalty stroke under stroke and distance.

2. You hit your tee shot into the woods where you are unlikely to find it. You then play a provisional ball that also goes into the woods, prompting you to properly play yet another provisional ball that also goes into the same area. At this point you think you will find one of the balls, so you go forward to the area where all three balls are estimated to be. You find only two balls within the three-minute search time and you determine they are the provisional balls, but you cannot tell which was the first provisional or second provisional. What is the ruling?
 - a. You must choose one of the two to treat as the first provisional ball under penalty of stroke and distance. Your next stroke will be your 4th.
 - b. You must choose one of the two to treat as the second provisional ball getting two stroke and distance penalties. Your next stroke will be your 6th.
 - c. Since you cannot identify one from the other, all three balls are lost and you must return to the teeing area and will be playing your 7th stroke.

3. You make a stroke from the putting green that must travel over a steep ridge to the hole cut just over a false front. While your ball is in motion, it is deflected by a small bee walking across the putting green. The ball doesn't make it up the ridge and rolls back down the slope and into a bunker. Forgetting that Model Local Rule D-7 is in effect, you take another ball and place it on the spot of the previous stroke, believing the stroke did not count and that you had to play from the previous spot. You hole out in two putts and tee off on the next hole. What is the ruling?
 - a. When you played from the previous spot, you proceeded under penalty of stroke and distance and the ball was holed.
 - b. When you placed a new ball on the previous spot, you substituted a ball when not allowed in a wrong place and got a total of two penalty strokes for playing from a wrong place.
 - c. You are disqualified for failing to correct the mistake of a serious breach of playing from a wrong place.

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4. In stroke play, you hit your tee shot into the rough. After searching for two-and-a-half minutes, you find a ball that you believe is yours. You return to your bag to retrieve a club and then play the ball, all of which takes an additional minute. You walk to the putting green and then learn that the ball you played was not yours. What is the ruling?
 - a. You get two penalty strokes for playing a wrong ball and must then play the original ball if you find it within 30 seconds of the discovery that you had played a wrong ball. If it is not found within those 30 seconds, you must proceed under stroke and distance.
 - b. You get two penalty strokes for playing a wrong ball and must then play the original ball if you find it within 30 seconds of resuming search for it. If it is not found within those 30 seconds, you must proceed under stroke and distance.
 - c. You get two penalty strokes for playing a wrong ball and must then play the original ball if you find it within a new three-minute search period.
 - d. You get two penalty strokes for playing a wrong ball and must then proceed under stroke and distance because your original ball is lost as more than three minutes elapsed after you started to search for it.

5. Your ball comes to rest on the putting green, and you mark it with a small coin. You walk away and after another player putts, you look for your coin but cannot find it. You search for three minutes but are unable to find the coin you had placed. Unsure what to do, you estimate where the ball had been lifted from and replace your ball and play into the hole. While walking away from the hole another player sees your ball-marker stuck to the bottom of your shoe. What is the ruling?
 - a. There is no penalty and the ball is holed.
 - b. You get one penalty stroke and the ball is holed.
 - c. You get two penalty strokes for playing from a wrong place.
 - d. You get three total penalty strokes for proceeding under stroke and distance and playing from a wrong place. You must correct the mistake of a serious breach by playing from where the previous stroke was made.

6. In stroke play, your tee shot looks to have finished just off the fairway in tall grass. Your caddie, who was already in the landing area when you played from the teeing area, arrives at the area and starts to search for your ball 30 seconds before you arrive. You look for the ball for one minute and then notice the following group has already arrived at the teeing area. You and your caddie step aside and wave to them to play through; you wait 90 seconds for them to play their tee shots and then resume search for your ball. After 50 more seconds you find a ball, and it takes you 10 more seconds to figure out the ball is not yours. After another 30 seconds you find a ball that you identify as yours within 10 more seconds. What is the ruling?
 - a. The answer depends as to whether you had authorized your caddie to search for your ball. If you did, the ball is lost; if you did not, the ball is in play.
 - b. Your ball is in play, and you must proceed with it.
 - c. Your ball is lost, and you must proceed under stroke and distance.

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7. Your skilled tee shot on a par 3 may be lost in deep rough about 10 yards beyond the green, so you play a provisional ball that ends up on the green about 25 feet from the hole. As you leave the teeing area, you tell the other players in your group: "Don't anyone look for that ball. I'm declaring it lost right now, so I lie 3 on the green with my provisional." When you get to the green, you play the provisional to 1 foot from the hole. Then another player sees a ball in light rough just over the green about 30 feet from the hole, and it is your original ball. You pick up the provisional and complete the hole with the original, scoring 4. Another player questions your actions, and on the way to the next tee, you consult a referee. What is the correct ruling?
 - a. Once you declared the original ball lost, you were obligated to complete the hole with the provisional, getting the stroke-and-distance penalty. You got one more penalty stroke for lifting your ball in play. You must return to the previous hole and place a ball on the green on the spot from which the provisional was lifted. You will lie 5.
 - b. Your original ball was not lost and remained in play. When you made a stroke at the provisional, you played a wrong ball, getting two penalty strokes. You then corrected that error by completing play with the original ball, making a score of 6 on the hole.
 - c. When you made a stroke at the provisional ball, it became your ball in play. When you made a stroke at your original, it was a wrong ball. In addition to the stroke-and-distance penalty for a lost ball, you get one penalty stroke for lifting your ball in play and two more for playing a wrong ball. You must return to the previous hole and place a ball on the green on the spot from which the provisional was lifted. You will lie 7.
 - d. Your original ball was not lost and remained in play, and there is no penalty for making another stroke at the provisional. You score 4 for the hole.

8. You hit your approach shot toward boundary stakes right of the green. As you and your group are some distance away, you see a man in the yard in the area where your ball might have ended up and you aren't sure, but you think he might have tossed something towards the course. You get to the green and you find your ball near the boundary but clearly in bounds, and the man is nowhere to be found. You chip your ball onto the green and finish the hole. As your group is leaving the green the man reappears and tells you he found your ball in his yard and tossed it back on the course so you didn't trample his yard. What should you do?
 - a. Since it was not known or virtually certain that your ball had been moved by an outside influence you proceeded correctly and your score for the hole is valid without any penalty strokes.
 - b. Your ball was no longer in play when it came to rest out of bounds, therefore it was a wrong ball. You must correct the mistake by going back and playing under penalty of stroke and distance. There is no penalty for playing the ball that was thrown back in bounds.
 - c. Your ball was no longer in play when it came to rest out of bounds, therefore it was a wrong ball. You must correct the mistake by going back and playing under penalty of stroke and distance. You also are penalized two strokes for playing a wrong ball.



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9. Your second stroke on a par 5 is headed well left, and left of a penalty area that borders the putting green. It lands in thick tall grass near the course boundary. Because you are not sure whether you will find the ball and, if you do, whether it will be in bounds, you properly announce and drop a provisional ball. After dropping but before playing that ball, a homeowner who was watching from off the course shouts to confirm your original ball has come to rest on the course and in the thick tall grass. Although you know your original ball has been found in bounds and, without going forward to assess the shot from where it was found, you don't think you'll be able to get it on the green from there so you choose to complete the hole with the dropped ball. After holing out, you tee off on the next hole and discuss the situation with a referee. What is the ruling?
 - a. Your score with the dropped ball counts, but you get one penalty stroke for having taken stroke-and-distance relief.
 - b. Your score with the dropped ball counts, but you get two penalty strokes for substituting a ball and playing it from a wrong place.
 - c. You are disqualified for failing to correct the mistake of playing a wrong ball.