The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

21.2 Maximum Score

a. Overview of Maximum Score

Maximum Score is a form of stroke play where a player’s or side’s score for a hole is capped at a maximum number of strokes set by the Committee, such as two times par, a fixed number or net double bogey.

The normal Rules for stroke play in Rules 1-20 apply, as modified by these specific Rules. Rule 21.2 is written for:

- Scratch competitions, but can be adapted for handicap competitions as well, and
- Individual play, but can be adapted for competitions involving partners, as modified by Rules 22 (Foursomes) and 23 (Four-Ball), and for team competitions, as modified by Rule 24.

b. Scoring in Maximum Score

(1) Player’s Score on Hole. A player’s score for a hole is based on the player’s number of strokes (including strokes made and penalty strokes), except that the player will get only the maximum score even if the actual score exceeds the maximum.

A player who does not hole out under the Rules for any reason gets the maximum score for the hole.

To help pace of play, players are encouraged to stop playing a hole when their score has reached the maximum.

The hole is completed when the player holes out, chooses not to do so or when his or her score has reached the maximum.

(2) Score Entered for Each Hole. To meet the requirements in Rule 3.3b for entering hole scores on the scorecard:

- If Hole Is Completed by Holing Out:
  - When Score Is Lower Than Maximum. The scorecard must show the actual score.
  - When Score Is Same as or Higher Than Maximum. The scorecard must show either no score or any score at or above the maximum.

- If Hole Is Completed Without Holing Out. If the player does not hole out under the Rules, the scorecard must show either no score or any score at or above the maximum.

The Committee is responsible for adjusting the player’s score to the maximum for any hole where the scorecard shows either no score or any score above the maximum and, in a handicap competition, for applying handicap strokes to the score entered for each hole.
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

c. Penalties in Maximum Score

All penalties that apply in stroke play apply in Maximum Score, except that a player who breaches any of these four Rules is not disqualified but gets the maximum score for the hole where the breach happened:

- Failure to hole out under Rule 3.3c,
- Failure to correct mistake of playing from outside the teeing area in starting a hole (see Rule 6.1b(2)),
- Failure to correct mistake of playing a wrong ball (see Rule 6.3c), or
- Failure to correct mistake of playing from a wrong place when there is a serious breach (see Rule 14.7b).

If the player breaches any other Rule with a penalty of disqualification, the player is disqualified.

After applying any penalty strokes, the player’s score for a hole cannot exceed the maximum score set by the Committee.

d. Exception to Rule 11.2 in Maximum Score

Rule 11.2 does not apply in this situation:

If a player’s ball in motion needs to be holed to score one lower than the maximum score on the hole and any person deliberately deflects or stops the ball at a time when there is no reasonable chance it can be holed, there is no penalty to that person and the player gets the maximum score on the hole.

e. When Round Ends in Maximum Score

A player’s round ends when the player:

- Holes out on his or her final hole (including correction of a mistake, such as under Rule 6.1 or 14.7b), or
- Chooses not to hole out on the final hole or already will get the maximum score on the hole.
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

Club-Length

The length of the longest club of the 14 (or fewer) clubs the player has during the round (as allowed by Rule 4.1b(1)), other than a putter.

For example, if the longest club (other than a putter) a player has during a round is a 43-inch (109.22 cm) driver, a club-length is 43 inches for that player for that round.

Club-lengths are used in defining the player’s teeing area on each hole and in determining the size of the player’s relief area when taking relief under a Rule.

Relief Area

The area where a player must drop a ball when taking relief under a Rule. Each relief Rule requires the player to use a specific relief area whose size and location are based on these three factors:

- **Reference Point**: The point from which the size of relief area is measured.
- **Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point**: The relief area is either one or two club-lengths from the reference point, but with certain limits:
  - **Limits on Location of Relief Area**: The location of the relief area may be limited in one or more ways so that, for example:
    - It is only in certain defined areas of the course, such as only in the general area, or not in a bunker or a penalty area.
    - It is not nearer the hole than the reference point or must be outside a penalty area or a bunker from which relief is being taken, or
    - It is where there is no interference (as defined in the particular Rule) from the condition from which relief is being taken.

In using club-lengths to determine the size of a relief area, the player may measure directly across a ditch, hole or similar thing, and directly across or through an object (such as a tree, fence, wall, tunnel, drain or sprinkler head), but is not allowed to measure through ground that naturally slopes up and down.

See Committee Procedures, Section 21 (Committee may choose to allow or require the player to use a dropping zone as a relief area when taking certain relief).
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

14.3 Dropping Ball in Relief Area

This Rule applies whenever a player must drop a ball in taking relief under a Rule, including when the player must complete taking relief by placing a ball under Rule 14.3c(2).

If the player improves the relief area before or when dropping a ball, see Rule 8.1

a. Original Ball or Another Ball May Be Used

The player may use the original ball or another ball.

This means that the player may use any ball each time he or she drops or places a ball under this Rule.

b. Ball Must Be Dropped in Right Way

The player must drop a ball in the right way, which means all three of these things:

(1) **Player Must Drop Ball.** The ball must be dropped only by the player. Neither the player’s caddie nor anyone else may do so.

(2) **Ball Must Be Dropped Straight Down from Knee Height Without Touching Player or Equipment.** The player must let go of the ball from a location at knee height so that the ball:

- Falls straight down, without the player throwing, spinning or rolling it or using any other motion that might affect where the ball will come to rest, and
- Does not touch any part of the player’s body or equipment before it hits the ground.

“Knee height” means the height of the player’s knee when in a standing position.

(3) **Ball Must Be Dropped in Relief Area.** The ball must be dropped in the relief area. The player may stand either inside or outside the relief area when dropping the ball.

If a ball is dropped in a wrong way in breach of one or more of these three requirements:

- The player must drop a ball again in the right way, and there is no limit to the number of times the player must do so.
- A ball dropped in the wrong way does not count as one of the two drops required before a ball must be placed under Rule 14.3c(2).
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

If the player does not drop again and instead makes a stroke at the ball from where it came to rest after being dropped in a wrong way:

- If the ball was played from the relief area, the player gets one penalty stroke (but has not played from a wrong place under Rule 14.7a).
- But if the ball was played from outside the relief area, or after it was placed when required to be dropped (no matter where it was played from), the player gets the general penalty.

c. Ball Dropped in Right Way Must Come to Rest in Relief Area

This Rule applies only when a ball is dropped in the right way under Rule 14.3b.

(1) **Player Has Completed Taking Relief When Ball Dropped in Right Way Comes to Rest in Relief Area.** The ball must come to rest in the relief area.

It does not matter whether the ball, after hitting the ground, touches any person, equipment or other outside influence before coming to rest:

- If the ball comes to rest in the relief area, the player has completed taking relief and must play the ball as it lies.
- If the ball comes to rest outside the relief area, the player must use the procedures in Rule 14.3c(2).

In either case, there is no penalty to any player if a ball dropped in the right way accidentally hits any person, equipment or other outside influence before coming to rest.

Exception – When Ball Dropped in Right Way is Deliberately Deflected or Stopped by Any Person: For what to do when the dropped ball is deliberately deflected or stopped by any person before it comes to rest, see Rule 14.3d.

(2) **What to Do if Ball Dropped in Right Way Comes to Rest Outside Relief Area.** If the ball comes to rest outside the relief area, the player must drop a ball in the right way a second time.

If that ball also comes to rest outside the relief area, the player must then complete taking relief by placing a ball using the procedures for replacing a ball in Rules 14.2b(2) and 14.2e:

- The player must place a ball on the spot where the ball dropped the second time first touched the ground.
- If the placed ball does not stay at rest on that spot, the player must place a ball on that spot a second time.
- If the ball placed a second time also does not stay on that spot, the player must place a ball on the nearest spot where the ball will stay at rest, subject to the limits in Rule 14.2e.
d. What to Do if Ball Dropped in Right Way is Deliberately Deflected or Stopped by Person

For purposes of this Rule, a dropped ball is “deliberately deflected or stopped” when:

- A person deliberately touches the ball in motion after it hits the ground, or
- The ball in motion hits any equipment or other object or any person (such as the player’s caddie) that a player deliberately positioned or left in a particular location so that the equipment, object or person might deflect or stop the ball in motion.

When a ball dropped in the right way is deliberately deflected or stopped by any person (whether in the relief area or outside the relief area) before it comes to rest:

- The player must drop a ball again, using the procedures in Rule 14.3b (which means that the ball that was deliberately deflected or stopped does not count as one of the two drops required before a ball must be placed under Rule 14.3c(2)).
- If the ball was deliberately deflected or stopped by any player or his or her caddie, that player gets the general penalty.

Exception – When There Is No Reasonable Chance Ball Will Come to Rest in Relief Area: If a ball dropped in the right way is deliberately deflected or stopped (whether in the relief area or outside the relief area) when there is no reasonable chance it will come to rest in the relief area:

- There is no penalty to any player, and
- The dropped ball is treated as having come to rest outside the relief area and counts as one of the two drops required before a ball must be placed under Rule 14.3c(2).

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place or Playing Ball that was Placed Instead of Dropped in Breach of Rule 14.3: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.

If multiple Rule breaches result from a single act or related acts, see Rule 1.3c(4).

See Rule 22.2 (in Foursomes, either partner may act for the side and action by the partner is treated as action of the player); 23.5 (in Four-Ball, either partner may act for the side and action by the partner concerning the player’s ball or equipment is treated as action of the player).
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

A-3 Out of Bounds When Public Road Runs Through Course

**Purpose.** When a public road runs through a course, it is usually defined as out of bounds. This can make it possible for a ball played from one side of the road to come to rest in bounds on the other side of the road, even though that ball would be out of bounds if it came to rest on the road itself.

If the Committee believes that it is unfair or dangerous to treat those situations differently, it may adopt a Local Rule stating that a ball played from one side of the road that comes to rest on the other side of that road is out of bounds.

If a road crosses a particular hole where the players have to play from one side to the other in the normal course of play, the Committee should specify that this Local Rule does not apply to that road in the play of that hole.

Model Local Rule A-3

“A ball coming to rest on or beyond the road [identify the road or the holes where it comes into play] is out of bounds, even if it comes to rest on another part of the course that is in bounds for other holes.”

16.3 Embedded Ball

**a. When Relief Is Allowed**

(1) **Ball Must Be Embedded in General Area.** Relief is allowed under Rule 16.3b only when a player’s ball is embedded in the general area.

- There is no relief under this Rule if the ball is embedded anywhere except in the general area.
- **But** if the ball is embedded on the putting green, the player may mark the spot of the ball and lift and clean the ball, repair the damage caused by the ball’s impact, and replace the ball on its original spot (see Rule 13.1c(2)).

**Exceptions – When Relief Not Allowed for Ball Embedded in General Area:** Relief under Rule 16.3b is not allowed:
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

- When the ball is *embedded* in sand in a part of the *general area* that is not cut to fairway height or less, or
- When interference by anything other than the ball being *embedded* makes the *stroke* clearly unreasonable (for example, when a player is unable to make a *stroke* because of where the ball lies in a bush).

(2) **Determining Whether Ball Is Embedded.** A player’s ball is *embedded* only if:

- It is in its own pitch-mark made as a result of the player’s previous *stroke*, and
- Part of the ball is below the level of the ground.

If the player cannot tell for sure whether the ball is in its own pitch-mark or a pitch-mark made by another ball, the player may treat the ball as *embedded* if it is reasonable to conclude from the available information that the ball is in its own pitch-mark.

A ball is not *embedded* if it is below the level of the ground as a result of anything other than the player’s previous *stroke*, such as when:

- The ball is pushed into the ground by someone stepping on it,
- The ball is driven straight into the ground without becoming airborne, or
- The ball was *dropped* in taking relief under a Rule.

### b. Relief for Embedded Ball

When a player’s ball is *embedded* in the *general area* and relief is allowed under Rule 16.3a, 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 spot right behind where the ball is *embedded*.
- **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*, and
    - Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point.

**See Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule F-2** (the *Committee* may adopt a Local Rule allowing relief only for a ball *embedded* in an area cut to fairway height or less).

**Penalty for Playing a Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule 16.3:** General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

16.4 Lifting Ball to See If It Lies in Condition Where Relief Allowed

If a player reasonably believes that his or her ball lies in a condition where free relief is allowed under Rule 15.2, 16.1 or 16.3, but cannot decide that without lifting the ball:

- The player may lift the ball to see if relief is allowed, but:
  - The spot of the ball must first be marked, and the lifted ball must not be cleaned (except on the putting green) (see Rule 14.1).

If the player lifts the ball without having this reasonable belief (except on the putting green where the player may lift under Rule 13.1b), he or she gets one penalty stroke.

If relief is allowed and the player takes relief, there is no penalty even if the player did not mark the spot of the ball before lifting it or cleaned the lifted ball.

If relief is not allowed, or if the player chooses not to take relief that is allowed:

- The player gets one penalty stroke if he or she did not mark the spot of the ball before lifting it or cleaned the lifted ball when not allowed, and
- The ball must be replaced on its original spot (see Rule 14.2).

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule 16.4: General Penalty Under Rule 6.3b or 14.7a.

If multiple Rule breaches result from a single act or related acts, see Rule 1.3c(4).

E-11 Ball Deflected by Power Line

**Purpose.** If a permanent overhead power line may interfere with the reasonable play of a hole, a Committee can require that if a ball hits the power line (and towers, support wires or poles supporting the power line), the stroke does not count and the player must play the stroke again. This Local Rule should not generally be used for power lines that do not interfere with play of a hole or are out of bounds.

A Local Rule that gives a player the option to replay the stroke for a ball that hits a power line should not be implemented.

Model Local Rule E-11
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

“If it is known or virtually certain that a player’s ball hit a power line [or tower or a wire or pole supporting a power line] during the play of [specify hole number], 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)

F-7 Relief from Seams of Cut Turf

**Purpose.** A portion of the course that has been repaired with cut turf is often marked as ground under repair until it is stable enough for play.

But when the area of turf itself no longer needs to be marked as ground under repair, the Committee may still choose to allow relief when:

- A ball lies in one of the cut turf seams (also known as sod seams).
- A seam interferes with the player’s area of intended swing.

When such seams only interfere with the player’s stance, there is no need to allow relief.

Model Local Rule F-7

“If a player’s ball lies in or touches a seam of cut turf or a seam interferes with the player’s area of intended swing:

(a) **Ball in General Area.** The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b.

(b) **Ball on Putting Green.** The player may take relief under Rule 16.1d.

**But** interference does not exist if the seam only interferes with the player’s stance.

All seams within the area of cut turf are treated as the same seam in taking relief. This means that if a player has interference from any seam after dropping the ball, the player must proceed as required under Rule 14.3c(2) even when the ball is still within one club-length of the reference point.

**Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule:** General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

G-6 Prohibiting Use of Motorized Transportation
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

**Purpose.** A Committee can choose to prohibit players from using any type of motorized transportation such as a golf cart during a round. This is appropriate when the Committee views walking as an integral part of playing in the competition or when it believes that the use of motorized transportation would be unsafe or might damage the course.

In adopting this Local Rule, the Committee can allow motorized transportation in limited ways, such as to take players from one hole to another when those holes are far apart or allowing members of the Committee to give a player a ride when he or she will play, or has played, again under penalty of stroke and distance.

If a player accepts a ride without the permission of the Committee, the Committee can waive the penalty if it would have authorized the player to ride in that situation had the request been made. For example, if a player who had lost a ball and needed to return to the teeing area accepted a ride from a volunteer when there was no Committee member available, the Committee could waive the penalty if members of the Committee would have given the player the ride if asked.

But, when motorized transportation is not allowed by Local Rule, it is a principle of the Local Rule that players should walk the entire course, so authorization should not be given if a player has been given a ride forwards when he or she has not already walked that distance. For example, if a player stops to buy a refreshment after playing his or her tee shot, and then accepts a ride forward to his or her ball from a volunteer, the penalty under the Local Rule should not be waived.

Model Local Rule G-6

“During a round, a player or caddie must not ride on any form of motorized transportation except as authorized or later approved by the Committee.

[A player who will play, or has played, under penalty of stroke and distance is always authorised to ride on motorized transportation.]

[Players and caddies may ride on the shuttle between holes [identify hole] and [identify hole].]

**Penalty for Breach of Local Rule:** The player gets the general penalty for each hole during which there is a breach of this Local Rule. If the breach occurs between the play of two holes, it applies to the next hole.”

**G-8 Prohibiting or Restricting Use of Audio and Video Devices**

**Purpose.** Rule 4.3a(4) permits a player to use equipment to listen to audio or watch video of matters unrelated to the competition being played. But the Committee can adopt a Local Rule prohibiting the use of audio and video devices altogether during a round.
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

Model Local Rule G-8

“Rule 4.3a(4) is modified in this way: During a round, a player must not listen to or watch content of any nature on a personal audio or video device.

**Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – see Rule 4.3.**”

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**H-1 Use of Caddie Prohibited or Required; Caddie Restrictions**

**Purpose.** A Committee can choose to modify Rule 10.3 to

- Prohibit the use of caddies,
- Require players to use a caddie, or
- Limit a player’s choice of caddie (such as not allowing a caddie to be a professional, a parent or relative, another player in the competition, etc.).

Model Local Rule H-1.1

If caddies are prohibited:

“Rule 10.3a is modified in this way: A player must not have a caddie during the round.

**Penalty for Breach of Local Rule:**

- The player gets the general penalty for each hole during which he or she is helped by a caddie.

  If the breach happens or continues between two holes, the player gets the general penalty for the next hole.”

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**H-2 Appointment of Advice Giver in Team Competitions**
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

**Purpose.** Under Rule 24.4a, in a team competition the Committee can allow each team to name one or two people who may give advice to team members while they are playing on the course:

- Any “advice giver” must be identified to the Committee before giving advice.
- The Committee can limit the types of advice that this person may give (such as not allowing the advice giver to point out the line of play when a ball lies on the putting green).
- The Committee can prohibit an advice giver from walking on certain parts of the course (such as putting greens).
- It is not normal for a Committee to allow two advice givers per team, unless the nature of the competition warrants it, for example in a competition where no caddies are permitted or there is a large number of players on each team.
- The Committee should determine the appropriate penalty for a violation by an advice giver. This may be a penalty to a specific player who was assisted in a prohibited manner or an overall penalty for the team, for example the addition of two strokes to the team’s score in a stroke-play event.

Model Local Rule H-2

“If each team may name [one/two] advice giver[s] whom players on the team may ask for advice and receive advice from during the round. The team must identify each advice giver to the Committee before any player on the team begins his or her round. [The team may change its advice giver during the round, but must tell the Committee when it is doing so.] [The advice giver must not point out a line of play or walk on the putting green when the ball of a team player lies on the putting green.]”

**I-1 Practising Before Rounds**

**Purpose.** Rule 5.2 covers practising on the course before or between rounds during a competition:

- **Match Play (Rule 5.2a).** Players in a match may practise on the course before or between rounds, as they usually will have an equal chance to do so because they play at the same time.
- **Stroke Play (Rule 5.2b).** Players must not practise on the course before a round on the day of a competition, as they may not have an equal chance to do so because they usually play in different groups at different times. But they are allowed to practise on a day of the competition after their competition play for the day is complete.

There are many different considerations about whether to allow practice on the course, such as fairness to the players, possible interference with set-up of the course and maintenance activities,
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

the amount of time before or between rounds, or when players are encouraged to play on the course outside the competition.

For these or other reasons, a Committee can choose to adopt a Local Rule that modifies these default provisions by either allowing or prohibiting such practice entirely or by limiting when, where or how such practice may take place.

Model Local Rule I-1.1

“Rule 5.2a is modified in this way:

A player must not practise on the competition course before or between rounds.

[Or, if players are allowed to practise in limited ways: Describe those limits and when, where and how a player may practise on the course.]

Penalty for Breach of this Local Rule:

- **Penalty for first breach**: General Penalty (applied to the player’s first hole).
- **Penalty for second breach**: Disqualification.”

[Or, if players are prohibited from practising on the course both before and between rounds: “A player must not practise on the competition course before or between rounds.”]

### 24.4 Advice Allowed in Team Competition

#### a. Person Allowed to Give Advice to Team (Advice Giver)

The Committee may adopt a Local Rule allowing each team to name one person (an “advice giver”) who may give advice and other help as allowed in Rule 10.2b(2) to players on the team during a round and who may be asked for advice by players on the team:

- The advice giver may be the team captain, a team coach or other person (including a team member playing in the competition).
- The advice giver must be identified to the Committee before giving advice.
- The Committee may allow a team’s advice giver to change during a round or during the competition.

See Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule H-2 (the Committee may adopt a Local Rule allowing each team to name two advice givers).
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

b. Restriction on Advice Giver While Playing

If a team’s advice giver is a player on the team, he or she is not allowed to act in that role while playing a round in the competition.

While playing a round, the advice giver is treated like any other playing team member for purposes of the restrictions on advice in Rule 10.2a.

c. No Advice between Team Members Other Than Partners

Except when playing together as partners on a side:

- A player must not ask for advice from or give advice to a member of his or her team playing on the course.
- This applies whether the team member is playing in the same group as the player or in another group on the course.

See Committee Procedures, Section 8; Model Local Rule H-5 (in a stroke play team competition where a player’s score for the round counts only as part of the team’s score, the Committee may adopt a Local Rule allowing team members playing in the same group to give each other advice even if they are not partners).

Penalty for Breach of Rule 24.4: General Penalty.

E-5 Alternative to Stroke and Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds

Purpose. When a provisional ball has not been played, significant issues with pace of play can result for a player needing to take stroke-and-distance relief for a ball that is out of bounds or cannot be found. The purpose of this Local Rule is to allow a Committee to provide an extra relief option that allows a player to play on without returning to the location of the previous stroke.

The Local Rule is appropriate for general play where golfers are playing casual rounds or playing their own competitions. The Local Rule is not appropriate for competitions limited to highly skilled players (that is, professional competitions and elite amateur competitions). For guidance on when and how this Local Rule may be used in order for scores to be submitted for handicapping purposes, consult the rules or recommendations contained within the Handicap System operating in the local jurisdiction.

Where a Committee has introduced such a Local Rule for general play, and removes it for competitions, it should ensure that all players are aware of this before play begins.

A Committee may introduce such a Local Rule for all play on the course or only for one or two specific holes where it may be especially useful (for example, where players are unable to see the landing area and therefore may not know whether or not to play a provisional ball).
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

This option allows the player to drop in a large area between the point where the ball is estimated to have come to rest or gone out of bounds and the edge of the fairway of the hole being played that is not nearer the hole.

The player gets two penalty strokes when using this relief option. This means that the relief is comparable to what could have been achieved if the player had taken stroke-and-distance relief.

This Local Rule cannot be used for an unplayable ball, or for a ball that is known or virtually certain to be in a penalty area.

If a provisional ball is played and neither the original ball nor the provisional ball can be found, then the Local Rule may be applied for the provisional ball that cannot be found.
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

**MLR E-5 Diagram 1: Ball Not Found**

When a player’s ball has not been found, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Points</th>
<th>Size of Relief Area</th>
<th>Limits on Relief Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Ball Reference Point:</strong>&lt;br&gt;The point where the original ball is estimated to have come to rest on the course (point A)</td>
<td>Anywhere between:&lt;br&gt;• A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line), and&lt;br&gt;• A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)</td>
<td>The relief area:&lt;br&gt;• Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and&lt;br&gt;• Must be in the general area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Fairway Reference Point:</strong>&lt;br&gt;The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Player Notes:**
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

**MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 2: BALL OUT OF BOUNDS**

- **A** Ball reference point
- **B** Fairway reference point
- Relief area

When a player’s ball is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Point</th>
<th>Size of Relief Area</th>
<th>Limits on Relief Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have last crossed the edge of the course boundary to go out of bounds (point A)</td>
<td>Anywhere between: - A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line but still on the course), and - A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)</td>
<td>The relief area: - Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and - Must be in the general area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Player Notes:**
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

**MLR E-5 Diagram 3: Ball Not Found or Out of Bounds Close to Green**

- **A** Ball reference point
- **B** Fairway reference point
- Relief area

When a player’s ball has not been found or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Points</th>
<th>Size of Relief Area</th>
<th>Limits on Relief Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have come to rest on the course or last crossed the edge of the course boundary to go out of bounds (point A) | Anywhere between:
- A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line), and
- A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line) | The relief area:
- Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and
- Must be in the general area |
| B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point | |

**Player Notes:**
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.

**Model Local Rule E-5**
“When a player’s ball has not been found or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may proceed as follows rather than proceeding under stroke and distance.

For two penalty strokes, the player may take relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in this relief area (see Rule 14.3):

**Two Estimated Reference Points:**

a. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have:
   - Come to rest on the course, or
   - Last crossed the edge of the course boundary to go out of bounds.

b. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point.

For purposes of this Local Rule, “fairway” means any area of grass in the general area that is cut to fairway height or less.

If a ball is estimated to be lost on the course or last crossed the edge of the course boundary short of the fairway, the fairway reference point may be a grass path or a teeing ground for the hole being played cut to fairway height or less.

**Size of Relief Area Based on Reference Points:** Anywhere between:

- A line from the hole through the ball reference point (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line), and
- A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line).

**Limits on Location of Relief Area:**

- Must be in the general area, and
- Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point.

Once the player puts a ball in play under this Local Rule:

- The original ball that was lost or out of bounds is no longer in play and must not be played.
- This is true even if the ball is found on the course before the end of the three-minute search time (see Rule 6.3b).

**But** the player may not use this option to take relief for the original ball when:
The following are excerpts from the Rules of Golf that explain in further detail some major changes as well as the specific Conditions and Local Rules. For further information, please refer to the 2019 Rules of Golf on the USGA website (www.USGA.org)

- That ball is known or virtually certain to have come to rest in a penalty area, or
- The player has played another ball provisionally under penalty of stroke and distance (see Rule 18.3).

A player may use this option to take relief for a provisional ball that has not been found or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds.

**Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule:** General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”