

2020 Notable Rules

Below is a summary of the notable rules that the Hilldale Men's Club will be following for the 2020 season. For more extensive descriptions of each rule change, the USGA.org website has a page dedicated to the major rule changes <http://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules-hub/rules-modernization/major-changes/major-changes.html>

HILLDALE MEN'S CLUB WILL NOT IMPLEMENT A LOCAL RULE ALTERNATIVE TO STROKE AND DISTANCE PENALTY INCURRED FOR "OUT OF BOUNDS" OR LOST BALL DURING LEAGUE PLAY. A ball found to be out of bounds or lost must be replayed from the spot of the previous shot with a one stroke penalty.

HILLDALE MEN'S CLUB WILL PLAY LIFT, CLEAN, AND PLACE ANYTIME COURSE MANAGEMENT HAS CONFINED US TO "CART PATH ONLY"

HOLE #16 – THE LATERAL HAZARD TO THE RIGHT AS YOU TEE OFF, PREVIOUSLY LABELED AS A RESTRICTED AREA, CAN NOW BE PLAYED FROM IF THE GOLFER SO CHOOSES

The re-spotting of a ball at rest has become more lenient and forgiving to the player. Any time a ball at rest is moved accidentally by the player or outside forces, the ball is to be placed at its original location or as near to the original location as possible (including on, under, or against any attached natural or man-made objects which the ball had been at rest under or against). This rule applies throughout the entire course.

There is no longer a penalty incurred for accidentally deflecting a ball in motion. This rule eliminates the penalty should the player "double hit" a shot with their club, their person, or any other equipment provided that the equipment was not intentionally positioned to act as a backstop.

When dropping a ball / taking relief...

- When measuring the relief area in which the ball must be dropped, the longest club in the player's bag (excluding the putter) must be used to define the relief area.
- The ball must be let go from knee height.
- The ball must be dropped within and come to rest within the relief area, one or two club lengths and no nearer to the hole. The previous iteration of the rule stated that the ball only need be dropped in the relief area and come to rest within two club lengths of where it hit the ground, meaning that the ball was allowed to come to rest within three club lengths when taking relief from a cart path or ground under repair or up to four club lengths when dropping from a lateral hazard or an unplayable lie.
- The player has the option to substitute a ball or play the original in all instances where relief is being taken.

Time to search for a lost ball has been cut down to three minutes.

The default position of a ball embedded in the "general area" has been reversed such that a ball embedded anywhere on the course (except when in the sand) shall be able to take relief within one club length no nearer to the hole. The previous iteration required a local rule be adopted to allow relief from a ball "through the green"; whereas the new rule would require a local rule be adopted if the club wanted to restrict relief to any area cut to fairway height or less. There is no free relief granted to a ball embedded within a hazard area.

Spike marks, and in general, any damage to the green can be repaired (exception is aeration holes or natural wear of the putting surface). It is no longer a penalty for merely touching the line of play (line of the putt)

The flagstick can be left in the hole when putting. If the flagstick is leaning, it may be straightened prior to a player's stroke, but if the flagstick is being tended during a player's putt it must be removed (i.e. the flagstick cannot be held in the hole)

A player is allowed to ground their club or remove loose impediments in a penalty area so long as those actions do not "improve the conditions affecting the stroke"

- See rule 8.1a for detailed examples
- Pressing the club forcibly into the ground (opposed to lightly grounding club) is still prohibited

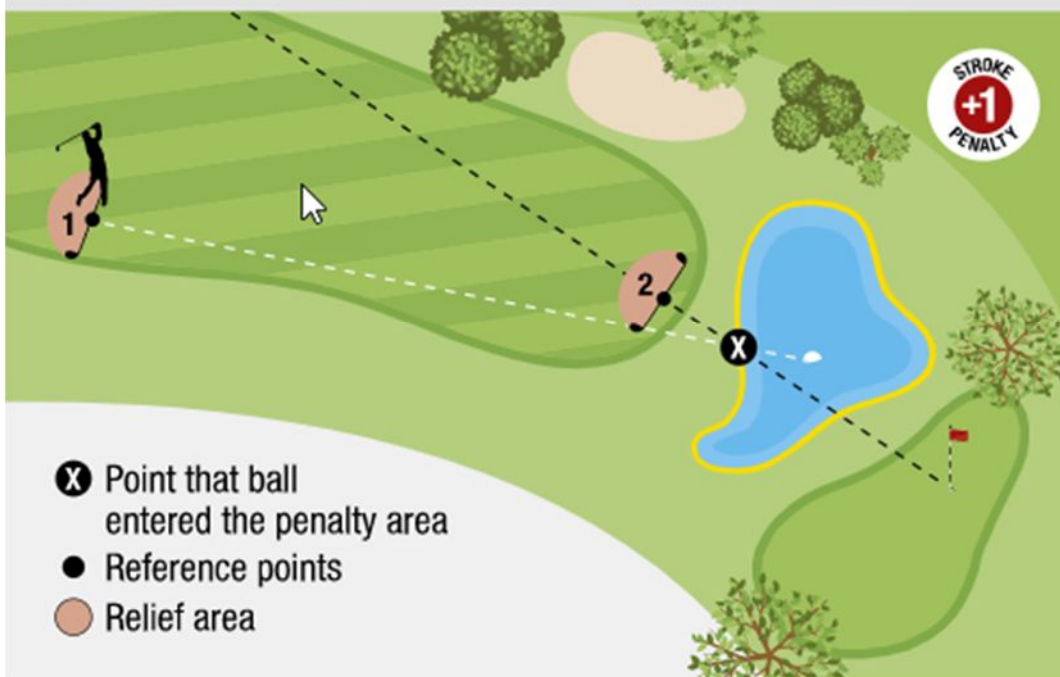
Loose impediments can be removed from a bunker, but the player still cannot intentionally ground their club, or deliberately touch the sand in a bunker in an effort to test the condition of the sand, nor bring the club into contact with the sand during a practice swing or in making the backswing of the stroke.

Players have an extra option of declaring an unplayable ball and taking relief from outside a bunker under penalty of two strokes.

A player is allowed to continue to play with a damaged club or to repair any club damaged during the round. A player is not allowed to replace a damaged club unless the damage came from an outside influence or natural forces.

Diagrams below are from the USGA website

DIAGRAM #1 17.1d: RELIEF FOR BALL IN YELLOW PENALTY AREA



When it is known or virtually certain that a ball is in a yellow penalty area and the player wishes to take relief, the player has **two options**, each for one penalty stroke:

- (1) The player may take stroke-and-distance relief by playing the original ball or another ball from a relief area based on where the previous stroke was made (see Rule 14.6 and Diagram 14.6).

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The spot where the player's previous stroke was made (which if not known must be estimated)	One club-length from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • Must be in the same area of the course as the reference point

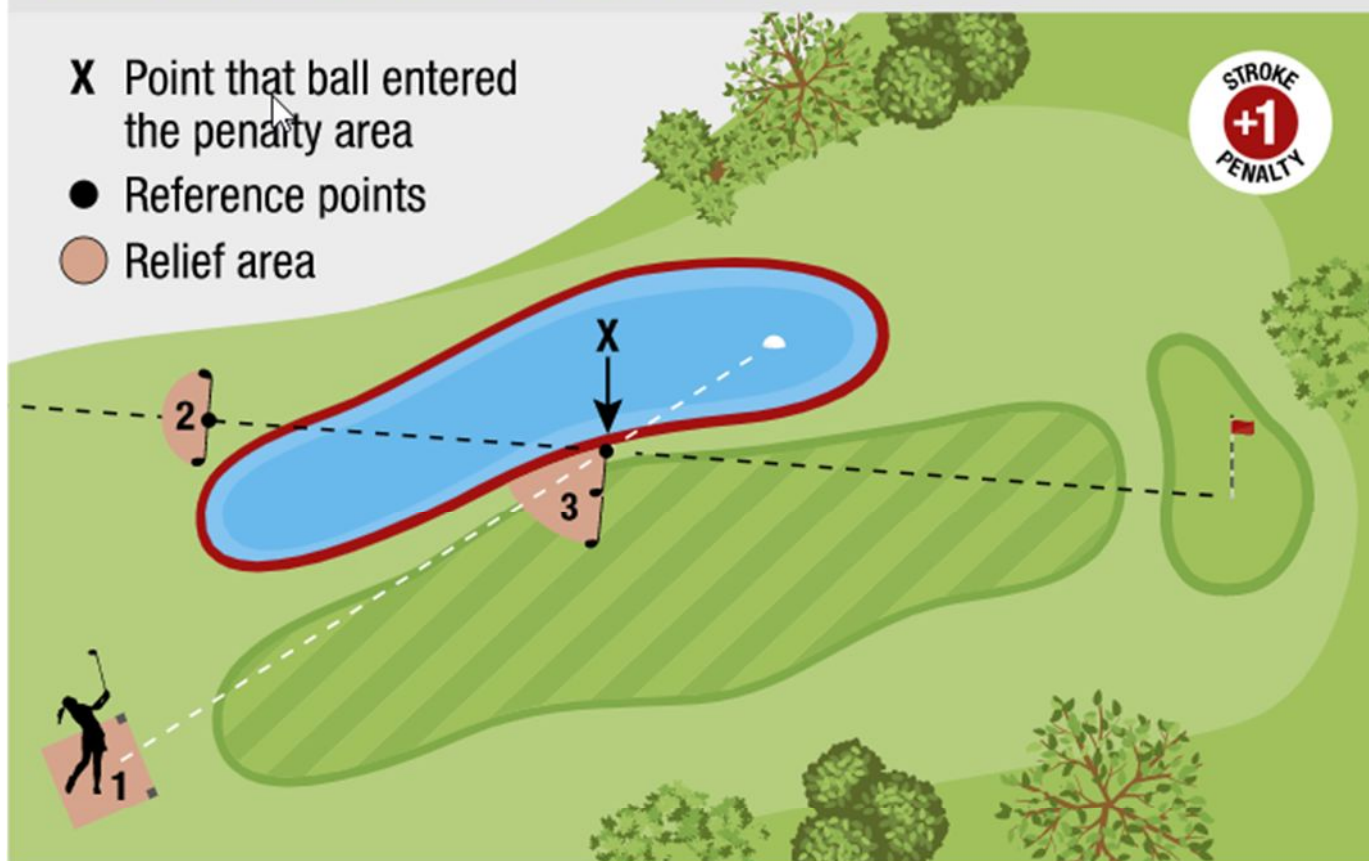
- (2) The player may take back-on-the-line relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in a relief area based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through point X.

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A point on the course chosen by the player that is on the reference line through point X (the point where the ball last crossed the edge of the yellow penalty area). There is no limit on how far back on the line the reference point may be	One club-length from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • May be in any area of the course except the same penalty area

Player Notes:

In choosing this reference point, you should indicate the point by using an object (such as a tee).

DIAGRAM #2 17.1d: RELIEF FOR BALL IN RED PENALTY AREA



When it is known or virtually certain that a ball is in a red penalty area and the player wishes to take relief, the player has **three options**, each for one penalty stroke:

- (1) The player may take stroke-and-distance relief (see point (1) in Diagram #1 17.1d).
- (2) The player may take back-on-the-line relief (see point (2) in Diagram #1 17.1d).
- (3) The player may take lateral relief (red penalty area only). The reference point for taking lateral relief is point X.


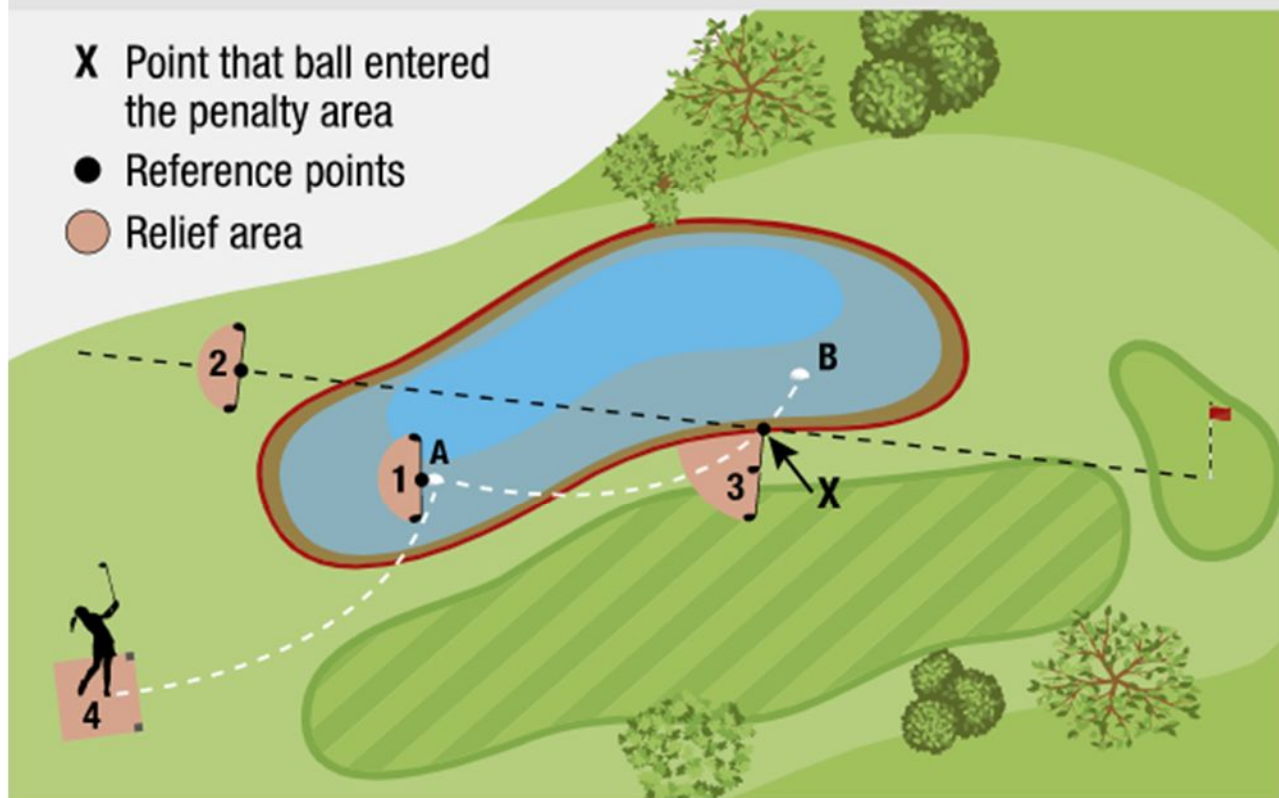
Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the red penalty area (point X)	Two club-lengths from the reference point 	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • May be in any area of the course except the same penalty area

DIAGRAM #2 17.2a: BALL PLAYED FROM PENALTY AREA COMES TO REST IN SAME PENALTY AREA HAVING EXITED AND RE-ENTERED



A player plays from the teeing area to point A in the penalty area. The player plays the ball from point A to point B, with the ball exiting the penalty area but crossing back into the penalty area at point X. If the player chooses to take relief, for one penalty stroke there are **four options**. The player may:

- (1) Take stroke-and-distance relief by playing the original ball or another ball from a relief area based on where the previous stroke was made at point A (see Rule 14.6 and Diagram 14.6) and is playing his or her 4th shot.
- (2) Take back-on-the-line relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in a relief area based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through point X, and is playing his or her 4th shot.
- (3) Take lateral relief (red penalty area only). The reference point for taking relief is point X, and the original ball or another ball must be dropped in and played from the two club-length relief area, and the player is playing his or her 4th shot.
- (4) Play the original ball or another ball from the teeing area as that was where he or she made the last stroke from outside the penalty area, and is playing his or her 4th shot.

If the player selected option (1) and then decided not to play the dropped ball, the player may take back-on-the-line relief or lateral relief in relation to point X, or play again from the teeing area, adding an additional penalty stroke for a total of two penalty strokes, and would be playing his or her 5th shot.