

# Rule Tin of the Young! While We're Young!

The USGA has launched a public education campaign and research effort to address pace of play issues that are adversely impacting the enjoyment of the game. The name of this campaign, “*While We’re Young*,” comes from one of Rodney Dangerfield’s famous lines in “*Caddyshack*”, the classic golf movie of 1980. PGA professionals who have suggestions or proven methods for improving pace of play are encouraged to submit their ideas to the USGA.



The purpose of this article is to focus on how the Rules of Golf can be utilized to improve one's pace of play. Three Rules have been enacted with the direct intention of improving pace of play:

- Rule 3-3 [Doubt as to Procedure] enables you to play a second ball in stroke play when you are not sure how to proceed.
- Rule 27-1c [Ball Not Found within Five Minutes] limits the amount of time spent searching for a ball to only five minutes after the player's side or his or their caddies have begun to search for it.
- Rule 27-2 [Provisional Ball] allows a player to play another ball provisionally if his ball may be lost outside a water hazard or may be out of bounds.

Obviously, if you have a good working knowledge of the Rules, you will be able to avoid any lengthy deliberations on how to proceed when taking relief. For example, you will know that anytime you are taking relief from an immovable obstruction (Rule 24) or an abnormal ground condition (Rule 25), you will be dropping your ball within one club-length, not two club-lengths, of the nearest point of relief. Likewise, you will realize that you may not deem your ball unplayable in a water hazard. Instead, you must proceed under Rule 26 [Water Hazards].

If you know the Rules, you will realize the importance of placing an identifying mark or two on your golf ball so that you can avoid playing a wrong ball. Per Rule 15-3b [Wrong Ball], if you play a wrong ball in stroke play, you must correct your mistake. Correcting your mistake often involves a lengthy walk or ride back the area from which you played the wrong ball to re-commence the search for your original ball.

If you know the Rules, you will understand that there is no penalty for playing out of turn in stroke play per Rule 10-2 [Order of Play – Stroke Play]. This will allow your group to play faster because there will be occasions when you can play “ready golf.” Similarly, you may find it expedient to putt out, rather than mark your ball, when you are relatively close to the hole.

If you know the Rules, you will be aware of all of your relief options in times of trouble. This enables you to quickly determine the best way for you to proceed. Here are some examples:

- If your ball enters a water hazard, you will be aware that you do not have to return to the spot from which you last played. Rule 26-1b [Relief for Ball in Water Hazard] allows you to 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.
- If you deem your ball unplayable, you will know that you do not have to return to the spot from which you last played. Rule 28 [Ball Unplayable] offers you two additional options. The first of these allows you to 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. The second allows you to drop a ball within two club-lengths of the spot where the ball lay, but not nearer the hole.
- If your ball enters a lateral water hazard, you will know that Rule 26-1c allows you to drop a ball within two club-lengths and not nearer the hole than the point where the original ball last crossed the margin of the lateral water hazard.