
From the USGA Website, January 21 2011

(Of course, please refer to their Website for all Rule Interpretations or for other related info)

6. Dropping Zones

Establishing special areas on which balls may or must be dropped when it is not feasible or practicable to proceed exactly in conformity with Rule 24-2b (Immovable Obstruction), Rule 24-3 (Ball in Obstruction Not Found), Rule 25-1b or 25-1c (Abnormal Ground Conditions), Rule 25-3 (Wrong Putting Green), Rule 26-1 (Water Hazards and Lateral Water Hazards) or Rule 28 (Ball Unplayable).

Note 3: A *Committee* may make a Local Rule (a) permitting or requiring a player to use a Dropping Zone when taking relief from a TIO or (b) permitting a player, as an additional relief option, to drop the ball on the opposite side of the TIO from the point established under Clause III, but otherwise in accordance with Clause III.

V. Dropping Zones

If the player has interference from a TIO, the *Committee* may permit or require the use of a Dropping Zone. If the player uses a Dropping Zone in taking relief, he must drop the ball in the Dropping Zone nearest to where his ball originally lay or is deemed to lie under Clause IV (even though the nearest Dropping Zone may be nearer the *hole*).

Note 1: A *Committee* may make a Local Rule prohibiting the use of a Dropping Zone that is nearer the *hole*.

8. Dropping Zones

If the *Committee* considers that it is not feasible or practicable to proceed in accordance with a Rule providing relief, it may establish Dropping Zones in which balls may or must be dropped when taking relief. Generally, such Dropping Zones should be provided as an additional relief option to those available under the Rule itself, rather than being mandatory.

Using the example of a Dropping Zone for a *water hazard*, when such a Dropping Zone is established, the following Local Rule is recommended:

"If a ball is in or it is known or virtually certain that a ball that has not been found is in the *water hazard* (specify location), the player may:

- (i) proceed under Rule 26; or
- (ii) as an additional option, drop a ball, under penalty of one stroke, in the Dropping Zone.

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF LOCAL RULE:

Match play - Loss of hole; Stroke play - Two strokes."

Note: When using a Dropping Zone the following provisions apply regarding the dropping and re-dropping of the ball:

- (a) The player does not have to stand within the Dropping Zone when dropping the ball.
- (b) The dropped ball must first strike a part of the *course* within the Dropping Zone.
- (c) If the Dropping Zone is defined by a line, the line is within the Dropping Zone.
- (d) The dropped ball does not have to come to rest within the Dropping Zone.
- (e) The dropped ball must be re-dropped if it rolls and comes to rest in a position covered by Rule 20-2c(i-vi).
- (f) The dropped ball may roll nearer the hole than the spot where it first struck a part of the *course*, provided it comes to rest within two club-lengths of that spot and not into any of the positions covered by (e).
- (g) Subject to the provisions of (e) and (f), the dropped ball may roll and come to rest nearer the hole than:
 - its original position or estimated position (see Rule 20-2b);
 - the *nearest point of relief* or maximum available relief (Rule 24-2, 24-3, 25-1 or 25-3); or
 - the point where the original ball last crossed the margin of the *water hazard* or *lateral water hazard* (Rule 26-1).