



2026 LOCAL RULES and TERMS OF COMPETITION HARD CARD

January 2026

The following Local Rules and Terms of Competition have been formulated after consultation with the Rules of Golf Committee of R&A Rules Limited, the DP World Tour & HotelPlanner Tour and apply on all French Tour events.

Play is governed by the Rules of Golf effective January 2023. See the Official Guide to the Rules of Golf for Model Local Rule references.

Unless otherwise noted, the penalty for breach of a Local Rule is the General Penalty: Match Play – Loss of Hole; Stroke Play – Two strokes.

LOCAL RULES

1. **Out of Bounds. Rule 18.2.**

- A ball is out of bounds when it is beyond any wall defining a boundary.
- A ball that comes to rest beyond any road defining out of bounds, is out of bounds, even though it may come to rest on another part of the course. Model Local Rule A-5.
- Gates in Boundary Fences and Walls Model Local Rule F-26.

2. **Penalty Areas. Rule 17.**

- Relief on Opposite Side of Red Penalty Area.**
Opposite side relief is available only to the red penalty areas that are listed on the Additional Local Rules under Model Local Rule B-2.1.
- Opposite side relief is available when a ball last crossed an edge of a red penalty area that coincides with a boundary under Model Local Rule B-2.2.
- Dropping zones, labelled DZ and listed on the Additional Local Rules, are an additional option under Model Local Rule E-1.1. The dropping zone is a relief area under Rule 14.3.

3. **Abnormal Course Conditions, Embedded Ball. Rule 16**

A. **Ground Under Repair**

- All areas bounded by white lines including spectator crossing points where marked, or as otherwise specified.
- French drains (stone-filled drainage ditches).
- Seams of cut turf under Model Local Rule F-7.
- Grass covered cable trenches under Model Local Rule F-22.
- A hole made by movable obstructions (such as microphones, stakes, signs, tripods, tables, chairs, etc) in the general area may be treated as ground under repair by the Committee but with no relief for stance under Model Local Rule F-6.
- Painted lines or dots in a part of general area cut to fairway height or less with no relief for stance under Model Local Rule F-6.
- Animal Holes but with no relief for stance under Model Local Rule F-6.

B. **Immovable Obstructions**

- White lined areas tying into an obstruction, and the obstruction itself, are treated as a single obstruction.
- Landscaped or garden areas that are surrounded by an immovable obstruction are treated as a single obstruction.
- Mats that are secured and all ramps covering cables (anything which is secured or fastened is not considered “readily movable” if it must be unfastened to be moved).

- Roads and paths surfaced with woodchip or mulch. Individual pieces of woodchip are loose impediments.
- Non-permanent bridges unless otherwise defined on the Additional Local Rules.
- Irrigation pipes (when not movable) but with no relief for stance under Model Local Rule F-6.

C. **Embedded Ball**

Rule 16.3 is modified in this way:

- Model Local Rule F-2.2. is in effect. Free relief is not allowed when a ball is embedded in a stacked turf face above bunkers (including for vertical seams in a stacked turf surface). Furthermore, Model Local Rule F-7 is not applicable, including for vertical seams in a stacked turf face.
- Model Local Rule F-2.3. is in effect. Free relief is available if the Committee determines it is known or virtually certain that part of a player’s ball is below the level of the ground in any player’s pitch-mark that has not been repaired in some way in part of the general area that is cut to fairway height or less.

D. **Removal of Temporary Water**

Model Local Rule J-2 is in effect and is modified in this way: If a player’s ball lies on the putting green and there is interference by temporary water on the putting green, the player may:

- Take free relief under Rule 16.1d, or
- Have their line of play squeegeed
- Have the putting green squeegeed when a ball lies adjacent to the putting green in any part of the course, but only when authorised by the Committee.

Such squeegeeing should be done across the line of play and extend a reasonable distance beyond the hole (that is, at least one roller length) and only be carried out by the Committee or someone authorised by the Committee. The Committee may squeegee the putting green between groups.

4. **Animal Not Defined as Loose Impediment Near Ball.**

Model Local Rule E-13 is in effect. An animal not defined as a loose impediment may be removed. If the ball moves there is no penalty, and the ball must be replaced.

5. **Immovable Obstructions Close to Putting Greens.**

Model Local Rule F-5 is in effect as follows:

When both the ball and the obstruction are in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less, the player may take relief under Rule 16.1b. The obstruction must be:

- On the player’s line of play
- On or within two club-lengths of the putting green, and
- The ball must be within two club-lengths of the obstruction.

Interference under this Local Rule also applies to holes made by the removal of a movable obstruction when the hole is treated as an abnormal course condition by the Committee under section 3-A-(5) and painted yardage dots or lines under section 3-A-(6).

6. **Green Reading Material Restrictions.**

Model Local Rule G-11 is in effect, except for amateurs playing only in a Pro-Am competition. Only approved materials may be used, and these include:

- Committee Approved yardage books, since 1st January 2022.
- Committee Approved pin positions sheets, and

Players should refer to the additional notice regarding the Model Local Rule G-11 and the special restrictions that apply to handwritten notes.

Penalty for first breach: General Penalty.
Penalty for second breach: Disqualification.

7. **Integral Objects.**

- Bunker liners in their intended position. An exposed liner may be treated as ground under repair by the Committee, but in such cases prohibiting relief when **only** stance interference exists under Model Local Rule F-6.
- The portion of wires, cables, wrapping or other objects when closely attached to trees or other permanent objects. Any portion of temporary objects not closely attached may be treated as a temporary immovable obstruction by the Committee.
- Artificial retaining walls and/or pilings when located within penalty areas.
- Artificial retaining walls and/or pilings when located on the edge of bunkers but such objects are not part of the bunker.
- Artificial stacked turf faces above bunkers.
- Sponsor displays floating or within water or penalty areas. Lines or cables anchoring them are temporary cables and Model Local Rule F-22 applies.

8. **Ball Deflected by Permanent Overhead Power Line.**

Model Local Rule E-11 is in effect. If it is known or virtually certain that a player’s ball hit a power line located in bounds (not the supporting pole/pylon), the player must replay the stroke (see Rule 14.6). If the player replays the stroke but does so from a wrong place, they get the general penalty under Rule 14.7. If the player does not replay the stroke, they get the general penalty and the stroke counts, but the player has not played from a wrong place.

9. **Temporary Lines and Cables.**

Model Local Rule F-22 is in effect and is modified as follows: Mats that are secured and all ramps covering cables are immovable obstructions. Cables located within grass trenches are movable obstructions.

10. **Temporary Immovable Obstructions. (TIOs)**

Model Local Rule F-23 is in effect. (Definitions of common obstructions and TIO’s can be found in the box below)

a) **“Either Side” Relief Option.**

The Additional Local Rules will specify which TIOs have an either side option. Either side relief is restricted to **line-of-sight relief only** and does not apply when the player chooses to operate under Rule 16.1 in taking free relief. The **either side relief option** is always available for line-of-sight interference from all TV Towers & Leaderboards when they stand alone.

b) **Optional Use of Dropping Zones (DZ’s).**

In the general area when a player’s ball lies in or on a TIO or so close to the TIO that it interferes with the stance or area of intended swing and relief is required, the player may proceed under any of the options allowed under the TIO Local Rule or Rule 16.1.

If dropping zones have been marked, as an additional option, the player may drop the original ball or another ball, without penalty, in the nearest dropping zone. This is true even if it is nearer the hole. The “DZ” is a relief area under Rule 14.3.

c) **Drones:**

If it is known or virtually certain that a player’s ball hit a drone in flight and in bounds, the player must replay the stroke (see Rule 14.6). If the player replays the stroke but does so from a wrong place, they get the general penalty under Rule 14.7. If the player does not replay the stroke, they get the general penalty and the stroke counts, but the player has not played from a wrong place.

11. Clubs and Balls.

- a) List of Confirming Driver Heads: Model Local Rule G-1 is in effect. Penalty for making a stroke with a club in breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.
- b) Groove and Punch Mark Specifications: Model Local Rule G-2 is in effect. Penalty for making a stroke with a club in breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.
- c) List of Conforming Balls: Model Local Rule G-3 is in effect. Penalty for making a stroke at a Ball not on the Current List in breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.
- d) One Ball Rule: Model Local Rule G-4 is in effect. Penalty for making a stroke at a ball in breach of this Local Rule: The player gets one penalty stroke for each hole during which they are in breach of this Local Rule. This Local Rule does not apply to professional or amateur players in any pre-tournament Pro-Am or approved one-day event or to amateurs who partner professional players in a major Pro-Am tournament.
- e) Replacing Club that is Broken or Significantly Damaged: Model Local Rule G-9 is in effect. (revised Jan 2026)
- f) Prohibiting Use of Clubs Longer than 46 Inches: Model Local Rule G-10 is in effect. Penalty for making a stroke with a club in breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification. This Local Rule is also in effect in a Pro-Am played as the official competition, except for an amateur playing solely in Pro-Am competition.

12. Starting Round and Stopping Play; Resume Play. Rule 5.3a and Rule 5.7.

- a) The official time is displayed on the clock at the starting tee, or as otherwise provided by the Committee.
- b) Model Rule J-1 is in effect as follows to suspend and resume play:
 - i **Immediate suspension** (such as when there is imminent danger) - **one prolonged note of the siren.**
 - ii Normal suspension (such as when the course is flooded) – three consecutive notes of the siren.
 - iii Resume play – two short notes of the siren.All practice areas are closed during a suspension for imminent danger.

13. Restrictions on Practice. Rule 5

- a) Before or between rounds in stroke play - Model Local Rule I-1.2 is in effect and Rule 5.2b. is modified in this way:
 - A player must not practise on the course before or between rounds. Exceptions:
 - i A player may practice on the designated practice areas.
 - ii A player may practice putting or chipping on or near their first teeing area.
- b) During Round – Model Local Rule I-2 is in effect and Rule 5.5b is modified in this way:

Between the play of two holes, a player must not:

 - Make any practice stroke on or near the putting green of the hole just completed or,
 - Test the surface of that putting green by rubbing the putting green or rolling a ball.

14. Distance Measuring Devices.

Model Local Rule G-5 is **not** in effect. Note: ‘Limitations on Distance Measuring Devices’ as defined in the Members Handbook is in effect restricting the use of certain types of distance-measuring device.

15. Prohibiting Use of Motorised Transportation.

Model Local Rule G-6 is in effect, and is modified in this way:

During a round, a player or caddie must not ride on any form of motorised transportation except as authorised or later approved by the Committee. A player (or caddie) who will play, or has played, under penalty of stroke and distance is always authorised.

Exception: At some tournaments players and caddies may be permitted to ride one a shuttle between specific holes and these holes will be identified on the Additional Local Rules.

16. Reduced Penalty When Player Unaware Ball Moved.

Model Local Rule E-14 is in effect and applies only when the player is unaware, before the stroke is made, that the ball might have moved.

17. Scoring in Stroke Play.

Model Local Rule L-1 is in effect and modifies the penalty for a missing signature(s) under Rule 3.3b(2).

18. Pace of Play.

The 2026 French Tour Pace of Play Policy as defined in the Members General Regulation Handbook is in force. The following penalties apply, and these penalties carry over all three rounds of each tournament:

1st bad time during Tournament – No penalty and warning from Referee

2nd bad time during Tournament – One stroke penalty

Subsequent bad time during same Tournament – Additional one stroke penalty.

Exception: The one-stroke penalty associated with a breach of point g)-vii of the 2026 French Tour Pace of Play Policy shall be in addition to the above penalty statement.

TERMS OF THE COMPETITION

19. Recording Area and When Scorecard Has Been Returned.

- a) Score recorders are part of the Committee
- b) The recording area will be defined on the Additional Local Rules.
- c) The scorecard (paper or digital) of a player or side is returned to the Committee 15 minutes after the scorecard is accepted into the electronic scoring system. If a mistake is discovered before it is accepted into the scoring system and the player, or member of the side, is not present to correct the mistake, the scorecard is returned 15 minutes after that mistake is discovered. Exceptions apply as outlined in the section “When scorecard has been returned” in the Player Portal in the APP.

20. How Ties Will Be Decided.

Unless otherwise stated, if there is a tie for the first place, there will be a hole-by-hole play-off to determine the winner.

21. When the Result of the Competition is Final.

The competition is final when the official results have been validated in the scoring system by the Score Recorder and approved by the Committee. In the event of a play-off, the competition is final when the play-off scores have been approved by the Committee.

22. Anti-Doping.

The 2026 French Tour Anti-Doping Policy, as defined in the Members General Regulations Handbook, is in force. Players should be aware that under this policy, if a player is found to have committed an anti-doping rule violation, he may face disqualification from the tournament at which he was tested (or otherwise committed the violation) and from any subsequent tournament in which he participated until provisionally suspended or rendered ineligible under the Policy. Disqualification in such cases includes the loss of all results, points, and prize money.

Movable Obstructions - Definitions

*Examples include but are not limited to: Free-standing advertising boards **situated away from teeing areas**, drinks dispensers that are on wheels or easily lifted, all cameras and their tripods (including those mounted on vehicles), TV microphones, free standing scoring/data masts, non-display cars, tables, chairs, trash bins, individual sections of crash barriers that are not fixed together, individual directional signage and all crossing point indicators.*

Immovable Obstructions - Definitions

Examples include but are not limited to: Curbs, gutters or similar adjoining an artificially surfaced road or path is part of the road or path, objects supporting trees or tree limbs (the tree, or tree limb itself is not part of the obstruction).

Temporary Immovable Obstructions (TIOs) - Definitions

Examples include but are not limited to: All fixed clocks, advertising boards and hole number distance indicators that are situated around teeing areas, tents, grandstands, hospitality structures, scoreboards, towers, platforms, white lined areas tying into a TIO are treated as part of the TIO. Multiple TIOs are treated as one single TIO when they are tied together with white lines or when they are touching or virtually touching each other.