

RULE 6. THE PLAYER

6-1. Rules

The player and his caddie are responsible for knowing the Rules.

The side is responsible for any breach of the Rules by any player on a side as well as any of their caddies.

6-2. Handicap

Match Play (Handicap Competition)

If a player begins a match having declared a handicap higher than that to which he is entitled and this affects the number of strokes given or received, he is **disqualified**.

Stroke Play (Handicap Competition)

If no handicap is recorded on his score card before it is returned (Rule 6-6b), the player is **disqualified**. In Foursome and Four-Ball competitions, partner's handicaps must be individually recorded.

If the recorded handicap is higher than that to which he is entitled and this affects the number of strokes received, the player is **disqualified**.

In four-ball and foursome play, both player's handicaps must be individually recorded or the side is **disqualified**.

6-3. Time of Starting and Groups

Players must start at the time established by the Committee. When a starting time is listed as 9:00 a.m., the starting time is deemed to be 9:00:00 a.m. and the player is subject to penalty under Rule 6-3a if he is not present and ready to play at 9:00:00 a.m.

If a player arrives within five minutes after his starting time, the penalty is loss of the first hole in match play or two strokes at the first hole in stroke play.

Decision 6-3a/5 clarifies that the penalty for starting early is the same as starting late.

The **Exception** states that the Committee may determine that if exceptional circumstances prevented a player from starting on time, there is no penalty.

Players must remain in the group assigned by the Committee or be **disqualified**, unless the Committee ratifies the change.

6-4. Caddie

The player may be assisted by a caddie, but he is limited to only one caddie at any one time.

Penalty statement under Rule 6-4 clarifies that in match play or stroke play, if a breach is discovered between play of two holes, the breach is deemed to have been discovered during play of the next hole and the penalty must be applied accordingly. In stroke play, two strokes at each of the first two holes at which any breach occurred.

6-5. Ball

The responsibility for playing the proper ball rests with the player.

6-6. Scoring in Stroke Play

The marker and player must sign and return the score card as soon as possible or DQ. Any score for a hole lower than actually taken on a returned score card results in a DQ. A higher score stands.

No alteration may be made on a score card after the score card has been returned.

2016 Amendment: If prior to close of competition it is discovered that a player returned a score omitting a penalty that he did not know he had incurred, the penalty is added and a two-stroke penalty for a breach of Rule 6-6d. See Rule 6-6d penalty statement.

6-7. Undue Delay; Slow Play

Undue delay is generally a delay not related to play of the game.

The player must play without undue delay and in accordance with any pace of play guidelines that the Committee may establish.

6-8. Discontinuance of Play; Resumption of Play

A player may discontinue play only if Committee has suspended play, danger from lightening, sudden illness or a resolution is needed from the Committee on a disputed point.

Except for a suspension for a dangerous situation, if the Committee suspends play, a group which has begun play of a hole may continue play of the hole.

When play is discontinued, a ball may be marked and lifted if the Committee has suspended play or there is a good reason to lift.

When play is resumed, the player must place the lifted ball or a substituted ball on the spot from which the original ball was lifted. If the spot is unknown, the ball is placed as near as possible to the estimated spot.

Note: The Committee may provide, in the conditions of a competition (Rule 33-1), that in potentially dangerous situations play must be discontinued immediately following a suspension of play by the Committee.

If a player fails to discontinue play immediately, he is **disqualified**.