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**Dealing With Water: Know The Rules**

**By Jack Moorehouse**

Water hazards probably account for more penalty strokes than anything else in golf. But water hazards—as dealt with under Rule 26—often lead to controversy when interpreting the rule. So I'm careful to review the topic in my golf lessons and discuss it in my golf tips.

The controversy stems from interpreting where the ball last crossed the water's edge. Since the decision affects where you take a drop, it makes sense to have a good understanding of the rule, especially if a match is on the line or your working on a personal best.

The Rules Golf's rules define a water hazard as "any sea, lake, pond, river, ditch, surface draining ditch, or other open water course (whether or not containing water), and anything of a similar nature." Courses mark water hazards with yellow stakes and lines. But the rules don't stop there, as I mention in my golf tips and during my golf lessons; they also discuss a lateral water hazard.

The rules define a "lateral water hazard" as part of a water hazard "so situated that it is not possible, or is deemed by the committee to be impracticable, to drop a ball behind the water hazard in accordance with Rule 26-1b." In other words, it's a water hazard that doesn't lie between the tee and the green. The course marks these off by red stakes or lines.

The Remedies If you hit into water you do one of four things:

1. You can play the ball as near as possible to the spot from which the original ball was played.
2. You can drop a ball behind the water hazard, keeping the point at which the ball entered the water's edge, directly behind the hole and the spot where the ball is dropped. There's no limit to how far back the ball may be dropped, as long as the point of crossing lies between the drop and the hole.
3. You can play the ball as it lies in the water hazard.
4. If a ball goes into a lateral water hazard, you can drop a ball away from the hazard but within two club lengths of the point from which the ball last crossed the water. However, the ball can't come to

## Dealing With Water: Know The Rules

rest any closer to the hole than the point at which the original ball crossed the hazard.

**The Controversy** A major source of controversy is establishing where the ball last crossed the hazard, not where the ball entered the water, which could be relevant in situations in which where a ball lands on the ground, then rolls back into the water.

The easiest way to deal with this type of problem is to determine the point where the ball was last on, or over, dry land, before it crossed the hazard. Next, determine if the point is between the red or yellow stakes. If it is, you can decide on the best course of action from that spot.

The additional dropping option for a lateral water hazard, however, means that the ball can sometimes be dropped on either side of the hazard, as long as it is within two club lengths of where the ball crossed the edge of the hazard and no closer to the hole. That can make a difference when you finally determine where to drop the ball. Unfortunately, no golf instruction can help you make that decision.

Hitting out of the water is rarely an option—and it's not a choice I recommend in my golf lessons and golf tips—but it has been known to happen. Payne Stewart chose to play the ball from a water hazard during the final hole of his 1989 Ryder Cup Match with Jose Maria Olazabal. The attempt failed and he lost the hole and the match. Think carefully before choosing this option.

**Grounding the Club** If a player chooses to hit from the water hazard, he or she can't ground the club at any stage of address. Grounding the club may be unintentional, but it's still a breach of the rules and subjects the player to a penalty—two-strokes in medal play and the loss of the hole in match play. The rule resembles that covering the grounding of a club in a bunker.

Knowing the rules governing water hazards won't necessarily lower your golf handicap. But it will give you an idea your remedies next time you hit into the water. Since you can be penalized for violating the rules, think carefully before deciding. If you're in a tournament and you're confused about what to do, don't hesitate to talk with officials.

Jack Moorehouse is the author of the best-selling book "How To Break 80 And Shoot Like The Pros

<http://www.howtobreak80.com>

." He is NOT a golf pro, rather a working man that has helped thousands of golfers from all seven continents lower their handicap immediately.

## **Summer Safety Tips For Children**

**By Nicole Dean**

Summer is a fun time, but it's also a time when a lot of accidents happen. Here are some ways to keep your children safe this summer.

## Dealing With Water: Know The Rules

Water safety. If you have a pool or plan to be around the water at all, then make sure you've got all security devices in place. All gates must be locked, and alarms installed, especially if you have non-swimming children at home.

Some general simple rules for children around any body of water are:

1. No running or horseplay near the pool.
2. Kids only swim with an adult watching them.
3. Make sure your children are taking swim lessons that teach, not only the basic strokes, but also survival strokes and basic water safety as well. All American Red Cross certified programs incorporate water safety into their swim lessons.
4. Of course, if lightening is possible, leave the water until the weather risk passes.
5. If your children are swimming in the ocean, follow the flag warnings and be cautious of the tides.

Sun safety. No matter how old we are or how careful we are, that sun will surprise us and we'll suffer a burn.

Some simple rules to keep your children safe in the sun are:

1. Always apply sun screen - even if it's a cloudy day.
2. Have your kids wear a t-shirt and hat if they have fair skin.
3. Make sure you have water proof sunblock on your kids if they're in the water.
4. Apply sunscreen often, especially if your kids have fair skin or are playing in water.
5. Provide your children with plenty of water, juice, or popsicles. Keep them hydrated to help prevent heat stroke.

Bicycle safety.

Some simple rules to keep your children safe on their bikes are:

1. A helmet is a must. Ask any nurse in any Emergency Room and you'll find out why.
2. If you've got a child who daydreams, wear a whistle around your neck when you go on a bike ride

together. If you see him or her being unsafe, you can blow the whistle. This is much more effective than trying to yell.

## Dealing With Water: Know The Rules

3. Look for bike paths in the woods. These allow your child to ride freely without the hazards of traffic. Pack a picnic lunch and make a day of it.

So many life-changing accidents are preventable. Make it a safe — and a fun summer!

Nicole Dean invites you to

<http://www.ShowKidstheFun.com>

— a free website filled with activities to

make memories with your children and

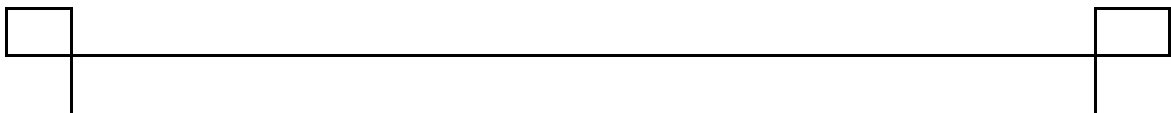
<http://www.ShowMomtheMoney.com>

— a fun and informative

resource for moms who want to make money from home.



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