

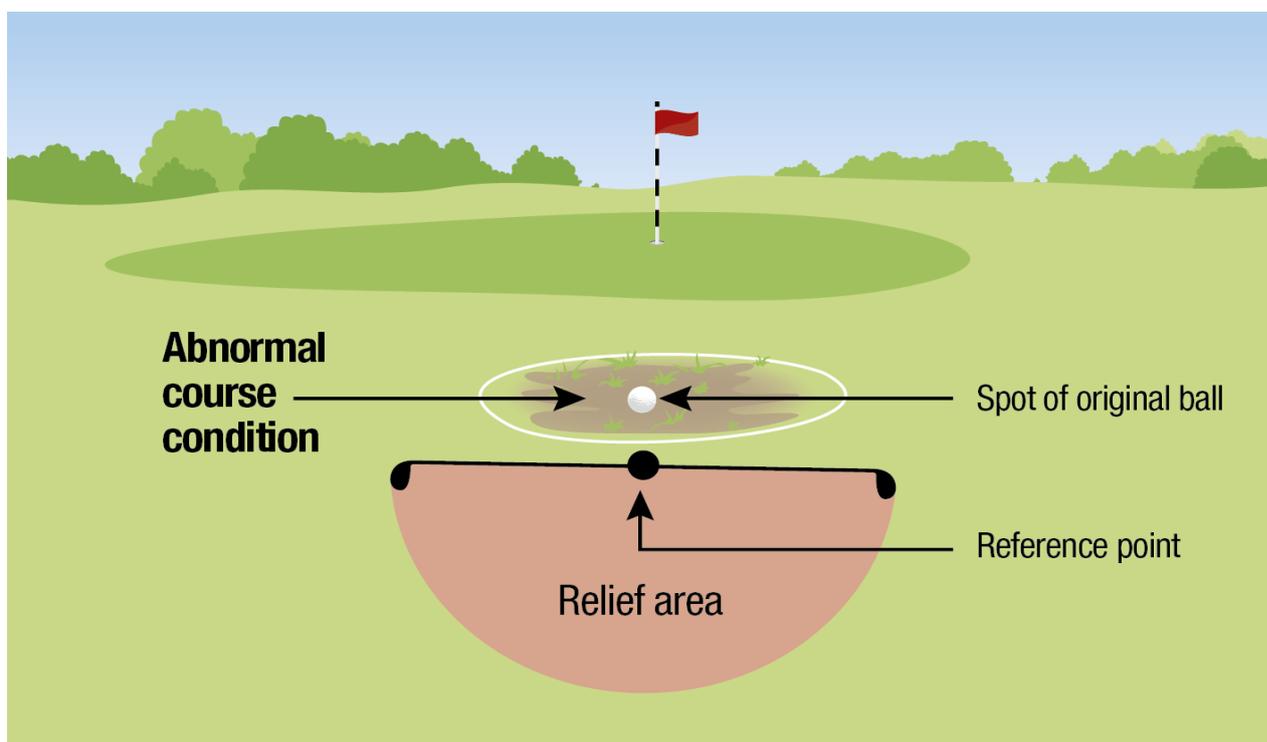
Abnormal Course Condition

When Relief Is Allowed

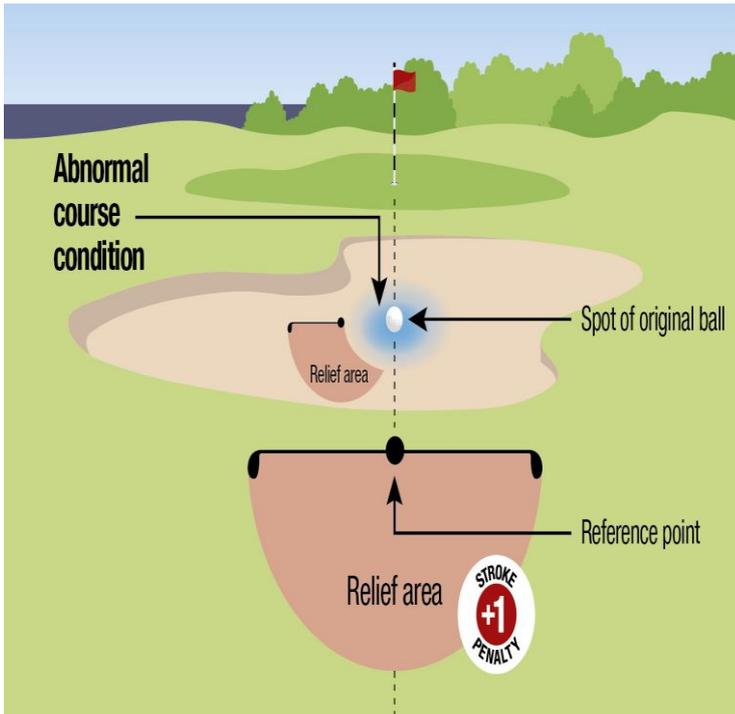
Interference exists when any one of these is true:

- The player's ball touches or is in or on an abnormal course condition,
- An abnormal course condition physically interferes with the player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing, or
- Only when the ball is on the putting green, an abnormal course condition on or off the putting green intervenes on the line of play.

If the abnormal course condition is close enough to distract the player but does not meet any of these requirements, there is no interference under this Rule.



Free relief is allowed when the ball is in the general area and there is interference by an abnormal course condition. The nearest point of complete relief should be identified and a ball must be dropped in and come to rest in the relief area. The relief area is one club-length from the reference point, is not nearer to the hole than the reference point and must be in the general area. When taking relief, the player must take complete relief from all interference by the abnormal course condition.



The diagram assumes a right-handed player. When there is interference from an abnormal course condition in a bunker, free relief may be taken in the bunker under Rule 16.1b or relief may be taken outside the bunker for one penalty stroke. Relief outside the bunker is based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through the spot of the original ball in the bunker. The reference point is a point on the course outside the bunker chosen by the player that is on the reference line and is farther from the hole than the original spot (with no limit on how far back on the line). The relief area is one club-length from the reference point, is not nearer to the hole than the reference point, but may be in any area of the course. In choosing this reference point, the player should indicate the point by using an object (such as a tee).

The diagram assumes the player is left-handed. When a ball is on the putting green and there is interference by an abnormal course condition, free relief may be taken by placing a ball on the spot of the nearest point of complete relief. The nearest point of complete relief must be either on the putting green or in the general area. If there is no such nearest point of complete relief, the player may still take this free relief by using the point of maximum available relief as the reference point, which must be either on the putting green or in the general area.

