

World Croquet Federation
Rules of Golf Croquet
6th Edition

Introductory Statement from the WCF Golf Croquet Rules Committee

1. PURPOSES

- 1.1 To incorporate the Official Rulings published on 1 October 2018.
- 1.2 To make stylistic and location changes to the Rules to improve clarity and ease of use (see Paragraph 2).
- 1.3 To take further steps where appropriate to align the Rules with the Laws of Association Croquet following the publication of the 7th Edition of the latter on 24 January 2021 (see Paragraph 3).
- 1.4 To add rules dealing with impasses, time-limited games and Advantage GC and to make non-substantive amendments to fill gaps and improve clarity and ease of use (see Paragraph 4).

2. STYLISTIC AND LOCATION CHANGES TO THE RULES

- 2.1 Great care has been taken to ensure that language and forms of expression are used consistently throughout the Rules.
- 2.2 The Glossary introduced in the 5th Edition has been expanded to include more defined terms and thereby shorten and clarify the main text. References to each Glossary defined term in the main text are italicised to highlight the fact that it is a defined term.
- 2.3 Rule 15.1.5 (5th) (giving warning about a forceful stroke) has been moved to Rule 16 (behaviour). This is both logical and allows Rule 15 to be better organised.
- 2.4 The positions of Rules 17 and 18 in the 5th Edition have been exchanged. Rule 17 now covers penalty areas and penalty area continuation and Rule 18 covers alternative colours and double-banking. This arrangement means that Rules 1 to 17 now deal with the standard game of single-banked, untimed level play and Rule 18 to 21 deal with the variations, namely double-banking, time limited games, handicap play and advantage play.
- 2.5 The main text of Rules 1 to 17 has been shortened and clarified by removing all references to matters covered in Rules 18 to 21 and replacing these references by “signposts” at the end of any affected rule. Each signpost states the relevant provision in Rules 18 to 21 within square brackets and in smaller font.

3. COMMONALITY WITH ASSOCIATION CROQUET

- 3.1 The 7th Edition of the AC Laws now includes gender-neutral language, fully numeric paragraphing, a revised approach to determining marginal situations connected with the scoring of a hoop point, a new law dealing with time-limited games and tables which summarise (1) the treatment of dynamic and marginal static decisions and (2) limits of claims.
- 3.2 The 6th Edition of the GC Rules has not adopted fully numeric paragraphing but has adopted the AC approach to determining marginal situations and a rule dealing with time-limited games (see Rule 19). A table which summarises the treatment of dynamic and marginal static decisions has been added as Appendix 1 at the end of the Rules. The 5th Edition adopted gender-neutral language which has been retained and developed with the replacement of “their” in relation to a player or side by “the player” or “the side”.

4. RULE CHANGES

4.1 General

There have been no significant substantive changes to the way the game is played other than the recognition of Advantage GC as a permitted variant.

4.1.1 The Glossary has been expanded to aid clarity and save space in the main text.

4.1.2 A new Rule 15.3 dealing with impasses has been added which reflects current practice.

4.1.3 A new Rule 19 (Time-limited games) has been added which provides guidance also based on current common practice but which provides organising bodies with flexibility.

4.1.4 A new Rule 21 (Advantage play) has been added to provide governance for a new form of handicap play that relies on setting different starting scores instead of extra strokes.

4.2 Rule 10 (Playing a wrong ball)

4.2.1 The wrong ball rule has traditionally given rise to more queries than any other rule throughout the history of the game. It has now been re-organised and shortened with the intention of improving its clarity and ease of use.

4.2.2 The special treatment of wrong balls in the first four turns of the game has been deleted apart from the exchange of colours case.

4.2.3 The obligation to forestall play if it is observed that a player is about to play a wrong ball or has done so has been reinforced in Rule 10.2 and by making a deliberate refusal to do so and playing a stroke instead a form of unacceptable behaviour under Rule 16.2.9. This can lead to such a stroke being annulled.

4.2.4 There are now just three classes of wrong ball set out in Rules 10.3 to 10.5. Two of these are less common and one, where the striker's side plays a wrong ball, is the most common. Rule 10 can be used as a checklist so that the reader can operate by first testing whether Rule 10.3 applies, then whether Rule 10.4 applies and, finally, whether Rule 10.5 applies. The very great majority of cases will be covered by Rule 10.5.

4.2.5 Rule 10.6 now deals with the status of earlier strokes and points in all types of wrong ball and Rule 10.7 provides guidance when it is discovered that a fault has been committed in a stroke in which a wrong ball was played.

4.2.6 The case where one side plays successive strokes is now covered in Rule 10.3 by the wider error of playing when not entitled.

4.3 Other minor amendments

4.3.1 Minor amendments have been made to some other Rules in order to fill gaps and improve clarity and ease of use. The amendments are explained in more detail in the accompanying Changes Log. The most significant are set out below.

4.3.2 Rule 6.3.6 introduces the concept of annulling a stroke which means that it is treated as if it was not played. Annulment provides a convenient and economical remedy in some situations.

4.3.3 Rule 7 (Scoring a hoop point) has been amended to make it as consistent as possible with AC Law 20 while recognising that, unlike in AC, the scoring of a point changes the hoop in order for all four balls. Rule 7.9 (Hoop contested or run out of order) now directs that play continues in sequence when a player discovers the error while a new Rule 15.4 permits a referee to intervene and direct a penalty area continuation if they observe that both sides are contesting a hoop out of order.

4.3.4 Rule 8 (Offside balls) has been refreshed to fill gaps and improve its clarity and internal logic.

4.3.5 Rules 9.1 and 9.2 have been clarified.

4.3.6 Rule 9.5 (Interference by defective equipment) has been refreshed and reorganised, principally to incorporate two Official Rulings.

4.3.7 Rule 9.6 (Interference by incorrect information) replaces the former Rule 14.1.2 with no change in meaning. This allows the restoration of time in timed games.

5. ACCOMMODATING PLAYERS WITH DISABILITIES

5.1 Communication with the opposing side is now required to meet a more demanding standard.

5.2 In the 5th Edition, it was sufficient to communicate with the opposing side when required to do so by the Rules in a manner capable of communicating information to someone “with normal hearing”. This applied to forestalling play, giving a direction that a ball is to be played next from a penalty area, announcing that time had expired and, in handicap play, warning the receiver’s opponent that an extra stroke might be played.

5.3 The needs of players with poor hearing have been recognised by requiring that such communications are now to be made “in a manner that could reasonably be expected to convey it to those to whom it is addressed”. This means taking active steps to ensure that the opposing side is made aware and may involve gestures as well as speech that is louder than normal.

6. CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

6.1 Two consultation questions were published in November 2021. The first asked for opinions about allowing the side that wins the toss at the start of a match to choose colours instead of being obliged to play first. The other concerned the possible extension of remedies when the striker’s side played a wrong ball.

6.2 Neither question attracted a large number of replies and those replies did not exhibit a clear preponderance of opinion in either direction. Accordingly, the option to allow the side winning the toss to choose colours has been added to Rule 5.1 on the grounds that it can do no harm but the remedies after the striker’s side has played a wrong ball have not been changed.

WCF Golf Croquet Rules Committee

Brian Boutel (New Zealand, Chairman)

Jeff Hill (USA)

Stephen Mulliner (England)

Amir Ramsis (Egypt)

John van der Touw (Australia)

Alfonso Urbano (Spain)

February 2022