

R&A USGA®

# Rules of Amateur Status

Effective January 2022



**ROLEX**

PROUD SUPPORTER OF  
THE GAME OF GOLF



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Effective January 2022



Together, The R&A, based in St Andrews, Scotland and the USGA, based in Liberty Corner, New Jersey govern the game worldwide, including writing and interpreting the Rules of Amateur Status.

While collaborating to issue a single set of Rules, The R&A and the USGA operate in separate working jurisdictions. The USGA is responsible for administering the Rules in the United States, its territories and Mexico, and The R&A, operating with the consent of its affiliated golfing bodies, has the same responsibilities for all other parts of the world.

The R&A and the USGA reserve the right to amend both the Rules and their interpretations at any time.

[www.RandA.org](http://www.RandA.org)

[www.USGA.org](http://www.USGA.org)

# Foreword to the 2022 Edition of the Rules of Amateur Status

Amateur golf has a well-established role in the game, and today's wealth of amateur competitions is enjoyed by golfers of all ages throughout the world. The Rules of Amateur Status continue to define who is eligible to compete as an amateur golfer and this edition has taken the important step of modernizing the Rules to make them easier to understand and apply.

The new edition is the result of a modernization initiative conducted by past and present representatives of the Amateur Status Committees of The R&A and USGA, along with representatives from all levels and areas of the game. It is influenced by feedback from key stakeholders and golfers worldwide, and reflects how the game is played today.

The new Rules make a clear distinction between amateur and professional golf in a modern context, providing clarity and opportunity for amateur golfers, competition organizers and potential sponsors of amateur golf. It is our intent that they support a healthy game long into the future, for those playing at the highest levels and for the many who play the game solely for pure enjoyment and the challenge that it presents.

**Clive T. Brown**  
Chairman  
Amateur Status Committee  
R&A Rules Limited

**Paul Brown**  
Chairman  
Amateur Status Committee  
United States Golf Association

### RULE

# 1

## Purpose of the Rules

Amateur golf has a well-established tradition in the game, including a history of competitions limited to amateur golfers. The Rules of Amateur Status define who is eligible to compete as an amateur golfer.

Golf is largely self-regulating, and to help protect the integrity of the game by minimising pressure on the Rules of Golf and the Rules of Handicapping, the Rules of Amateur Status limit the form and value of prizes an amateur golfer is allowed to accept based on performance in competition.

### RULE

# 2

## Amateur Golfer

All golfers are amateurs unless they:

- Accept a prize that is not allowed under Rule 3: Prizes,
- Play in a golf competition as a professional,
- Accept payment or compensation for giving instruction that is not allowed under Rule 4: Instruction,
- Are employed (including being self-employed) as a golf club or driving range professional, or
- Hold membership of an association for professional golfers.

An amateur who takes any of these actions becomes a non-amateur and remains a non-amateur until being reinstated as an amateur (see Rule 5: Reinstatement as an Amateur Golfer).

**RULE**  
**3****Prizes****3a Scratch Competitions**

An amateur playing in a scratch competition is allowed to accept any prize, including prize money, up to a limit of £700 or US\$1000 in value, per competition, unless the national governing body has set a lower limit.

For the purposes of these Rules, a scratch competition is a competition that does not have a net score element in any part of the competition and handicaps must not be used to separate players into different scratch categories. Any competition that is not a scratch competition is a handicap competition.

**3b Handicap Competitions**

An amateur playing in a handicap competition is not allowed to accept prize money, but may accept any other prize up to a limit of £700 or US\$1000 in value, per competition, unless the national governing body has set a lower limit.

**3c General**

For a non-monetary prize, the value of that prize is the price at which the item is generally available to purchase from a retail source at the time the prize is accepted.

The prize limit applies to the following:

- Any tee-to-hole golf competition involving a score for a hole, regardless of where that competition is played (for example, on a golf course or a golf simulator).
- Any skills competition where the shot is played during a tee-to-hole golf competition.
- The total prizes accepted in a single competition or multiple competitions being conducted at the same time (for example, individual and team competitions).

The prize limit does not apply to the following:

- The value of trophies and other similar prizes.
- Long-drive competitions, target competitions, competitions involving specific skills, trick shots and competitions that solely involve putting (unless the competition or shot is played during a tee-to-hole golf competition).

**RULE**  
**3**

## Prizes (continued)

- A prize for a hole-in-one made:
  - » Outside a tee-to-hole competition or
  - » During a tee-to-hole competition, provided the length of the shot is at least 50 yards.
- Gambling or wagering among individual golfers or teams of golfers.
- Expenses to compete in a subsequent stage of the same competition.

**RULE**  
**4**

## Instruction

Instruction means teaching the mechanics of swinging a golf club and hitting a golf ball. The Rules of Amateur Status do not apply to other forms of teaching or coaching (for example, physical fitness and psychological aspects of the game).

An amateur who accepts payment or compensation for giving instruction, including as part of salaried duties, becomes a non-amateur.

But, an amateur may accept payment or compensation for giving instruction in the following circumstances:

- As part of a programme that has been approved in advance by the national governing body.
- As an employee of a school, college, or camp, provided the time spent giving instruction is less than 50% of the time spent in performance of all duties as an employee.
- When the instruction is given in writing or online, and not to a specific individual or group.

**RULE**  
**5**

## Reinstatement as an Amateur Golfer

A non-amateur may be reinstated as an amateur by the applicable national governing body.

Each national governing body has the sole authority to:

- reinstate a non-amateur,
- require a waiting period prior to reinstatement, or
- deny reinstatement.

The national governing body's decision on reinstatement is final, subject to any appeal process established by that body.

**RULE**  
**6**

## Applying the Rules

The R&A and USGA are the governing bodies for the Rules of Amateur Status and reserve the right to change the Rules at any time and to make and change interpretations of the Rules at any time.

The national golf union or association is the national governing body responsible for administering and applying the Rules of Amateur Status within its area of authority, including issues that arise in another area but involve a person or people who come under its authority.

If there is uncertainty or doubt about the application of the Rules, including whether a person is an amateur or non-amateur, the national governing body has the authority to make a final decision but it may also refer the matter to the USGA prior to making a decision.

The national governing body's decision about the application of the Rules is final, subject to any appeal process established by that body.





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Golf is a global game and The  
R&A and the USGA have issued  
this single set of Rules of Amateur  
Status to apply worldwide

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