ABBREVIATED RULES OF GOLF
Condensed from the U.S.G.A. Rules of Golf

Rules pertaining to the teeing area

1. When starting play on a hole, the ball must be teed within the teeing area—that area two club lengths in depth, the front and sides of which are defined by the outside limits of two tee markers.

2. Should a ball fall off the tee or be knocked off accidentally during the address, it shall be re-teed without penalty.

Rules from tee to green

1. Ball lost or out-of-bound.

A ball is to be treated as lost or out-of-bounds after reasonable evidence to this effect is shown. An honest attempt must be made to find the ball. Penalty: loss of distance and a one stroke penalty. The player must play his next stroke as near as possible to the spot from which the original ball was played.

2. Provisional ball.

If there is doubt as to whether a ball is lost or out-of-bounds, the player may play another from the spot where the original ball was played. This is done to save time and avoid going back after the ball is declared lost. The player must announce his intention of playing a provisional ball. He may play the provisional ball until he reaches the place where the original ball is likely to be. If the original ball is lost or out-of-bounds, he shall incur the penalty and continue play with the provisional ball. If the first ball is playable, he may play that and disregard all strokes taken with the provisional.

3. Ball unplayable

The player is the sole judge as to whether his ball is unplayable. If the ball is so declared, the player has three options:

a) Drop a ball behind the unplayable spot keeping the spot inline with the flag stick (no limit on how far back)

b) Drop a ball within one club length, no nearer the hole, adding 1 stroke for either option (a) or (b).
c) Drop a ball as near as possible to the spot from where the original ball was played, adding one stroke plus distance

4. Dropping a ball

To drop a ball, the player faces the hole and drops the ball with arm extended sideways while standing erect. The ball should be dropped as near as possible to the original spot. In a hazard, the ball must come to rest in the hazard. Should a ball be dropped and roll into a hazard, it may be dropped again.

5. Improvement of lie

Nothing may be done to improve the lie of the ball in the rough. A ball may not be lifted and only as much of the long grass may be moved as is necessary to identify the ball.

6. Loose impediments

Loose impediments such as dead leaves and twigs may be removed as long as the ball is not moved in the process. Should the ball lie in a hazard, these impediments may not be touched.

7. Movable and immovable obstructions

Movable obstructions may be moved with no penalty (hoses, rakes, etc.). Objects such as buildings, water hydrants and other similar immovable obstructions are not considered hazards. Should these interfere with the swing or stance, the ball may be lifted and dropped within two club lengths from the obstruction without penalty.

8. Hitting the wrong ball

A player is responsible for the identification of his own ball. He must hole out with the same ball driven from the tee. Should he play the wrong ball, except in a hazard, in stroke play the penalty is two strokes and then he must play his own ball. In match play, he loses the hole.

9. Water hazards

If a ball lie in or be lost in a water hazard, the player may, under penalty of 1 stroke, either:

a) Drop the ball as far back from the hazard as he wishes, or

b) As near as possible to the spot from which the original ball was played.
Rules on the green

1. Cleaning the ball

A ball on the putting green may be lifted, cleaned and replaced on the same spot from which it was lifted, without penalty.

2. Moving ball on the green

Should a ball rest on the intended line of putt, request may be made for its removal, with the spot marked.

3. Hitting ball against flag stick

A player may at any time have the flagstick attended, removed or held up to indicate the position of the hole. Should a ball hit a flag stick, while attended or removed, or should it hit the person holding the flag stick, a penalty of two strokes in stroke play and loss of hole in match play shall be given. If a ball is played from the putting surface and hits an unattended flag stick, a two stroke penalty in stroke play or loss of hole in match play is incurred.

4. Ball resting against flag stick

If a ball which is hit from off the putting green comes to rest against the flag stick in the hole, the player may request the flag stick to be removed. If the ball falls into the hole, the ball shall be considered to have been holed out on the last stroke.

General Rules

1. Playing on ground under repair

On occasion, areas of the course may be under repair. These areas are usually marked "Ground Under Repair" and should not be considered hazards. The privilege of dropping a ball without penalty is allowed.

2. Designating use of specific club

There is no rule that designates a specific club be used for any particular shot. For example, a sand wedge need not be used in a bunker nor a driver off the tee.

3. Lifting ball from non-hazards

Accumulation of standing water or holes made by burrowing animals are not considered hazards and a player may drop a ball as near as possible to that spot (but not nearer the hole) without penalty.