E-5 Alternative to Stroke and Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds

Purpose. When a provisional ball has not been played, significant issues with pace of play can result for a player needing to take stroke-and-distance relief for a ball that is out of bounds or cannot be found. The purpose of this Local Rule is to allow a Committee to provide an extra relief option that allows a player to play on without returning to the location of the previous stroke.

The Local Rule is appropriate for general play where golfers are playing casual rounds or playing their own competitions. The Local Rule is not appropriate for competitions limited to highly skilled players (that is, professional competitions and elite amateur competitions). For guidance on when and how this Local Rule may be used in order for scores to be submitted for handicapping purposes, consult the rules or recommendations contained within the Handicap System operating in the local jurisdiction.

Where a Committee has introduced such a Local Rule for general play, and removes it for competitions, it should ensure that all players are aware of this before play begins.

A Committee may introduce such a Local Rule for all play on the course or only for one or two specific holes where it may be especially useful (for example, where players are unable to see the landing area and therefore may not know whether or not to play a provisional ball).

This option allows the player to drop in a large area between the point where the ball is estimated to have come to rest or gone out of bounds and the edge of the fairway of the hole being played that is not nearer the hole.

The player gets two penalty strokes when using this relief option. This means that the relief is comparable to what could have been achieved if the player had taken stroke-and-distance relief.

This Local Rule cannot be used for an unplayable ball, or for a ball that is known or virtually certain to be in a penalty area.

If a provisional ball is played and neither the original ball nor the provisional ball can be found, then the Local Rule may be applied for the provisional ball that cannot be found.

Model Local Rule E-5

"When a player's ball has not been found or is *known or virtually certain* to be *out of bounds*, the player may proceed as follows rather than proceeding under *stroke and distance*.

For **two penalty strokes**, the player may take relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in this *relief area* (see Rule 14.3):

Two Estimated Reference Points:

a. **Ball Reference Point**: The point where the original ball is estimated to have:

- Come to rest on the *course*, or
- Last crossed the edge of the *course* boundary to go *out of bounds*.

b. **Fairway Reference Point**: The point of fairway of the hole being played that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the *hole* than the ball reference point.

For purposes of this Local Rule, "fairway" means any area of grass in the *general area* that is cut to fairway height or less.

If a ball is estimated to be *lost* on the *course* or last crossed the edge of the *course* boundary short of the fairway, the fairway reference point may be a grass path or a teeing ground for the hole being played cut to fairway height or less.

Size of Relief Area Based on Reference Points: Anywhere between:

- A line from the *hole* through the ball reference point (and within two *club-lengths* to the outside of that line), and
- A line from the *hole* through the fairway reference point (and within two *club-lengths* to the fairway side of that line).

But with these limits:

Limits on Location of Relief Area:

- Must be in the *general area*, and
- Must not be nearer the *hole* than the ball reference point.

Once the player puts a ball *in play* under this Local Rule:

- The original ball that was *lost* or *out of bounds* is no longer *in play* and must not be played.
- This is true even if the ball is found on the *course* before the end of the three-minute search time (see Rule 6.3b).

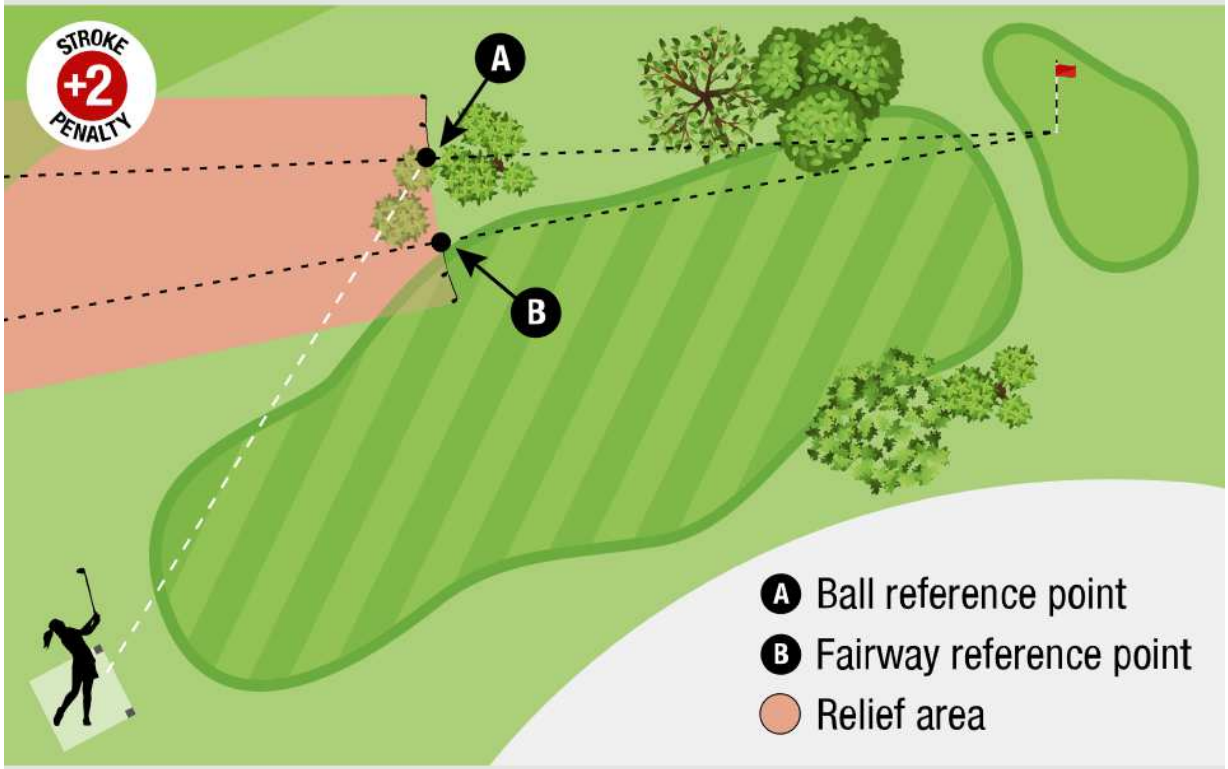
But the player may not use this option to take relief for the original ball when:

- That ball is *known or virtually certain* to have come to rest in a *penalty area*, or
- The player has played another ball provisionally under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.3).

A player may use this option to take relief for a provisional ball that has not been found or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty* Under Rule 14.7a."

MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 1: BALL NOT FOUND

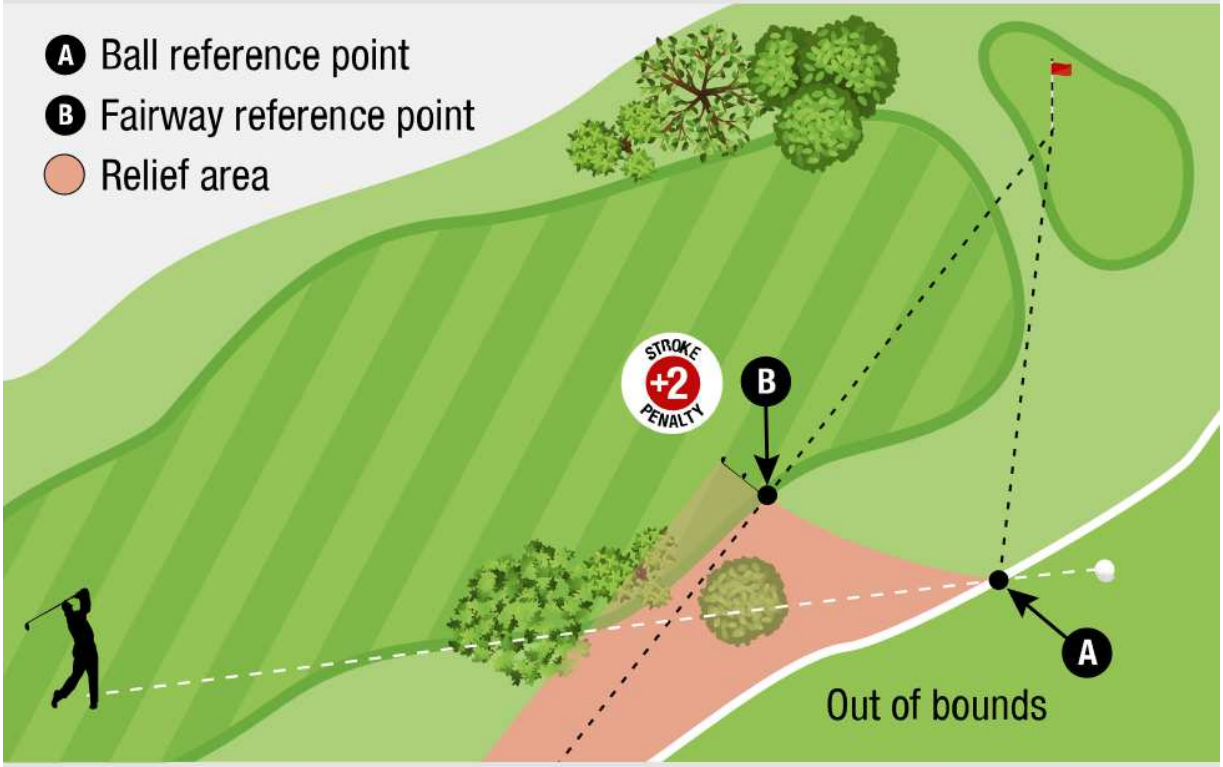


When a player's ball has not been found, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

Reference Points	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have come to rest on the course (point A) B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point	Anywhere between: • A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line), and • A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)	The relief area: • Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and • Must be in the general area

Player Notes:
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.

MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 2: BALL OUT OF BOUNDS

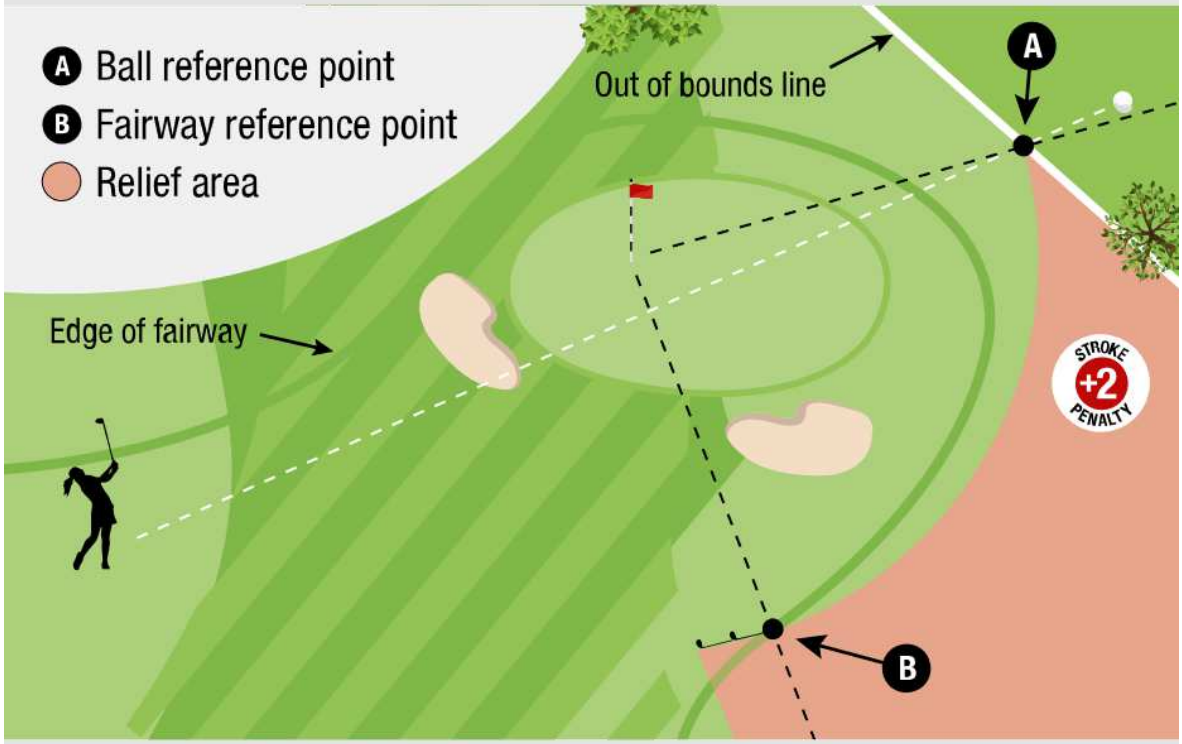


When a player's ball is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have last crossed the edge of the course boundary to go out of bounds (point A) B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point	Anywhere between: • A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line but still on the course), and • A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)	The relief area: • Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and • Must be in the general area

Player Notes:
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.

MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 3: BALL NOT FOUND OR OUT OF BOUNDS CLOSE TO GREEN



When a player's ball has not been found or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

Reference Points	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have come to rest on the course or last crossed the edge of the course boundary to go out of bounds (point A) B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point	Anywhere between: • A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line), and • A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)	The relief area: • Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and • Must be in the general area

Player Notes:
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.