**Here is a summarized version of the rules.  If you are playing in a tournament you need to know the rules!**

Remember: In a tournament you are allowed only 14 clubs in your bag!

 1.   Summer Rules:   Play the ball as it lies.  Winter rules do not apply; you cannot move the ball to improve your lie or position.

2.   No "Gimmies" unless you are playing match play. You must putt out and finish every hole. Your fellow competitors cannot concede putts during stroke play and you cannot assume that you will make the putt and not putt out.  Failure to not complete a hole can result in disqualification in a tournament.

3.   No Mulligans either. Sorry. Every stroke counts.

4.   Same ball. You must use the same ball throughout a hole (from tee through holing a putt). You cannot substitute a ball unless you declare it to be damaged and unfit for play.

5.   No cleaning. Unless the “lift, clean, and replace” rule is in effect, you cannot clean mud or debris from a ball in play, unless you are on the putting green.

6.   Exchange Scorecards and Attest for Tournaments. At the beginning of the round, each player is required to give his/her scorecard to another player in his/her group who will record their score on each hole. At the end of the round, the person keeping the score signs the scorecard on the “Scorer” line and gives it back to the player whose score was being recorded. The player whose score was being recorded verifies the scores, settles any discrepancies, and signs the scorecard on the “Attest” line. The “committee” shall add up the score. It is not the responsibility of the players to add up the score (but it doesn’t hurt anything if it is added up). So, 3 things are necessary for a valid scorecard: 1) the correct gross score on each hole; 2) the signature of the person recording the score (the “Scorer”); 3) the signature of the player “Attesting” to the score.

7.  Asking Advice and Giving Assistance:  you CANNOT aid your fellow competitor on what club to hit or how to play a particular shot. You can ask fellow competitors questions about the course (yardage, particulars on how holes are laid out), but you cannot ask a competitor “what club are you going to hit” or “which way does this putt break”. Note that discussion of club selection can take place AFTER everyone hits, but not before. And observing that ‘Joe’ hit a 5 iron before you hit is not a rules violation, but asking him is.  Violating this rule is a 2-stroke penalty.

8.  Lost Ball: you’ve got 5 minutes to search, and after that, the ball is considered lost! Then it’s “go back and play another ball” from the same place, counting all strokes played and adding a penalty stroke. If you happen to find the ball after your 5 minutes are up, you cannot play it, so just pick it up.  Allow group behind you to play through to avoid slow play if it is appropriate to do so.

9.  Out of Bounds: same as lost ball (#4), which is go back and play another ball. If you think your ball might have gone out of bounds or might be lost, it’s wise to play a “provisional” ball.  This will help you avoid having to go back to the location of your last shot if you can’t find your ball.    Announce to your fellow competitor(s) you are hitting a provisional BEFORE doing so, or it’s automatically a ball in play with the added penalty stroke, even if you find your original ball.  Make sure that you identify the provisional ball (brand, number, markings).  For any provisional ball, it is always best to choose a ball with a different number or markings from your original ball to make sure that both balls are easily identified and distinguished.

10. Water Hazard: add 1 stroke penalty and either a) drop a ball any distance behind the water hazard, keeping the point where the ball last crossed the margin of the hazard between you and the pin, b) go back to where you hit the ball originally, or c) if it’s a lateral water hazard with a red stake and not a yellow one, you may drop within 2 club lengths from the point the ball last crossed the margin of the hazard, no nearer the hole.  The provisional ball procedure described in #5 does NOT apply to water hazards.  If you hit the ball towards a water hazard, the water hazard rules above rather than the lost ball rules apply.

11. Unplayable Lie: if you find your ball outside of a hazard, but cannot play it, add 1 penalty stroke and either a) go back to where you originally hit the ball, b) drop the ball within 2 club lengths of where your ball lies no nearer the hole, or c) drop the ball any distance along a straight line from the hole and the point of the unplayable lie, no closer to the hole.

12. Relief (free drop): several situations allow you to pick your ball up and drop it with no penalty.  If relief is allowed, you will drop within one club length of the nearest area giving relief, but no nearer hole.  Typical situations permitting a free drop include the ball lying in animal hole, on a service road or cart path, in a tire track, or in a “casual” water or washout area.  In addition, "ground under repair", which is usually marked with white chalk, or next to man-made obstructions (sprinkler heads, fairway markers, fences, benches, water fountains, etc.) allow the same one club length of relief without penalty.

13. Honors off the tee is based on raw or gross score on the previous hole. Those teeing off from the back markers always hit first.  If your group is falling behind, you may play “ready golf” where the person ready to play is allowed to do so.

14. Local Rules that are specific to the course being played will be identified prior to teeing off on a separate rules sheet.

If you run into a situation where there is doubt as to the correct ruling, then announce to your fellow competitors that you are playing a second ball (this is NOT the same as a provisional ball).  As an example, you might find your ball in what you consider ground under repair, but are uncertain as to whether or not you are really entitled to take a free drop.  Drop your second ball in the place that you think is correct.  Play both balls to completion, and submit the problem to the Rules Committee (if you don’t score the same with both balls).  Please note that you must complete play with both balls and have a score with each one.  Wave the group behind you to play through if you think that this procedure will slow down play.