

May and June have been unusually wet this year in Florida and if you have been playing golf you have most likely encountered casual water, and possibly very large areas of casual water. Taking relief from casual water is fairly simple, but what happens when your ball enters a large area of casual water and you cannot find your ball?

First, what is “casual water” and how do we take relief? Casual water is any temporary accumulation of water on the course that is not in a water hazard and is visible before or after the player takes his stance. Please note that the definition of casual water does not include water being visible while the player is taking their stance and rocking their feet and distributing their weight; it is after they take their stance. Interference from casual water exists for stance, lie of ball and area of intended swing. When you have interference you are entitled to free relief, provided your ball does not lie in a water hazard.

When you take your free drop from casual water, first you must determine the nearest point of relief from the casual water that is not closer to the hole and then drop the ball within one club-length from that spot. If your ball was in a bunker, you must stay in the bunker. If your ball was through the green you must drop it through the green; however, it is accepted to go from rough to fairway or fairway to rough provided you are dropping within one club-length of the nearest point of relief.

If your ball is lost in an area of casual water you are entitled to free relief if it is known or virtually certain that the ball is in the casual water (someone saw it go in the casual water or there is basically no chance the ball could be anywhere else). To take relief when your ball is lost in an area of casual water you must estimate the point where the ball last crossed the outer most limits of the casual water, assume your ball lies at that point and then take complete relief in the manner mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Water that is overflowing from a water hazard and outside the hazard marking is casual water.

If it is not known or virtually certain that your ball is lost in the area of casual water, then you must assume your ball is lost and play under stroke and distance.

Read more on casual water and abnormal ground conditions in Rule 25 [here](#).

2019 New Rules of Golf – The term “casual water” is being replaced by the term “temporary water” to more clearly indicate the nature of the condition and to help in translating the term into other languages. There will be no substantive change to the rule and relief procedure.