



## Restricting the Use of Green-Reading Materials (Model Local Rule G-11) : Language of Model Local Rule and Additional Guidance

Local Rule available January 2022

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### Model Local Rule G-11: Restricting Use of Green-Reading Materials

Purpose. Rule 4.3, and specifically Interpretation 4.3a/1, puts limitations on the size and scale of detailed green-reading materials. But to ensure that players and caddies use only their eye and feel to help them read the line of play on the putting green, the Committee may further restrict the use of green-reading materials by requiring that players are limited throughout their round to using only the yardage book that has been approved for use in the competition.

This Local Rule is intended only for the highest levels of competitive golf and, even then, only to competitions where it is realistic for the Committee to undertake an approval process for yardage books.

When introducing this Local Rule, the Committee is responsible for approving the yardage book that players may use, and the approved yardage book should contain diagrams of putting greens with minimal detail only (such as significant slopes, tiers or false edges that indicate sections of greens).

Players and caddies may add handwritten notes to the approved yardage book to help them read the line of play on a putting green, so long as those notes are allowed under this Local Rule.

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"Rule 4.3a is modified in this way:

During a *round*, the player may use only the yardage book(s) approved by the *Committee*. This restriction also applies to any other maps of the course, including hole-location sheets.

Additional restrictions apply to handwritten notes and any other materials used by the player that could help read the *line of play* on the *putting green*:

- Handwritten notes may be added to an approved yardage book or approved hole-location sheet before or during the *round* by the player or the player's *caddie* only and are limited to information gathered by the player or *caddie* only.
- Handwritten notes may contain information gained only through personal experiences of the player or the player's *caddie* from the course or by watching a televised broadcast, but are limited to information gained:
  - While observing a ball that was rolled or played (whether by the player, *caddie* or someone else) or
  - Through the player's or *caddie's* feel or general observations of the *putting green*.

These additional restrictions on handwritten notes or other materials do not apply to such information when they could not help the player read the *line of play* on the *putting green* (such as handwritten or printed information containing swing thoughts or listing carry distances for the player's clubs).

During a *round*, if a player uses:

- A yardage book, other maps of the course or a hole-location sheet that has not been approved by the *Committee*,
- An approved yardage book or approved hole-location sheet that contains a handwritten note or information gained in a manner that is not allowed, or
- Any other materials that could help with reading the *line of play* on the *putting green* (whether a specific *putting green* or greens in general),

the player is in **breach of this Local Rule and the penalty statement under Rule 4.3 applies.**

"Use" means to look at:

- Any page of a yardage book or other maps of the course or a hole-location sheet that has not been approved by the *Committee*, or
- Any of the following when doing so could help the player or caddie read the *line of play* on the *putting green*:
  - a page in an approved yardage book or an approved hole-location sheet that contains a handwritten note or information gained in a manner that is not allowed, or
  - any other materials.



**The below responses relate to MLR G-11. The Local Rule allows a Committee to further restrict the use of green-reading materials by requiring that players are limited throughout their round to using only the yardage book that has been approved for use in the competition.**

**General:**

1. **Q.** Do the size and scale limits in Interpretation 4.3a/1 apply when MLR G-11 is in effect?  
**A.** Yes. The size of the Committee approved yardage book must not exceed 7" x 4.25" and the scale of the greens must not exceed 3/8" for every 5 yards.

**Committee Approval Process:**

2. **Q.** May a Committee approve a yardage book that has already been produced?  
**A.** Yes. While the Committee must approve the yardage book prior to the competition, if a yardage book meets the size and scale limits established in Interpretation 4.3a/1 and contains the limited level of detail on the greens that satisfies the Committee, that yardage book may be approved for a future competition.
3. **Q.** Is there a set level of green detail for the yardage books that a Committee may approve?  
**A.** No. MLR G-11 does not establish specific parameters on the level of green detail, but to meet the purpose of MLR G-11 an approved book should only contain minimal detail (such as significant slopes, tiers or false edges that indicate sections of the green).
4. **Q.** May a player create their own yardage book based on the Committee Approved Book, such as by copying the greens and creating the rest of the book based on their own preferences?  
**A.** No. Under MLR G-11 the Committee Approved Book is the only book that may be used by a player during a round.
5. **Q.** Do all hole-location sheets need to be approved?  
**A.** A hole-location sheet must be approved if it contains any detail of the greens, even when the detail includes only a reproduction of a green's outline or minimal slopes. But it does not need to be approved if the information given relates only to the location of the hole and does not include any other detail specific to that green. For example, a sheet with generic circles with lines that only show how far from the front and the left or right edge of the green the hole is located does not need to be approved.

**Handwritten Notes:**

6. **Q.** May a player use the green detail from another source to create handwritten notes in the Committee Approved Book or elsewhere for use during the round?  
**A.** No. Handwritten notes must be based on the player's or caddie's experiences or observations of a ball rolling on a green, or through the player's or caddie's feel or general observations of the green.

7. **Q.** During the round, may a player or caddie use information gathered by use of a level or some other device to create handwritten notes in the Committee Approved Book or elsewhere.  
**A.** No. Handwritten notes must be based on the player's or caddie's experiences or observations of a ball rolling on a green, or through the player's or caddie's feel or general observations of the green.
8. **Q.** During the round, may a player or caddie use material (whether printed or handwritten) to help read the line of play on the putting green that has not been approved but is generic and could apply to any green on the course.  
**A.** No. Any other material that could help with reading the line of play on the putting green (whether a specific green or greens in general) is not allowed.
9. **Q.** May a player or caddie include information seen on TV in their handwritten notes?  
**A.** Yes. Handwritten notes may be based on experiences or observations of a ball rolling on a green, and this includes such observations from a TV broadcast. These notes must be kept in the Committee Approved Book, or on other approved maps of the course or approved hole-location sheets.

#### **Switching Caddies and Partner's Notes:**

10. **Q.** If a player begins his or her round with caddie A, but then switches to caddie B during the round, may the player and caddie B use an Approved Yardage Book that contains handwritten notes produced by caddie A to help read the line of play on the putting green?  
**A.** In the limited circumstances where a player changes caddies during a round (for example, if caddie A were to get sick), the player would be allowed to continue to use both caddie A's and caddie B's handwritten notes for the remainder of that round.
11. **Q.** If a player switches caddies during a tournament, may the player and the new caddie use handwritten notes that were made by the previous caddie to help determine the line of play on the putting green?  
**A.** Yes. During a tournament, handwritten notes that could help read the line of play on the putting green may be used by a player even if those notes were made by a caddie the player has previously had during the tournament. The ability to continue using these notes also includes situations where a caddie takes notes during practice rounds in the days leading up to the tournament but the player begins the tournament with another caddie. This permission does not extend to situations where the player or caddie are attempting to circumvent the limitation on handwritten notes.
12. **Q.** May a player use handwritten notes that could help read the line of play on the putting green from a partner or the partner's caddie in Foursomes or Four-ball competitions?  
**A.** Yes. While the MLR G-11 restricts handwritten notes that could help read the line of play on the putting green to only those made by the player or the player's caddie, Rule 22.2 and 23.5a are clear in stating that a partner or the partner's caddie may provide guidance.



**Application of Penalty:**

- 13. Q.** If a player gets the general penalty for a breach of Rule 4.3 and then breaches MLR G-11 in the same round, how is the penalty applied for the breach of the MLR?
- A.** While MLR G-11 uses the penalty statement from Rule 4.3, a breach of this MLR is independent from a breach of Rule 4.3. This means that a player who breaches Rule 4.3 and then breaches this MLR (or vice versa) in the same round gets two general penalties. Any subsequent breach of either Rule 4.3 or the MLR during the same round results in disqualification.