

Stroke and Distance. Used under rules **#17 Penalty Area**, Rule **#18 Ball Lost or Out of bounds** and Rule **#18 Unplayable** ball.

In golf, the “**stroke and distance**” penalty applies when your ball is **out of bounds (OB)** or **lost outside a penalty area**. It means you take a penalty stroke **and** must play your next shot from the **same spot** as the previous one.

### What “Stroke and Distance” Means

1. **Stroke** – You add **1 penalty stroke** to your score.
2. **Distance** – You must **replay the shot from where you last hit**.

So you effectively lose **both the stroke and the distance gained** from the shot.

### When It Applies

- **Out of Bounds (OB):** Ball crosses a boundary marked by **white stakes/lines**.
- **Lost Ball:** Ball cannot be found within **3 minutes of searching**, and it is **not known or virtually certain** to be in a penalty area.

### Example

- You hit your **tee shot** on a par-4.
- The ball goes **out of bounds**.
- You must **re-tee** and hit again.

### Scoring:

- First shot (OB) = **1**
- Penalty stroke = **+1**
- Next shot from the tee = **your 3rd stroke**

So your next shot from the tee is “**hitting 3.**”

## Provisional Ball (Important Tip)

If you think your ball **might be lost or OB**, you can play a **provisional ball** before going forward to search. **Announce to your foursome you are playing a provisional ball**. This saves time because if the original ball is lost/OB, you can continue with the provisional instead of returning to the original spot.

## Local Rule Alternative (Villages has this rule, Not all courses do.)

Some courses allow a **Local Rule (Model Local Rule E-5)** where instead of stroke-and-distance you may drop in the fairway with a **p 2-stroke penalty and drop within two club lengths**. This is mainly for **pace of play in casual rounds**, not typically used in professional tournaments.

Click on the link below **video using Rule #18** Ball lost or out of bounds.

