

DMD - 2016

Beginning in 2016, you now simply incur a loss of hole penalty in match play or a two-stroke penalty in stroke play for the first time you breach Rule 14-3. If you make a mistake only once, you will no longer face a quick end to your match or competition with a single breach.

However, any subsequent offenses will continue to result in a disqualification penalty. Here are some examples of how the disqualification penalty will be applied:

If you use a distance-measuring device before two different strokes during the round, when a Local Rule permitting distance-measuring devices is not in effect, you are disqualified (See New Decision 14-3/20, but also see New Decision 14-3/19 for multiple uses before a single stroke)

Please note that this new penalty structure is only intended to benefit the player that breaches Rule 14-3 on a single occasion. In other words, if you use an artificial device several times throughout the round, but the discovery of the breach does not occur until the second or later breach, the penalty remains disqualification.

In conclusion, one mistake will cost you some. Two mistakes will send you home.

Finally, there is a subtle change in how Rule 14-3 will be applied related to distance-measuring devices that you will not find in the text of the Rule. Instead, you'll need to reference the text of the Local Rule or Appendix IV. Its effect, though, is significant.

The end of Appendix IV now reads:

A multi-functional device, such as a smartphone or PDA, may be used as a distance-measuring device, but it MUST NOT be used to gauge or measure other conditions where doing so would be a breach of Rule 14-3.

Beginning in 2016, when the **Local Rule** is in effect, you **may** use any application or device to measure distance, provided you do **not** use any feature on the device that, if used, would be a **breach of Rule 14-3**. For example, if you have a laser range finder that has the ability to give you distance only to a target but can also give you the effective playing distance for an uphill shot, you **may** use this device as long as you **don't** use the effective playing distance feature. **Rule 14-3** will now mirror the rest of the **Rules** of Golf, where honesty is expected and presumed. As long as you do **not** use features in **breach** of the **Rules**, you have nothing to worry about and will be playing within the **Rules**.