

T'ain't Necessarily So
(Some golfers believe these are rules, but they are only myths!)

The first 9 items come from a PWGA Rules Clinic. However, I added the last two so quoted the USGA Rules. One is straight from the Rules Book; the other came from the Decisions Book.

1. Your chip or putt comes up a few inches from the hole, so you walk up, remove the flag and while still holding it, tap in the putt. Is that a penalty? No, as long as the ball doesn't touch the flag stick.
2. You are chipping from off the green and you ask a player to attend the flag. Someone says you must either leave the flag in, or have it taken out when chipping from off the green. No so. You may ask to have the flag attended just as you do when on the putting green and the same rules apply -- the holder of the flag must remove the flag before the ball goes into the hole.
3. You miss your putt by a few inches and walking up to the hole you stand on the other side of the hole and tap your putt in. That is OK.
4. Two players are in a bunker at the same time while one hits. No problem here.
5. When using a club for measuring, if the player leaves the club on the ground when dropping and the ball hits the club, there is no penalty, but she must re-drop. (Hint: pick up your club before dropping.)
6. Cleaning a ball by rubbing it on the green is not prohibited, but it isn't a good idea.
7. When removing a rake from a bunker if a player slips a club head under the rake to lift it up and while doing so touches the sand, there is no penalty.
8. On the putting green it is a two stroke penalty if one player's putt hits another ball on the green in STROKE PLAY. In MATCH PLAY there is NO penalty.
9. People with the loudest voices know all the rules - (PWGA calls this is the biggest myth of all)
10. You carry extra clubs into a bunker – is that allowed? Yes, as long as you don't test the surface. It is like carrying the rake in and you know that you may not use the rake to 'test' the sand. [Rule 13-4, Exception 1]
11. You accidentally knock some leaves off a bush or tree while taking a practice swing. Does that cost you a 2 stroke penalty? It depends. If you deliberately did so to improve either your stance or projected flight of the ball it is a penalty. If it is an accident, it depends on whether the stance or projected flight was actually improved. As the Decisions Book puts it 'in some cases a single leaf might trigger a

penalty, while in another case a number of leaves could be knocked down without changing either the stance or the projected flight of the ball'. Hint: take your practice swings well away from your ball and the bush/tree. If you want to know how far you can take your backswing, do it VERY slowly and stop when you get to the branches. Once you take the actual swing it doesn't matter what you knock down as long as you complete your swing. Think of that as you would a divot. [Decisions Book 13-2/22]