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How many clubs? (or maybe 'A Bag Full')



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A player must not start a round with more than fourteen clubs.

DID YOU EVER HEAR THE ONE about the golfer whose ball lands on the cart path but his playing partner won't let him take free relief?

After several practice strokes, he hits off the pavement, scratching the club badly but winning the hole and the match. The punch line is that the club used was his playing partner's, not his.

While this is a funny tale, the reality is that a penalty of loss of hole (match play) or two strokes (stroke play) would have been assessed due to the fact the player had more than 14 clubs accessible. This is why some golf bags come with the sectioned areas in the top, one space for each club.

What do the rules say?

A player must not start a round with more than fourteen clubs. They can add clubs during the round, provided the total number does not exceed fourteen.

The addition or repair of a club(s) must not unduly delay play. Partners may share clubs, provided that the total number of clubs carried by the partners does not exceed fourteen.

Think this is this an obscure rule? Several touring pros have carried more than the allowed number of clubs onto the course and were on the receiving end of the penalty, which caused a drop down the leaderboard. This happened because their caddy forgot to pull out the extra club that was stuffed in their bag for use on the range.

Count your Clubs!

I know golfers that have been playing for decades and still get this rule wrong. You can refer to the June issue of NWO Golf Links for help with this rule and see my humorous books for additional help in tackling the rules and etiquette of golf.

