



Pace of Play Policy of the Real Federación Española de Golf – Rule 5.6b

Appendix: Guidelines and Guidance for Referees on Taking Individual Timings

1. Time allowed

Each hole has been assigned a maximum time for completion, based on the length and difficulty of the hole. The maximum time **allocated by the Committee** to complete the 18 holes will be available before play begins.

2. Definition of “Out of Position”

A group is out of position when it has completed play of a hole (that is, when the ball of the last player in the group to hole out has been removed from the hole) **later** than the maximum time allowed (according to the time sheet provided by the Committee) and **has not maintained its starting interval** with the group ahead.

If the group has waited for a referee’s ruling or for another justified delay that causes the group to be out of position, the group is expected to regain its position within a reasonable time.

In stroke play, players may — and are encouraged to — play out of turn (“Ready Golf”) in a safe and responsible manner in accordance with Rule 6.4b(2) at any time, especially when their group is out of position.

3. Procedure When a Group Is Out of Position

- a. If a group is out of position **without justified cause**¹, it will be given an **Official Warning** to speed up its pace of play. This first **Official Warning** will be considered a **Bad Time** for the group if it does not regain its position during the monitoring phase or within a specified interval.
- b. Once the **Official Warning** has been received, the group may, at the discretion of the chief referee, be monitored for a maximum of two holes, which is the maximum limit for one monitoring session per round
- c. Monitoring is a tool to ensure a good pace of play for the entire group. It is an opportunity to regain position without consequences or penalties, unless an **Excessive Stroke Time** occurs as provided in section 7.
- d. When, in the opinion of the chief referee, one or more players in the group **have not made a reasonable effort** to help regain position, the penalty derived from the official warning may be **applied individually** only to such player or players.

¹ **Justified Cause:** Such as waiting for a referee’s ruling or another justified delay, such as searching for a ball, that causes the group to be out of position.



- e. A **monitored group may be officially timed** at any time, at the discretion of the chief referee, when circumstances warrant it or when it is considered that the monitored group is not making the necessary effort to regain its position.
- f. If the group does not regain its position within the maximum interval granted, it will be timed, in which case each player in the group will be subject to individual timing by the referee. Each player will be informed that they are "out of position" and that they are being **officially timed**.

4. Allowed Time for a Stroke

The maximum time assigned per stroke is **50 seconds** for the **first player** to play:

- a stroke from the teeing area;
- an approach stroke to the green on a par 4 or par 5 hole;
- a lay-up stroke on a par 5 hole;
- a stroke from around the green;
- a stroke from the green.

The maximum time allowed per stroke **for the following players** to play is **40 seconds**.

A **10 percent tolerance** will be allowed for the maximum assigned times of 40 or 50 seconds, meaning they will have 44 or 55 seconds available.

Timing will **start** when the player has had sufficient time to reach their ball, it is their turn to play, and they can do so without interference or distractions. The 50 or 40-second limit **includes** all preparation for the stroke, such as **determining the distance** and other conditions (such as wind), putting on a glove, choosing a club, etc.

On the putting green, timing will **begin** when the player has had a reasonable time to lift, clean, and replace their ball, repair damage, and remove loose impediments on their line of play.

The 40 or 50-second limit **includes all preparation** for the putt, including time to examine the line from different angles and aligning the ball when replacing it. A **10 percent tolerance** will be allowed for the maximum assigned times of 40 or 50 seconds, meaning they will have 44 or 55 seconds available.

Official timing ceases when the group is back in position, and players will be **informed** of this.

Note: Under certain circumstances, based on the timing of the players in the group, the referee in charge of timing may decide to time an individual player or two players within a group of three or four, instead of the entire group.



5. Penalty for Breach of Policy

"Bad times" are maintained throughout the entire championship in stroke play, with one exception: those resulting from failing to regain position within the number of holes established by the referee, following an official out-of-position warning, only affect the round in which they occur and do not accumulate for the rest of the competition. In match play, bad times only apply to the specific match, whether it is 18 or 36 holes.

Official Warning (Bad Time): Stroke Play and Match Play

After receiving an **Official Warning** from the referee for being **out of position without a justified cause** and failing to regain said position within the established interval, all players in the group will be informed that the **next bad time** will result in a **one-stroke penalty**.

Said **Official Warning** will be rescinded or cancelled if the position is regained within the established interval.

	Stroke Play	Match Play
1 Bad Time	Official Warning	Official Warning
2 Bad Times	One Penalty Stroke	One Penalty Stroke
3 Bad Times	Two Additional Penalty Strokes	Loss of Hole
4 Bad Times	Disqualification	Disqualification

Penalty strokes for bad times **will only be applied** when the player is being timed and exceeds the allowed time for the stroke.

Note: A player cannot incur a new **Bad Time** until they have been informed of the previous one.

6. Procedure when a group is out of position again

If the same group is found to be **out of position** on more than one occasion during the same round or in a subsequent round of the competition, the procedure provided in section 3 will be applied on each of those occasions.

7. Excessive Time for the Stroke

At any time, **without being monitored or timed**, if a player is observed taking more than **90 seconds** to play a stroke, they will be notified as soon as possible that they have exceeded the time and will receive the penalty corresponding to a **Bad Time** in the penalty table.



The Committee may decide to start **official timing** for a player who has received a **Bad Time**, even if the group is not out of position. In such circumstances, the player remains subject to the procedures described in section 4 above (i.e., limits of 50 and 40 seconds per stroke). In this case, their next **Bad Time** would result in a **one-stroke penalty**, and so on.

If the Chief Referee decides not to begin individual timing, the player may still receive another **Excessive Time for the Stroke**, which will constitute a second **Bad Time** and carry the penalty corresponding to said second **Bad Time**, i.e., **one penalty stroke**.

Rules Committee of the Royal Spanish Golf Federation, February 20, 2026