

## Frequently-Asked Questions - Smartphone Usage in Competition.

- 1) Can a player use a smartphone-based distance-measuring device (DMD)?  
**Yes**, as long as the club has adopted a local rule and the smartphone is conforming to USGA/NCGA rules and clarifications.
- 2) What is the definition of a conforming smartphone as a distance-measuring device (DMD)?
  - a. The golf application on the smartphone may **only** determine **distance**.
  - b. The smartphone does not have any **golf-specific** applications that could affect play by **directly** measuring conditions such as slope, temperature, wind speed and/or provide club selection recommendations.
- 3) Is my smartphone legal even though it has a weather application?  
**Yes**. A weather application doesn't directly measure conditions, it only provides as reported general area conditions. In addition, the USGA has deemed weather applications as a safety precaution to avoid dangerous weather.
- 4) My smartphone included an application to measure slope when laid on a surface and/or a topographical map that I could use to determine slope over distance. Is my phone still legal?  
**Yes**. The NCGA has clarified that only **golf-specific** applications - defined as "whose sole capability is to directly measure or gauge conditions other than distance that might affect a competitor's play of a hole" - make a smartphone illegal. The NCGA adds, "Other apps, such as a level, are permissible to have on a Smart Phone being used as a distance-measuring device because a level could be used in a way that does not breach the Rules."
- 5) OK, this is confusing. A level could be used to help me on the greens, but it is legal to have on my smartphone for competition?  
**Yes**. The NCGA clarification is attempting to eliminate illegal **golf-specific applications**, not the myriad of **general** applications that may be downloaded or loaded on the smartphone by default from the manufacturer. A player could never legally use any smartphone application or device that directly measures the break on a green such as a level. But, merely having a general application on the smartphone that acts as a level does not render the device as illegal to use in competition.
- 6) I have a golf-specific application on my smartphone that helps me adjust to slope, but I'm not going to use it. Is my phone legal for competition play?  
**No**. You must uninstall that application and/or any other golf-specific application whose sole capability to directly measure or gauge conditions other than distance for the smartphone to be legal for usage in competition.
- 7) Can I use my smartphone as a phone in competition?  
**Yes**. The NCGA says, "Smart Phones may be used as phones at any time so long as the player does not disrupt or unduly delay play, and the phone is not used to breach another Rule (i.e. calling an instructor for advice)." STMGC policies discourages the usage of any phones on the course and our policies state that phones should be set to silent which **includes silencing both ringers and vibrations** or the player could be subject to action by the board.