

**SUMMARIZED SELECTIONS
FROM
THE RULES OF GOLF FOR 2023**

What follows is intended to be an accurate paraphrasing of portions of the *Rules of Golf for 2023* with emphasis on the Rules that most often come into play during our competitions.

Any errors are the author's and are inadvertent.

Questions of accuracy can be addressed by viewing of *The Rules of Golf for 2023* available at the USGA website.

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PLAYING BY THE RULES: 2019

Part One

Areas of the Course

GENERAL AREA

The **General Area** includes all parts of the course except the following four areas; your Teeing Area, Penalty Areas, Bunkers and your Putting Green.

YOUR TEEING AREA

Your **Teeing Area** is the area *from which you must play* when starting a hole.

It is measured from the outside edges of the tee markers and two club lengths back from the front the front of the tee markers.

All other **teeing areas** are part of the **General Area**.

PENALTY AREAS

All **Penalty Areas** are either Red or Yellow penalty areas.

With a one stroke penalty, one can take relief as stroke and distance (playing from where the previous stroke was played) or back on the line (the line determined by the hole and the point at which the ball entered the **Penalty Area**).

For a **Red Penalty Area**, the additional option is within two club lengths of the point at which the ball entered the **Penalty Area**.

(Note: there will no longer be an option for the opposite side of a **Red Penalty Area**.)

If any part of the ball is in the **Penalty Area**, the ball is in the **Penalty Area**.

BUNKERS

All **Bunkers** on the course.

There is a penalty if one touches the sand in any way to test the condition of the sand.

There is also a penalty for touching the sand right in front or behind the ball, or taking a practice swing, or in taking the backswing of a stroke.

If any part of the ball is in the **Bunker**, the ball is in the **Bunker**.

YOUR PUTTING GREEN

The *Putting Green* of the hole being played.

A ball on your *Putting Green* may be marked, lifted and cleaned.

Loose sand or soil may be removed without penalty on your *Putting Green* but nowhere else on the course.

Damage (ball marks, spike marks, etc.) to your *Putting Green* may be repaired without penalty.

There is a penalty for testing the surface of your *Putting Green* by rubbing the surface or rolling a ball.

There is no penalty for accidentally causing the ball to move, but it must be replaced.

If the ball is moved by natural forces (wind, water, gravity), it may or may not have to be replaced.

If it had previously been marked and lifted, it must be replaced, otherwise, it must be played from its new position.

If any part of the ball touches the *Putting Green*, the ball is on the *Putting Green*.

Part 2

From The Tee

STARTING PLAY OF A HOLE

A player has started a hole when he or she makes a stroke to begin the hole.

Making a Stroke

The player must fairly strike at the ball with the head of the club such that there is only momentary contact between the club and the ball and must not push, scrape or scoop the ball.

If the player's club accidentally hits the ball more than once, there has been only one stroke and there is **no penalty**.

In making a *stroke*, the player must not anchor the club, either:

Directly, by holding the club or a gripping hand against any part of the body (**except** that the player may hold the club or a gripping hand against a hand or forearm), or

Indirectly, through use of an "**anchor point**," by holding a forearm against any part of the body to use a gripping hand as a stable point around which the other hand may swing the club.

If the player's club, gripping hand or forearm merely touches his or her body or clothing during the stroke, without being held against the body, there is no breach of this Rule.

For the purposes of this Rule, "forearm" means the part of the arm below the elbow joint and includes the wrist.

The player must not make a stroke from a stance with a foot deliberately placed on each side of, or with either foot deliberately touching, the line of play or an extension of that line behind the ball.

For this Rule only, the line of play does not include a reasonable distance on either side.

Exception – There Is No Penalty If Stance Is Taken Accidentally or to Avoid Another Player's Line of Play.

Penalty for Breach of Rule: Two Penalty Strokes or loss of hole in match play.

In stroke play, a stroke made in breach of this Rule counts and the player gets **two penalty strokes**.

The hole has started even if the stroke was made from outside the *teeing area* or the stroke was cancelled under a Rule.

A player must start each hole by playing a ball from anywhere inside the *teeing area*.

If a player who is starting a hole plays a ball from outside the *teeing area* (including from a wrong set of tee markers for a different teeing location on the same hole or a different hole):

Match Play. There is no penalty, **but** the opponent may cancel the stroke:

- This must be done promptly and before either player makes another stroke. When the opponent cancels the stroke, he or she cannot withdraw the cancellation.
- If the opponent cancels the stroke, the player must play a ball from inside the *teeing area* and it is still his or her turn to play.
- If the opponent does not cancel the stroke, the stroke counts and the ball is *in play* and must be played as it lies.

Stroke Play. The player gets the *general penalty* (**two penalty strokes**) and must correct the mistake by playing a ball from inside the *teeing area*:

- The ball played from outside the *teeing area* is not *in play*.
- That stroke and any more strokes before the mistake is corrected (including strokes made and any penalty strokes solely from playing that ball) do not count.
- If the player does not correct the mistake before making a stroke to begin another hole or, for the final hole of the round, before returning his or her scorecard, the player is **disqualified**.

TEERING AREA RULES

A ball is in the *teeing area* when any part of the ball touches or is above any part of the *teeing area*.

The player may stand outside the *teeing area* in making the stroke at a ball in the *teeing area*.

The ball must be played from either a tee placed in or on the ground, or the ground itself.

Before making a stroke, the player may take these actions in the *teeing area* to improve the conditions affecting the stroke:

- Alter the surface of the ground in the *teeing area* (such as by making an indentation with a club or foot),
- Move, bend or break grass, weeds and other natural objects that are attached or growing in the ground in the *teeing area*,
- Remove or press down sand and soil in the *teeing area*, and

- Remove dew, frost and water in the *teeing area*.

The location of the tee-markers is set by the Committee to define each *teeing area* and should remain in that same location for all players who will play from that *teeing area*.

If the player improves the conditions affecting the stroke by moving any such tee-marker before playing from the *teeing area*, he or she gets **two penalty strokes** (**loss of hole** in match play).

Part 3

Where'd It Go

HOW TO FAIRLY SEARCH FOR BALL

A player is responsible for finding his or her ball *in play* after each stroke.

A ball is *lost* if not found in **three minutes** after the player or his or her caddie begins to search for it.

If a ball is found in that time but it is uncertain whether it is the player's ball, the player must promptly attempt to identify the ball, and is allowed a reasonable time to do so. If the player does not identify his or her ball in that reasonable time, the ball is *lost*.

The player may fairly search for the ball by taking reasonable actions to find and identify it, such as:

- Moving sand and water, and
- Moving or bending grass, bushes, tree branches and other growing or attached natural objects, and breaking such objects, but **only if** such breaking is a result of other reasonable actions taken to find or identify the ball.

If taking such reasonable actions as part of a fair search improves the conditions affecting the stroke: There is no penalty if the improvement results from a fair search, **but** if the improvement results from actions that exceeded what was reasonable for a fair search, the player gets **two penalty strokes (loss of hole)** in match play).

In trying to find and identify the ball, the player may remove *loose impediments* and may remove *movable obstructions*.

What to Do If Sand Affecting Lie of Player's Ball Is Moved While Trying to Find or Identify It

- The player must re-create the original lie in the sand but may leave a small part of the ball visible if the ball had been covered by sand.
- If the player plays the ball without having re-created the original lie, the player gets **two penalty strokes (loss of hole)** in match play).

Lifting Ball to Identify It

If a ball might be a player's ball but cannot be identified as it lies:

- The player may lift the ball to identify it (including by rotating it), **but**:
- The spot of the ball must first be *marked*, and the ball must not be cleaned more than needed to identify it (**except** on the *putting green*).

If the lifted ball is the player's ball or another player's ball, it must be *replaced* on its original spot.

If the player lifts his or her ball under this Rule when not reasonably necessary to identify it (**except** on the *putting green*), fails to *mark* the spot of the ball before lifting it or cleans it when not allowed, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place: two penalty strokes (loss of hole in match play).

Ball Accidentally Moved in Trying to Find or Identify It

There is no penalty if the player's ball is accidentally *moved* by the player, opponent or anyone else while trying to find or identify it.

But, if this happens, the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated). In doing so:

- If the ball was on, under or against any *immovable obstruction, integral object, boundary object* or growing or attached natural object, the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot on, under or against such object.
- If the ball was covered by sand, the original *lie* must be re-created and the ball must be *replaced* in that *lie*, **but** the player may leave a small part of the ball visible when doing so.

Penalty for Breach of Rule: **two penalty strokes (loss of hole** in match play).

WHEN BALL IS OUT OF BOUNDS.

A ball at rest is *out of bounds* only when all of it is outside the boundary edge of the course.

A ball is in bounds when any part of the ball:

- Lies on or touches the ground or anything else (such as any natural or artificial object) inside the boundary edge, or
- Is above the boundary edge or any other part of the course.

A player may stand *out of bounds* to play a ball on the course.

WHAT TO DO WHEN BALL IS LOST OR OUT OF BOUNDS

If a ball is *lost* or *out of bounds*, the player must take *stroke-and-distance* relief by adding **one penalty stroke** and playing the original ball or another ball from where the previous stroke was made.

Exception: Instead of taking *stroke-and-distance* relief, the player may substitute another ball his or her ball has not been found and it is *known or virtually certain* that the ball:

- Came to rest on the course and was moved by an *outside influence* or played as a *wrong ball* by another player,
- Came to rest on the course in or on a *movable obstruction* or an *abnormal course condition*,
- Is in a **penalty area**, or
- Was deliberately deflected or stopped by any person.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: Two Strokes (loss of hole in match play).

WHEN PROVISIONAL BALL IS ALLOWED

If a ball might be *lost* outside a penalty area or be *out of bounds*, to save time the player may play another ball provisionally under penalty of stroke and distance.

Before the stroke is made, the player must announce that he or she is going to play a *provisional* ball.

The player may continue to play the *provisional* ball without it losing its status as a *provisional* ball so long as it is played from a spot that is the same distance or farther from the hole than where the original ball is estimated to be.

The provisional ball becomes the player's ball in play under penalty of stroke and distance in either of these two cases:

1. When original ball is lost anywhere on course except in **penalty area** or is *out of bounds*. The original ball is no longer in play (even if it is then found on the course after the end of the three-minute search time) and is now a wrong ball that must not be played.
2. When *provisional* ball is played from spot nearer hole than where original ball is estimated to be. The original ball is no longer in play (even if it is then found on the course before the end of the three-minute search time or is found nearer the hole than had been estimated) and is now a wrong ball that must not be played.

If the player plays a *provisional* ball into the same general location as the original ball and is unable to identify which ball is which:

1. If only one of the balls is found on the course, that ball is treated as the *provisional* ball which is now **in play**.
2. If both balls are found on the course, the player must choose one of the balls to be treated as the *provisional* ball which is now **in play**, and the other ball is treated as *lost* and must not be played.

When a *provisional* ball has not yet become the ball **in play**, it must be abandoned in either of these two cases:

1. When original ball is found on course outside *penalty area* before the end of the three Minute search time. The player must play the original ball as it lies.
2. When original ball is found in *penalty area* or is known or virtually certain to be in *penalty area*. The player must either play the original ball as it lies or take penalty relief.

Part 4

Gotta Lift It

Marking, Lifting and Cleaning Ball

This Rule applies to the deliberate “lifting” of a player’s ball at rest, which includes picking up the ball by hand, rotating it or otherwise deliberately causing it to move from its spot.

a. Spot of Ball to Be Lifted and Replaced Must Be Marked

Before lifting a ball under a Rule requiring the ball to be replaced on its original spot, the player must mark the spot which means to:

- Place a ball-marker right behind or right next to the ball, or
- Hold a club on the ground right behind or right next to the ball.

If the spot is marked with a ball-marker, after replacing the ball the player must remove the ball-marker before making a stroke.

If the player lifts the ball without marking its spot, marks its spot in a wrong way or makes a stroke with a ball-marker left in place, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

When a ball is lifted to take relief under a Rule, the player is not required to mark the spot before lifting the ball.

b. Who May Lift Ball

The player’s ball may be lifted under the Rules only by:

- The player, or
- Anyone the player authorizes, but such authorization must be given each time before the ball is lifted rather than given generally for the round.

Exception –When the player’s ball is on the *putting green*, his or her caddie may lift the ball without the player’s authorization.

If the caddie lifts the ball without authorization when it is anywhere except on the putting green, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

c. Cleaning Lifted Ball

A ball lifted from the putting green may always be cleaned.

A ball lifted from anywhere else may always be cleaned **except** when it is lifted:

- To See If It Is Cut or Cracked. Cleaning is not allowed.

- To Identify It. Cleaning is allowed only as needed to identify it.
- Because It Interferes with Play. Cleaning is not allowed.
- To See If It Lies in Condition Where Relief Is Allowed. Cleaning is not allowed, unless the player then takes relief under a Rule.

If the player cleans a lifted ball when not allowed, he or she gets **one penalty stroke**.

Replacing Ball on Spot

This Rule applies whenever a ball is lifted or moved and a Rule requires it to be replaced on a spot.

a. Original Ball Must Be Used

The original ball must be used when replacing a ball.

Exception – Another Ball May Be Used When:

- The original ball cannot be recovered with reasonable effort and in a few seconds, so long as the player did not deliberately cause the ball to become unrecoverable,
- The original ball is cut or cracked,
- Play resumes after a suspension of play, or
- The original ball was played by another player as a wrong ball.

b. Who Must Replace Ball and How It Must Be Replaced

(1) Who May Replace Ball: The player's ball must be replaced under the Rules only by:

- The player, or
- Any person who lifted the ball or caused it to move (even if that person was not allowed to do so under the Rules).

If the player plays a ball that was replaced by someone not allowed to do so, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

(2) How Ball Must Be Replaced. The ball must be replaced by setting it down on the required spot and letting it go so that it stays on that spot.

If the player plays a ball that was replaced in a wrong way but on the required spot, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

c. Spot Where Ball Is Replaced

The ball must be replaced on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated, except when the ball must be replaced on a different spot under a Rule.

If the ball was at rest on, under or against any immovable obstruction, integral object, boundary object or growing or attached natural object:

- The “spot” of the ball includes its vertical location relative to the ground.
- This means that the ball must be replaced on its original spot on, under or against such object.

If any loose impediments were removed as a result of the ball being lifted or moved or before the ball was replaced, they do not need to be replaced.

d. Where to Replace Ball When Original Lie Altered

If the lie of a lifted or moved ball that must be replaced is altered, the player must replace the ball in this way:

(1) Ball in Sand. When the ball was in sand, whether in a *bunker* or anywhere else on the course:

- In replacing the ball on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated, the player must re-create the original lie as much as possible.
- In re-creating the lie, the player may leave a small part of the ball visible if the ball had been covered by sand.

(2) Ball Anywhere Except in Sand. When the ball was anywhere except in sand, the player must replace the ball by placing it on the nearest spot with a lie most similar to the original lie that is:

- Within one club-length from its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated,
- Not nearer the hole, and
- In the same area of the course as that spot.

If the player knows that the original lie was altered but does not know what the lie was, the player must estimate the original lie and replace the ball under (1) or (2).

e. What to Do If Replaced Ball Does Not Stay on Original Spot

If the player tries to replace a ball but it does not stay on its original spot, the player must try a second time.

If the ball again does not stay on that spot, the player must replace the ball by placing it on the nearest spot where the ball will stay at rest, but with these limits depending on where the original spot is located:

- The spot must not be nearer the hole.
- Original Spot in General Area. The nearest spot must be in the general area.
- Original Spot in Bunker or Penalty Area. The nearest spot must be either in the same bunker or in the same penalty area.
- Original Spot on Putting Green. The nearest spot must be either on the putting green or in the general area.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Part 5

I Need Relief

Dropping Ball in Relief Area

This Rule applies whenever a player must **drop** a ball in taking relief under a Rule.

Original Ball or Another Ball May Be Used.

Ball Must Be Dropped in Right Way

The player must **drop** a ball in the right way, which means all three of these requirements:

(1) **Player Must Drop Ball.** The ball must be **dropped** only by the player. Neither the player's caddie nor anyone else may do so.

(2) **Ball Must Be Dropped Straight Down from Knee Height Without Touching Player or Equipment.** The player must let go of the ball from a location at knee height so that the ball:

a. Falls straight down, without the player throwing, spinning or rolling it or using any other motion that might affect where the ball will come to rest, and

b. Does not touch any part of the player's body or equipment before it hits the ground.

"Knee height" means the height of the player's knee when in a standing position.

(3) **Ball Must Be Dropped in Relief Area.** The player may stand either inside or outside the **relief area** when **dropping** the ball.

If a ball is **dropped** in a wrong way in breach of one or more of these three requirements, the player must **drop** a ball again in the right way, and there is no limit to the number of times the player must do so. A ball **dropped** in the wrong way does not count as one of the two **drops** required before a ball must be **placed**.

Ball **dropped** in the right way must come to rest in **relief area**.

It does not matter whether the ball, after hitting the ground, touches any person, equipment or other **outside influence** before coming to rest.

There is no penalty to any player if a ball **dropped** in the right way **accidentally** hits any person, **equipment** or other **outside influence** before coming to rest.

If the ball comes to rest outside the **relief area**, the player must **drop** a ball in the right way a second time.

If that ball also comes to rest outside the **relief area**, the player must then complete taking relief by placing a ball the spot where the ball **dropped** the second time first touched the ground.

If the placed ball does not stay at rest on that spot, the player must place a ball on that spot a second time.

If the ball placed a second time also does not stay on that spot, the player must place a ball on the nearest spot where the ball will stay at rest in the *relief area* not nearer the hole.

(4) What to Do if Ball Dropped in Right Way is Deliberately Deflected or Stopped by Person

For purposes of this Rule, a *dropped* ball is “deliberately deflected or stopped” when:

- A person deliberately touches the ball in motion after it hits the ground, or
- The ball in motion hits any equipment or other object or any person (such as the player’s caddie) that a player deliberately positioned or left in a particular location so that the equipment, object or person might deflect or stop the ball in motion.

When a ball *dropped* in the right way is deliberately deflected or stopped by any person (whether in the relief area or outside the relief area) before it comes to rest:

- The player must *drop* a ball again, and ball that was deliberately deflected or stopped does not count as one of the two *drops* required before a ball must be placed.
- If the ball was deliberately deflected or stopped by any player or his or her caddie, that player gets the **general penalty** of **two strokes** or **loss of hole** in match play.

Exception – If a ball *dropped* in the right way is deliberately deflected or stopped (whether in the relief area or outside the relief area) when there is *no reasonable chance* it will come to rest in the relief area:

- There is no penalty to any player, and
- The *dropped* ball is treated as having come to rest outside the relief area and counts as one of the two *drops* required before a ball must be placed.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place: **Two Strokes or **loss of hole**** in match play.

OBJECTS OR CONDITIONS THAT CAN INTERFERE WITH PLAY

Embedded Ball.

Relief is allowed only when a player’s ball is *embedded* in the *general area*. The player may take free relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in the *relief area*.

Reference Point: The point behind the location of the **embedded** ball in the *general area*.

Size of *relief area* measured from *reference point*: **One club-length**, but with these limits:

1. Must be in the *general area*,
2. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*.

Loose Impediments

Loose impediments are unattached (not growing, solidly embedded or sticking to the ball) *natural objects* such as stones, leaves, branches, animal waste, insects, ant hills, aeration plugs, etc.

Loose impediments may be removed anywhere on or off the course when the ball is at rest.

If removal of the *loose impediment* causes the ball to move, there is a **one stroke penalty** and the ball must be **replaced**.

The penalty *does not apply* if the ball is on the *teeing ground* or the *putting green*.

Sand, loose soil, dew, frost and water *are not loose impediments*.

Movable Obstructions

Movable obstructions are artificial objects that can be moved with reasonable effort without damage to the obstruction or to the course.

Movable obstructions may be removed anywhere on or off the course when the ball is at rest, except that the tee markers of the *teeing area* may not be moved.

If removal of the *movable obstruction* causes the ball to move, there is *no penalty* but the ball must be **replaced**.

If the ball lies in or on the *movable obstruction*, and the ball is on the *putting green*, after moving the obstruction, place a ball on the spot right under where the ball was in or on the *movable obstruction*.

If the ball lies in or on the *movable obstruction*, and the ball is *not on* the *putting green*, after moving the obstruction, *drop* a ball in the relief area based on the spot right under where the ball was in or on the *movable obstruction*.

Out of Bounds stakes may not be removed.

Abnormal Course Conditions

Abnormal course conditions include *animal holes, ground under repair, immovable obstructions and temporary water*.

Unless the ball is unplayable as it lies, one may take relief from interference by an *abnormal course condition* anywhere on the course *except when the ball lies in a penalty area*.

Interference occurs when the ball touches or lies in the *abnormal course condition* or when the *abnormal course condition* interferes with the intended stance or the area of the intended swing.

Additionally, only if the ball lies on the *putting green*, interference occurs when an *abnormal course condition*, on or off the *putting green*, interferes with the intended *line of play*.

When the ball lies in the *general area*, take complete relief and drop in the appropriate relief area of the *general area*.

Relief for Ball in General Area.

If a player's ball is in the *general area* and there is interference by an *abnormal course condition* on the course, the player may take free relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in the *relief area*.

Reference Point: The nearest point of complete relief in the *general area*.

Size of *relief area* measured from *reference point*: **One club-length**, but with these limits:

1. Must be in the *general area*,
2. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*, and
3. There must be complete relief from all interference by the *abnormal course condition*.

Relief for Ball in a Bunker.

- (1) *Free Relief*. If a player's ball is in a *bunker* and there is interference by an *abnormal course condition* on the course, the player may take free relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in this *relief area*.

Reference Point: The nearest point of *complete relief* in the *bunker*.

Size of *relief area* measured from *reference point*: **One club-length**, but with these limits:

1. Must be in the *bunker*,
2. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*.
3. If there is no such nearest point of *complete relief* in the *bunker*, the player may still take this relief by using the point of *maximum available relief* in the *bunker* as the *reference point*.

B. Penalty Relief: Playing from Outside Bunker.

For **one penalty stroke**, the player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in a **relief area** based on a **reference line** going straight back from the hole through the original spot of the ball:

Reference Point: A point on the *course* chosen by the player that is on the **reference line** and is farther from the hole than that original spot (with no limit on how far back on the line):

Size of **relief area** measured from **reference point**: **One club-length**, but with these limits:

1. Must not be nearer the hole than the **reference point**, and
2. May be in any area of the course, but
3. If more than one area of the course is located within **one club-length** of the **reference point**, the ball must come to rest in the **relief area** in the same area of the course that the ball first touched when *dropped* in the **relief area**.

Relief for Ball on Putting Green.

When the ball lies on the **putting green**, relief can be taken by placing a ball at the point of complete relief on the **putting green** or **general area**.

If complete relief is not possible, the ball can be placed at the appropriate point of maximum available relief on the **putting green** or **general area**.

Dangerous Animal Condition.

A **dangerous animal condition** exists when a dangerous animal (such as poisonous snakes, stinging bees, alligators, fire ants or bears) near a ball could cause serious physical injury to the player if he or she had to play the ball as it lies.

A player may take relief from interference by a **dangerous animal condition** no matter where his or her ball is on the course, except that relief is not allowed:

- When playing the ball as it lies would be clearly unreasonable because of something other than the **dangerous animal condition** (for example, when a player would be unable to make a stroke because of where the ball lies in a bush), or
- When interference exists only because the player chooses a club, type of stance or swing or direction of play that is clearly unreasonable under the circumstances.

Relief From Dangerous Animal Condition.

(1) When ball is anywhere except **penalty area**. The player may take the same relief as for **abnormal course conditions** depending on whether the ball is in the **general area**, in a **bunker** or on the **putting green**.

(2) When ball is in **penalty area**. The player may take free relief or penalty relief:

- A. Free Relief: Playing from Inside *Penalty Area*.** The player may take free relief except that the nearest point of *complete relief* and the *relief area* must be in the *penalty area*.
- B. Penalty Relief: Playing from Outside *Penalty Area*.** Relief options are the same as for relief from a *Penalty Area*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place: Two Strokes (loss of hole in match play).

PENALTY AREAS

Penalty areas are defined as either **red** or **yellow**. A player may stand in a *penalty area* to play a ball outside the *penalty area*, including after taking relief from the *penalty area*.

The player may either:

Play the ball as it lies without penalty, under the same Rules that apply to a ball in the *general area* (which means there are no specific Rules limiting how a ball may be played from a *penalty area*), or

Play a ball from outside the *penalty area* by taking penalty relief.

Relief for Ball Not Found but in Penalty Area.

If a player's ball has not been found and it is *known or virtually certain* that the ball came to rest in a *penalty area*, the player may take penalty relief.

Once the player puts another ball *in play* to take relief in this way, the original ball is no longer in play and must not be played. This is true even if it is then found on the course before the end of the three-minute search time.

But, if it is **not** *known or virtually certain* that the ball came to rest in a *penalty area*, and the ball is *lost*, the player must take *stroke-and-distance* relief.

Relief for Ball in Penalty Area.

The player has these relief options, each with **one penalty stroke**:

Stroke-and-Distance Relief. The player may play the original ball or another ball from where the previous stroke was made.

Back-On-the-Line Relief. The player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in a *relief area* that is based on a *reference line* going straight back from the hole through the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the *penalty area*:

Reference point: The point on the *reference line* at which the dropped ball strikes the course with no limit on how far back on the line.

Size of relief area measured from reference point: One club-length in any direction, but not in the same penalty area.

Lateral Relief (Only for Red Penalty Area). When the ball last crossed the edge of a *red penalty area*, the player may drop the original ball or another ball in this lateral *relief area*.

Reference point: The estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the *red penalty area*.

Size of relief area measured from reference point: Two club-lengths, but with these limits:

1. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*, and
2. May be in any area of the course except the same *penalty area*, but
3. If more than one area of the course is located within **two club-lengths** of the *reference point*, the ball must come to rest in the *relief area* in the same area of the course that the ball first touched when *dropped* in the *relief area*.

No Relief under Other Rules for Ball in Penalty Area.

When a player's ball is in a *penalty area*, there is no relief for:

- Interference by an *abnormal course condition*,
- An *embedded ball*, or
- An *unplayable ball*.

Playing from the wrong place results in a **two stroke penalty** (loss of hole in Match Play).

Part 6 In A Bunker

BUNKERS

A ball is in a *bunker* when any part of the ball touches sand on the ground inside the edge of the *bunker*, or is inside the edge of the bunker and rests:

1. On ground where sand normally would be (such as where sand was blown or washed away by wind or water), or
2. In or on a loose impediment, movable obstruction, abnormal course condition or integral object that touches sand in the bunker or is on ground where sand normally would be.

If a ball lies on soil or grass or other growing or attached natural objects inside the edge of the bunker without touching any sand, the ball is not in the bunker.

Removing Loose Impediments and Movable Obstructions

Before playing a ball in a *bunker*, a player may remove *loose impediments* and *movable obstructions*. This includes any reasonable touching or movement of the sand in the *bunker* that happens while doing so.

Restrictions on Touching Sand in Bunker

(1) *When Touching Sand Results in Penalty*. Before making a stroke at a ball in a bunker, a player must not:

- a. Deliberately touch sand in the *bunker* with a hand, club, rake or other object **to test the condition of the sand** to learn information for the next stroke, or
- b. Touch sand in the *bunker* with a club:
 1. In the area right in front of or right behind the ball (except as allowed in fairly searching for a ball or in removing a loose impediment or movable obstruction),
 2. In making a practice swing, or
 3. In making the backswing for a stroke.

(2) *When Touching Sand Does Not Result in Penalty*. The player may touch sand in the *bunker* in any other way, including:

- a. Digging in with the feet to take a stance for a practice swing or the stroke,
- b. Smoothing the *bunker* to care for the course,
- c. Placing clubs, equipment or other objects in the *bunker* (whether by throwing or setting them down),

- d. Measuring, marking, lifting, replacing or taking other actions under a Rule,
- e. Leaning on a club to rest, stay balanced or prevent a fall, or
- f. Striking the sand in frustration or anger.

But the player gets the *two stroke penalty (loss of hole in match play)* if his or her actions in touching the sand improve the conditions affecting the stroke.

(3) *No Restrictions After Ball Is Played Out of Bunker.* After a ball in a *bunker* is played and it is *outside* the *bunker*, the player may:

- a. Touch sand in the *bunker* without penalty, and
- b. Smooth sand in the *bunker* to care for the course without penalty.

This is true even if the ball comes to rest outside the *bunker* and:

The player is required or allowed by the Rules to take stroke-and-distance relief by dropping a ball in the bunker, or

The sand in the bunker is on the player's *line of play* for the next stroke from outside the *bunker*.

But if the ball played from the *bunker* comes back into the *bunker*, or the player takes relief by dropping a ball in the *bunker*, the restrictions again apply to that ball in play in the *bunker*.

On The Green

PUTTING GREENS

When Ball is on *Putting Green*

A ball is on the *putting green* when any part of the ball:

- Touches the *putting green*, or
- Lies on or in anything (such as a loose impediment or an obstruction) and is inside the edge of the *putting green*.

Marking, Lifting and Cleaning Ball on *Putting Green*

A ball on the putting green may be lifted and cleaned.

The spot of the ball must be marked before it is lifted and the ball must be **replaced** on its original spot.

Improvements Allowed on *Putting Green*

A player may take these two actions on the *putting green*, no matter whether the ball is **on or off** the *putting green*:

1. Sand and loose soil on the *putting green* (but not anywhere else on the course) may be removed without penalty.
2. A player may repair damage on the *putting green* without penalty by taking reasonable actions to restore the *putting green* as nearly as possible to its original condition, but only:
 - By using his or her hand, foot or other part of the body or a normal ball-mark repair tool, tee, club or similar item of normal equipment, and
 - Without unreasonably delaying play.

“Damage on the *putting green*” means any damage caused by a person or outside influence, such as:

- Ball marks, shoe damage (such as spike marks) and scrapes or indentations caused by equipment or a flagstick,
- Old hole plugs, turf plugs, seams of cut turf and scrapes or indentations from maintenance tools or vehicles,
- Animal tracks or hoof indentations, and
- Embedded objects (such as a stone, acorn or tee).

But “damage on the *putting green*” does not include any damage or conditions that result from:

- Normal practices for maintaining the overall condition of the putting green (such as aeration holes and grooves from vertical mowing),
- Irrigation or rain or other natural forces,
- Natural surface imperfections (such as weeds or areas of bare, diseased or uneven growth), or
- Natural wear of the hole.

When Ball or Ball-Marker Moves on *Putting Green*

There are two specific Rules for a ball or ball-marker that moves on the *putting green*.

- (2) **No Penalty for Accidentally Causing Ball to Move.** There is no penalty if the player, opponent or another player in stroke play *accidentally* moves the player's ball or ball-marker on the putting green.

The player must:

- Replace the ball on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), or
- Place a ball-marker to mark that original spot.

Exception – Ball Must Be Played as It Lies When Ball Begins to Move During Backswing or Stroke and Stroke Is Made.

(2) **When to Replace Ball Moved by Natural Forces.** If *natural forces* cause a player's ball on the *putting green* to move, where the player must play from next depends on whether the ball had already been lifted and replaced on its original spot:

- Ball Already Lifted and Replaced. The ball must be replaced on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated), even though it was moved by *natural forces* and not by the player, the opponent or an *outside influence*.
- Ball Not Already Lifted and Replaced. The ball must be played from its new spot.

No Deliberate Testing of Greens

A player must not deliberately take either of these actions to test the *putting green* or a *wrong green*:

- Rub the surface, or
- Roll a ball.

Exception – Testing Greens When between Two Holes: Between two holes, a player may rub the surface or roll a ball on the *putting green* of the hole just completed and on any *practice green*.

NOTE: The Committee may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting a player from rolling a ball on the *putting green* of the hole just completed.

Relief Must Be Taken from *Wrong Green*

(3) **Meaning of Interference by *Wrong Green*.** Interference under this Rule exists when:

- Any part of the player's ball touches a **wrong green** or lies on or in anything (such as a loose impediment or an obstruction) and is inside the edge of a *wrong green*, or
- A *wrong green* physically interferes with the player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing.

(2) **Relief Must Be Taken.** When there is interference by a *wrong green*, a player must not play the ball as it lies.

Instead, the player must take free relief by **dropping** the original ball or another ball in this *relief area*:

- **Reference Point:** The nearest point of complete relief in the *general area*.
- **Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point:** One club-length, but with these limits:
 1. Must be in the *general area*,
 2. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*, and
 3. There must be complete relief from all interference by the *wrong green*.

Ball Overhanging Hole

(4) **Waiting Time to See If Ball Overhanging Hole Will Fall into Hole**

If any part of a player's ball overhangs the lip of the hole:

- The player is allowed a reasonable time to reach the hole and ten more seconds to wait to see whether the ball will fall into the hole.
- If the ball falls into the hole in this waiting time, the player has holed out with the previous stroke.
- If the ball does not fall into the hole in this waiting time:
 - a. The ball is treated as being at rest.
 - b. If the ball then falls into the hole before it is played, the player has holed out with the previous stroke, but gets one penalty stroke added to the score for the hole.

b. What to Do If Ball Overhanging Hole Is Lifted or Moved Before Waiting Time Has Ended

If a ball overhanging the hole is lifted or moved before the waiting time has ended, the ball is treated as having come to rest:

- The ball must be replaced on the lip of the hole, and

- The waiting time no longer applies to the ball.

If the player lifts the ball without marking its spot, marks its spot in a wrong way or makes a stroke with a ball-marker left in place, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

If the opponent in match play or another player in stroke play deliberately lifts or moves the player's ball overhanging the hole before the waiting time has ended:

- In match play, the player's ball is treated as holed with the previous stroke, and there is no penalty to the opponent.
- In stroke play, the player who lifted or moved the ball gets the general penalty (**two penalty strokes**). The ball must be replaced on its original spot which if not known must be estimated.

The Flagstick

This Rule applies to a ball played from anywhere on the course, whether on or off the **putting green**.

Leaving Flagstick in Hole

- (5) **Player May Leave Flagstick in Hole.** The player may make a stroke with the flagstick left in the hole, so that it is possible for the ball in motion to hit the flagstick.

The player must decide this before making the stroke, by either:

- Leaving the flagstick where it is in the hole or moving it so that it is centered in the hole and leaving it there, or
- Having a removed flagstick put back in the hole.

In either case:

- The player must not try to gain an advantage by deliberately moving the flagstick to a position other than centered in the hole.
- If the player does so and the ball in motion then hits the flagstick, he or she gets the general penalty of **two strokes** or **loss of hole** in match play.

(2) **No Penalty If Ball Hits Flagstick Left in Hole.** If the player makes a stroke with the flagstick left in the hole and the ball in motion then hits the flagstick:

- There is no penalty, and
- The ball must be played as it lies.

(3) **Limitation on Player Moving or Removing Flagstick in Hole While Ball Is in Motion.** After making a stroke with the flagstick left in the hole:

- The player and his or her caddie must not deliberately move or remove the flagstick to affect where the player's ball in motion might come to rest (such as to avoid having the ball hit the flagstick). If this is done, the player gets the **general penalty** of **two strokes** or **loss of hole** in match play.
- But there is no penalty if the player has the flagstick in the hole moved or removed for any other reason, such as when he or she reasonably believes that the ball in motion will not hit the flagstick before coming to rest.

(4) Limitation on Other Players Moving or Removing Flagstick When Player Has Decided to Leave It in Hole. When the player has left the flagstick in the hole and has not authorized anyone to attend the flagstick, another player must not deliberately move or remove the flagstick to affect where the player's ball in motion might come to rest.

- If another player or his or her caddie does so before or during the stroke and the player makes the stroke without being aware of this, or does so while the player's ball is in motion after the stroke, that other player gets the **general penalty** of **two strokes** or **loss of hole** in match play.
- But there is no penalty if the other player or his or her caddie moves or removes the flagstick for any other reason, such as when he or she:
 - a. Reasonably believes that the player's ball in motion will not hit the flagstick before coming to rest, or
 - b. Is not aware that the player is about to play or that the player's ball is in motion.

Removing Flagstick from Hole

- (6) Player May Have Flagstick Removed from Hole.** The player may make a stroke with the flagstick removed from the hole, so that his or her ball in motion will not hit the flagstick in the hole.

The player must decide this before making the stroke, by either:

- Having the flagstick removed from the hole before playing the ball, or
- Authorizing someone to attend the flagstick, which means to remove it by:
 - a. First holding the flagstick in, above or next to the hole before and during the stroke to show the player where the hole is, and
 - b. Then removing the flagstick after the stroke is made.

The player is treated as having authorized the flagstick to be attended if:

- The player's caddie is holding the flagstick in, above or next to the hole or is standing right next to the hole when the stroke is made, even if the player is not aware the caddie is doing so,
- The player asks any other person to attend the flagstick and that person does so, or

- The player sees any other person holding the flagstick in, above or next to the hole or standing right next to the hole, and the player makes the stroke without asking that person to move away or to leave the flagstick in the hole.

(2) What to Do If Ball Hits Flagstick or Person Attending Flagstick. If the player's ball in motion hits a flagstick that the player had decided to have removed, or hits the person who is attending the flagstick (or anything the person is holding), what happens depends on whether this was accidental or deliberate:

- **Ball Accidentally Hits Flagstick or Person Who Removed or Is Attending It.** If the player's ball in motion *accidentally* hits the flagstick or the person who removed or is attending it (or anything the person is holding), there is no penalty and the ball must be played as it lies.

- **Ball Deliberately Deflected or Stopped by Person Attending Flagstick.** If the person who is attending the flagstick *deliberately* deflects or stops the player's ball in motion, the player must not play the ball as it lies and instead must take relief:

(7) **Stroke Made from Anywhere Except Putting Green.** The player must take relief based on the estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest if not deflected or stopped:

- **When Ball Would Have Come to Rest Anywhere on Course Except on *Putting Green*.** The player must drop the original ball or another ball in this relief area:

Reference Point: The estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest.

Size of *relief area* measured from *reference point*: One club-length, but with these limits:

1. Must be in the same area of the course as the *reference point*, and
2. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*.

- **When Ball Would Have Come to Rest on *Putting Green*.** The player must place the original ball or another ball on the estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest.

- **When Ball Would Have Come to Rest *Out of Bounds*.** The player must take stroke-and-distance relief.

When Penalty Applies. If the person who deliberately deflected or stopped the ball was a player or his or her caddie, that player gets the **general penalty** of **two strokes** or **loss of hole** in match play.

For purposes of this Rule, “**deliberately deflected or stopped**” includes when the player's ball in motion hits:

- A removed flagstick that was deliberately positioned or left in a particular place on the ground so that it might deflect or stop the ball,
- An attended flagstick that the person deliberately failed to remove from the hole or to move out of the way of the ball, or
- The person who attended or removed the flagstick (or anything the person was holding), when he or she deliberately failed to move out of the way of the ball.

Exception: This Rule does not prohibit a player from lifting or moving:

- A removed flagstick,
- A ball at rest on the *putting green*, or
- Any other player equipment, **not including** a ball at rest anywhere except the *putting green* or a ball-marker anywhere on the course.

Ball or Ball-Marker Helping or Interfering with Play

a. Ball on Putting Green Helping Play

This Rule applies only to a ball at rest on the *putting green*, not anywhere else on the course.

If a player reasonably believes that a ball on the putting green might help anyone's play (such as by serving as a possible backstop near the hole), the player may:

- Mark the spot of the ball and **lift** it if it is his or her own ball, or if the ball belongs to another player, require the other player to mark the spot and **lift** the ball.
- The lifted ball must be replaced on its original spot (see Rule 14.2).

In stroke play only:

- A player who is required to **lift** a ball may play first instead, and
- If two or more players agree to leave a ball in place to help any player, and that player then makes a stroke with the helping ball left in place, each player who made the agreement gets the general penalty of **two penalty strokes**.

b. Ball Anywhere on Course Interfering with Play

(1) Meaning of Interference by Another Player's Ball. Interference under this Rule exists when another player's ball at rest:

- Might interfere with the player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing,
- Is on or close to the player's line of play such that, given the intended stroke, there is a reasonable chance the player's ball in motion could hit that ball, or

- Is close enough to distract the player in making the stroke.

(2) When Relief Is Allowed from Interfering Ball. If a player reasonably believes that another player's ball anywhere on the course might interfere with the player's own play:

- The player may require the other player to mark the spot and **lift** the ball, and the ball must not be cleaned (except when lifted from the putting green and must be replaced on its original spot).
- If the other player does not mark the spot before **lifting** the ball or cleans the lifted ball when not allowed, he or she gets **one penalty stroke**.
- In stroke play only, a player required to **lift** his or her ball under this Rule may play first instead.

A player is not allowed to **lift** his or her ball under this Rule based only on the player's own belief that the ball might interfere with another player's play.

If the player **lifts** his or her ball when not required to do so by the other player (except when lifting the ball on the putting green, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

c. Ball-Marker Helping or Interfering with Play

If a ball-marker might help or interfere with play, a player may:

- Move the ball-marker out of the way if it is his or her own, or
- If the ball-marker belongs to another player, require that player to move the ball-marker out of the way, for the same reasons as he or she may require a ball to be lifted.

The ball-marker must be moved out of the way to a new spot measured from its original spot, such as by using one or more clubhead-lengths.

Either the **lifted** ball must be replaced on its original spot or the ball-marker must be replaced to mark that spot.

Penalty for Breach of Rule: General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.

This penalty also applies if the player:

- Makes a stroke without waiting for a helping ball or ball-marker to be **lifted** or moved after becoming aware that another player
 - (1) intended to lift or move it under this Rule. or
 - (2) had required someone else to do so, or
- Refuses to **lift** his or her ball or move his or her ball-marker when required to do so and a stroke is then made by the other player whose play might have been helped or interfered with.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or **loss of hole** in match play.**

Part 8

Play The Course As You Find It

COURSE PLAYED AS IT IS FOUND

This Rule restricts what a player may do to improve any of these protected “conditions affecting the stroke” (anywhere on or off the course) for the next stroke the player will make:

- The lie of the player’s ball at rest,
- The area of the player’s intended stance,
- The area of the player’s intended swing,
- The player’s line of play, and
- The relief area where the player will drop or place a ball.

It does not apply to:

- The removal of loose impediments or movable obstructions, or
- An action taken while a player’s ball is in motion

Actions That Are Not Allowed

Except in the limited ways allowed in other Rules, a player must not take any of these actions if they improve the conditions affecting the stroke:

(8) Move, bend or break any:

- Growing or attached natural object,
- Immovable obstruction, integral object or boundary object, or
- Tee-marker for the teeing area when playing a ball from that teeing area.

(2) Move a loose impediment or movable obstruction into position (such as to build a stance or to improve the line of play).

(3) Alter the surface of the ground, including by:

- Replacing divots in a divot hole,
- Removing or pressing down divots that have already been replaced or other cut turf that is already in place, or
- Creating or eliminating holes, indentations or uneven surfaces.

(4) Remove or press down sand or loose soil.

(5) Remove dew, frost or water.

Penalty for Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Actions That Are Allowed

In preparing for or making a stroke, a player may take any of these actions and there is no penalty even if doing so improves the conditions affecting the stroke:

- (1) Fairly search for his or her ball by taking reasonable actions to find and identify it.
- (2) Take reasonable actions to remove loose impediments and movable obstructions.
- (3) Take reasonable actions to mark the spot of a ball and to lift and replace the ball.
- (4) Ground the club lightly right in front of or right behind the ball.

But this does not allow:

- Pressing the club on the ground, or
 - When a ball is in a bunker, touching the sand right in front of or right behind the ball.
- (5) Firmly place the feet in taking a stance, including a reasonable amount of digging in with the feet in sand or loose soil.
 - (6) Fairly take a stance by taking reasonable actions to get to the ball and take a stance.

But when doing so the player:

- Is not entitled to a normal stance or swing, and
 - Must use the least intrusive course of action to deal with the particular situation.
- (7) Make a stroke or the backswing for a stroke which is then made.

But when the ball is in a bunker, touching the sand in the bunker in taking the backswing is not allowed.

(8) In the teeing area:

- Place a tee in or on the ground,
- Move, bend or break any growing or attached natural object, and
- Alter the surface of the ground, remove or press down sand and soil, or remove dew, frost or water.

(9) In a bunker, smooth sand to care for the course after a ball played from the bunker is outside the bunker.

(10) On the putting green, remove sand and loose soil and repair damage.

(11) Move a natural object to see if it is loose.

But if the object is found to be growing or attached, it must stay attached and be returned as nearly as possible to its original position.

Avoiding Penalty by Restoring Conditions Improved in Breach of Rule

If a player has improved the conditions affecting the stroke by moving, bending or breaking an object in breach of this Rule or moving an object into position in breach of this Rule:

- There is no penalty if, before making the next stroke, the player eliminates that improvement by restoring the original conditions in the ways allowed in (1) and (2) below.
- But if the player improves the conditions affecting the stroke by taking any of the other actions covered by this Rule, he or she cannot avoid penalty by restoring the original conditions.

(9) How to Restore Conditions Improved by Moving, Bending or Breaking Object.

Before making the stroke, the player may avoid penalty for breach of this Rule by restoring the original object as nearly as possible to its original position so that the improvement created by the breach is eliminated, such as by:

- Replacing a boundary object (such as a boundary stake) that had been removed or moving the boundary object back into its original position after it had been pushed to a different angle, or
- Returning a tree branch or grass, or an immovable obstruction to its original position after it had been moved.

But the player *cannot avoid penalty*:

- If the improvement is not eliminated (such as when a boundary object or branch has been bent or broken in a significant way so that it cannot be returned to the original position), or
 - By using anything other than the original object itself in trying to restore conditions, such as:
 - a. Using a different or additional object (for example, placing a different stake in a hole from which a boundary stake had been removed or tying a moved branch into place), or
 - b. Using other materials to repair the original object (for example, using tape to repair a broken boundary object or branch).
- (10) How to Restore Conditions Improved by Moving an Object into Position.** Before making the stroke, the player may avoid penalty for breach of this Rule by removing the object that was moved into position.

Restoring Conditions Worsened After Ball Came to Rest

If the conditions affecting the stroke are worsened after a player's ball came to rest:

(11) **When Restoration of Worsened Conditions Is Allowed.** If the conditions affecting the stroke are worsened by any person **other than** the player or by an animal or artificial object, without penalty the player may:

- Restore the original conditions as nearly as possible.
- Mark the spot of the ball and lift, clean and replace the ball on its original spot, if it is reasonable to do so to restore the original conditions or if material ended up on the ball when the conditions were worsened.
- If the worsened conditions cannot be easily restored, lift and replace the ball by placing it on the nearest spot (not nearer the hole) that
 - (1) has the most similar conditions affecting the stroke,
 - (2) is within one club-length of its original spot, and
 - (3) is in the same area of the course as that spot.

(2) **When Restoration of Worsened Conditions Is Not Allowed.** If the conditions affecting the stroke are worsened by the player, by a natural object or by natural forces such as wind or water, the player must not improve those worsened conditions.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of this Rule: **General Penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Prohibited Actions to Alter Other Physical Conditions

A player must not deliberately take any actions to alter any such other physical conditions to affect:

- Where the player's ball or another player's ball might go or come to rest after his or her next stroke or a later stroke, or
- Where the player's ball or another player's ball at rest might go or come to rest if it moves before the stroke is made (for example, when the ball is on a steep slope and the player is concerned that it might roll into a bush).

Exception – Actions to Care for the Course: There is no penalty under this Rule if the player alters any such other physical conditions to care for the course (such as smoothing footprints in a bunker or replacing a divot in a divot hole).

Penalty for Breach of Rule: General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.

Part 9

Play The Ball As It Lies

Ball Played as It Lies

A player's ball at rest on the course must be played as it lies, except when the Rules require or allow the player:

- To play a ball from another place on the course, or
- To lift a ball and then replace it on its original spot.

What to Do When Ball Moves During Backswing or Stroke

If a player's ball at rest begins moving after the player has begun the stroke or the backswing for a stroke and the player goes on to make the stroke:

- The ball *must not be replaced*, no matter what caused it to move.
- Instead, the player must play the ball from where it comes to rest after the stroke.
- If the player caused the ball to move, there is a **one stroke penalty**, except for accidental movement on the putting green.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball is one stroke. Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: General Penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.

Deciding Whether Ball Moved

A player's ball at rest is treated as having moved only if it is *known or virtually certain* that it did.

If the ball might have moved but this is *not known or virtually certain*, it is treated as **not** having moved and must be played as it lies.

A ball has moved when a ball at rest has left its original spot and come to rest on any other spot, and this can be seen by the naked eye (whether or not anyone actually sees it do so).

This applies whether the ball has gone up, down or horizontally in any direction away from its original spot.

If the ball only wobbles (sometimes referred to as oscillating) and stays on or returns to its original spot, the ball has not moved.

Deciding What Caused Ball to Move

When a player's ball at rest has moved:

- It must be decided what caused it to move.
- This determines whether the player must replace the ball or play it as it lies and whether there is a penalty.

(1) **Four Possible Causes.** The Rules recognize only four possible causes for a ball at rest that moves before the player makes a stroke:

- **Natural forces**, the effects of nature such as wind, water or when something happens for no apparent reason because of the effects of gravity,
- The player, including the player's caddie,
- The opponent in match play, including the opponent's caddie, or
- An **outside influence**, any of these people or things that can affect what happens to a player's ball or equipment or to the course:
 - Any person (including another player), except the player or his or her caddie or the player's partner or opponent or any of their caddies,
 - Any animal, and
 - Any natural or artificial object or anything else (including another ball in motion), except for natural forces.including any other player in stroke play.

(2) "Known or Virtually Certain" Standard for Deciding What Caused Ball to Move.

- The player, the opponent or an outside influence is treated as having caused the ball to move only if it is known or virtually certain to be the cause.
- If it is not known or virtually certain that at least one of these was the cause, the ball is treated as having been moved by natural forces.

In applying this standard, all reasonably available information must be considered, which means all information the player knows or can get with reasonable effort and without unreasonably delaying play.

Ball Moved by Natural Forces

If natural forces (such as wind or water) cause a player's ball at rest to move:

- There is no penalty, and
- The ball must be played from its new spot.

If the ball had come to rest after being dropped, placed or replaced and then is moved by natural forces, it must be replaced on its original spot *if it moved to a different area of the course or out of bounds*.

Exception – Ball on Putting Green Must Be Replaced If It Moves After Having Already Been Lifted and Replaced : If the player's ball on the putting green moves after the player had already lifted and replaced the ball on the spot from which it moved:

- The ball must be replaced on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated.
- This is true no matter what caused it to move (including natural forces).

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Ball Lifted or Moved by Player

This Rule applies only when it is known or virtually certain that a player (including the player's caddie) lifted his or her ball at rest or caused it to move.

When Lifted or Moved Ball Must Be Replaced

If the player lifts his or her ball at rest or causes it to move, the ball must be replaced on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated, except:

- When the player lifts the ball under a Rule to take relief or to replace the ball on a different spot, or
- When the ball moves only after the player has begun the stroke or the backswing for a stroke and then goes on to make the stroke.

Penalty for Lifting or Deliberately Touching Ball or Causing It to Move

If the player lifts or deliberately touches his or her ball at rest or causes it to move, the player gets **one penalty stroke**.

But there are four exceptions:

Exception 1 – Player Allowed to Lift or Move Ball: There is no penalty when the player lifts the ball or causes it to move under a Rule that:

- Allows the ball to be lifted and then replaced on its original spot,
- Requires a moved ball to be replaced on its original spot, or
- Requires or allows the player to drop or place a ball again or to play a ball from a different place.

Exception 2 – Accidental Movement Before Ball Is Found: There is no penalty when the player accidentally causes the ball to move while trying to find or identify it.

Exception 3 – Accidental Movement on Putting Green: There is no penalty when the player accidentally causes the ball to move on the putting green, no matter how that happens.

Exception 4 – Accidental Movement Anywhere Except on Putting Green While Applying Rule: There is no penalty when the player accidentally causes the ball to move anywhere except on the putting green while taking reasonable actions to:

- Mark the spot of the ball or lift or replace the ball, when allowed to do so,
- Remove a movable obstruction,

- Restore worsened conditions, when allowed to do so,
- Take relief under a Rule, including in determining whether relief is available under a Rule (such as swinging a club to see if there is interference from a condition), or where to take relief (such as determining the nearest point of complete relief), or
- Measure under a Rule such as to decide the order of play.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Ball Lifted or Moved by Opponent in Match Play

This Rule applies only when it is *known or virtually certain* that the opponent (including the opponent's caddie) lifted a player's ball at rest or caused it to move.

If the opponent plays the player's ball as a wrong ball, that is covered by another Rule, not by this Rule.

a. When Lifted or Moved Ball Must Be Replaced

If the opponent lifts or moves the player's ball at rest, the ball must be replaced on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated, except:

- When the opponent is conceding a stroke, hole or the match, or
- When the opponent lifts or moves the ball at the player's request because the player intends to apply a Rule to take relief or to replace the ball on a different spot.

b. Penalty for Lifting or Deliberately Touching Ball or Causing It to Move

If the opponent lifts or deliberately touches the player's ball at rest or causes it to move, the opponent gets **one penalty stroke**.

But there are several exceptions:

Exception 1 – Opponent Allowed to Lift Player's Ball: There is no penalty when the opponent lifts the ball:

- When conceding a stroke, a hole or the match to the player, or
- At the player's request.

Exception 2 – Marking and Lifting Player's Ball on Putting Green by Mistake: There is no penalty when the opponent marks the spot of the player's ball and lifts it on the putting green in the mistaken belief that it is the opponent's own ball.

Exception 3 – Same Exceptions as for the Player: There is no penalty when the opponent accidentally causes the ball to move while taking any of the actions covered by Exceptions for the player.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Ball Lifted or Moved by Outside Influence

If it is *known or virtually certain* that an outside influence (including another player in stroke play or another ball) lifted or moved a player's ball:

- There is no penalty, and
- The ball must be replaced on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated.

This applies whether or not the player's ball has been found.

But if it is **not known or virtually certain** that the ball was lifted or moved by an outside influence and the ball is **lost**, the player must take stroke-and-distance relief.

If the player's ball is played as a wrong ball by another player, that is covered by another Rule, not by this Rule.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Ball-Marker Lifted or Moved

This Rule covers what to do if a ball-marker that is marking the spot of a lifted ball is lifted or moved before the ball is replaced.

a. Ball or Ball-Marker Must Be Replaced

If a player's ball-marker is lifted or moved in any way (including by natural forces) before the ball is replaced, the player must either:

- Replace the ball on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated, or
- Place a ball-marker to mark that original spot.

b. Penalty for Lifting Ball-Marker or Causing It to Move

If the player, or his or her opponent in match play, lifts the player's ball-marker or causes it to move, the player or opponent gets **one penalty stroke**.

In all cases where the player or opponent gets no penalty for lifting the player's ball or accidentally causing it to move, there is also no penalty for lifting or accidentally moving the player's ball-marker.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Part 10

The Ball Hits Something

Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Person, Animal or Object

This Rule applies any time a ball in play is in motion (whether after a stroke or otherwise), except when a ball has been dropped in a relief area and has not yet come to rest.

No Penalty to Any Player

If a player's ball in motion accidentally hits any person or outside influence:

- There is no penalty to any player.
- This is true even if the ball hits the player, the opponent or any other player or any of their caddies or equipment.

Exception – Ball Played on Putting Green in Stroke Play: If the player's ball in motion hits another ball at rest on the putting green and both balls were on the putting green before the stroke, the player gets the **general penalty** of **two penalty strokes**.

Ball Must Be Played as It Lies

If a player's ball in motion accidentally hits any person or outside influence, the ball must be **played as it lies**, except in two situations:

Exception 1 – When Ball Played from Anywhere Except Putting Green Comes to Rest on Any Person, Animal or Moving Outside Influence: The player must not play the ball as it lies. Instead, the player must take relief:

- **When Ball Is Anywhere Except on Putting Green.** The player must drop the original ball or another ball in this relief area:

Reference Point: The estimated point right under where the ball first came to rest on the person, animal or moving outside influence.

Size of relief area measured from *reference point*: One club-length, but with these limits:

1. Must be in the same area of the course as the **reference point**, and
2. Must not be nearer the hole than the **reference point**.

- **When Ball Is on Putting Green.** The player must place the original ball or another ball on the estimated spot right under where the ball first came to rest on the person, animal or moving outside influence.

Exception 2 – When Ball Played from Putting Green Accidentally Hits Any Person, Animal or Movable Obstruction (Including Another Ball in Motion) on Putting Green: The stroke does not count and the original ball or another ball must be replaced on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated, except in these two cases:

- **Ball in Motion Hits Another Ball at Rest or Ball-Marker on Putting Green.** The stroke counts and the ball must be played as it lies.

• **Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Flagstick or Person Attending Flagstick.** This is covered by another Rule, not by this Rule.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule 11.1: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

Ball in Motion Deliberately Deflected or Stopped by Person

This Rule applies only when it is known or virtually certain that a player's ball in motion was deliberately deflected or stopped by a person, which is when:

- A person deliberately touches the ball in motion, or
- The ball in motion hits any equipment or other object (except a ball-marker or another ball at rest before the ball was played or otherwise went into motion) or any person (such as the player's caddie) that a player deliberately positioned or left in a particular location so that the equipment, object or person might deflect or stop the ball in motion.

Exception – Ball Deliberately Deflected or Stopped in Match Play When No Reasonable Chance It Can Be Holed: An opponent's ball in motion that is deliberately deflected or stopped at a time when there is no reasonable chance it can be holed, and when done either as a concession or when the ball needed to be holed to tie the hole is covered by another Rule not by this Rule.

When Penalty Applies to a Player

- A player gets the **general penalty of two strokes or loss of hole** in match play if he or she deliberately deflects or stops any ball in motion.
- This is true whether it is the player's own ball or a ball played by an opponent or by another player in stroke play.

Exception – Ball Moving in Water: There is no penalty if a player lifts his or her ball moving in water in temporary water or in a penalty area when taking relief.

Place from Where Deliberately Deflected or Stopped Ball Must Be Played

If it is known or virtually certain that a player's ball in motion was deliberately deflected or stopped by a person (whether or not the ball has been found), it must not be played as it lies. Instead, the player must take relief:

(1) Stroke Made from Anywhere Except Putting Green. The player must take relief based on the estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest if not deflected or stopped:

• **When Ball Would Have Come to Rest Anywhere on Course Except on Putting Green.**

The player must drop the original ball or another ball in this relief area:

Reference Point: The estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest.

Size of relief area measured from *reference point*: One club-length, but with these limits:

1. Must be in the same area of the course as the *reference point*, and
2. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*.

• **When Ball Would Have Come to Rest on Putting Green.** The player must place the original ball or another ball on the estimated spot where the ball would have come to rest.

• **When Ball Would Have Come to Rest Out of Bounds.** The player must take stroke-and-distance relief.

(2) **Stroke Made from Putting Green.** The stroke does not count, and the original ball or another ball must be replaced on its original spot, which if not known, must be estimated.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule 11.2: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole** in match play.

Deliberately Moving Objects or Altering Conditions to Affect Ball in Motion

When a ball is in motion, a player must not deliberately take any of these actions to affect where that ball (whether the player's own ball or another player's ball) might come to rest:

- Alter physical conditions by taking any of the actions such as replacing a divot or pressing down a raised area of turf, or
- Lift or move:
 1. A loose impediment, or
 2. A movable obstruction.

Exception – Moving Flagstick, Ball at Rest on Putting Green and Other Player Equipment: This Rule does not prohibit a player from lifting or moving:

- A removed flagstick,
- A ball at rest on the putting green, or

- Any other player equipment (not including a ball at rest anywhere except the putting green or a ball-marker anywhere on the course).

Removing the flagstick from the hole (including by attending it) while a ball is in motion is covered by another Rule not by this Rule.

Penalty for Breach of Rule: General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.

Part 11

It's Unplayable

UNPLAYABLE BALL

A player is the only person who may decide to treat his or her ball as unplayable by taking penalty relief.

- Unplayable ball relief is allowed anywhere on the course, except in a *penalty area*.
- If a ball is unplayable in a *penalty area*, the player's only relief option is to take penalty relief for ball in a *penalty area*.

Relief Options for Unplayable Ball in General Area or on *Putting Green*

A player may take unplayable ball relief using one of three options, in each case adding **one penalty stroke**.

- The player may take stroke-and-distance relief even if the original ball has not been found and identified.
- But to take back-on-the-line relief or lateral relief, the player must know the spot of the original ball.

a. Stroke-and-Distance Relief

The player may play the original ball or another ball from where the previous stroke was made.

b. Back-on-the-Line Relief

The player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in a *relief area* that is based on a *reference line* going straight back from the hole through the spot of the original ball:

Reference point: A point on the course chosen by the player that is on the reference line and is farther from the hole than the spot of the original ball with no limit on how far back on the line:

In choosing this point, the player should indicate the point by using an object (such as a tee).

If the player *drops* the ball without having chosen this point, the *reference point* is treated as being the point on the line that is the same distance from the hole as where the dropped ball first touched the ground.

Size of relief area measured from *reference point*: One club-length, but with these limits:

1. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*, and
2. May be in any area of the course, but
3. If more than one area of the course is located within **one club-length** of the *reference point*, the ball must come to rest in the *relief area* in the same area of the course that the ball first touched when dropped in the *relief area*.

c. Lateral Relief

The player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in this lateral relief area:

Reference point: The spot of the original ball.

Size of relief area measured from *reference point*: Two club-lengths, but with these limits:

1. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*, and
2. May be in any area of the course, but
3. If more than one area of the course is located within **two club-lengths** of the *reference point*, the ball must come to rest in the *relief area* in the same area of the course that the ball first touched when dropped in the *relief area*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.

Relief Options for Unplayable Ball in *Bunker*

a. Normal Relief Options (**One Penalty Stroke**)

When a player's ball is in a *bunker*: The player may take unplayable ball relief for **one penalty stroke** under any of the three options, except that the ball must be *dropped* in and come to rest in a *relief area* in the *bunker* if the player takes either back-on-the-line relief or lateral relief .

b. Extra Relief Option (**Two Penalty Strokes**)

As an extra relief option when a player's ball is in a *bunker*, for a total of **two penalty strokes**, the player may take back-on-the-line relief outside the bunker.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.

Part 12

OOPS!

Advice and Other Help

a. Advice

During a round, a player must not:

- Give advice to anyone in the competition who is playing on the course,
- Ask anyone for advice, other than the player's caddie, or
- Touch another player's equipment to learn information that would be advice if given by or asked of the other player (such as touching the other player's clubs or bag to see what club is being used).

This does not apply before a round, while play is stopped, between rounds in a competition.

b. Other Help

(1) Pointing Out Line of Play for Ball Anywhere Except on Putting Green. A player may have his or her line of play pointed out by:

- Having his or her caddie or any other person stand on or close to the player's line of play to show where it is, but that person **must move away** before the stroke is made.

(2) Pointing Out Line of Play for Ball on Putting Green. Before the stroke is made, only the player and his or her caddie may point out the player's line of play, but with these limitations:

- The player or caddie may touch the putting green with a hand, foot or anything he or she is holding, but must not improve the conditions affecting the stroke, and
- The player or caddie or any other person must not set an object down anywhere on or off the putting green to show the line of play. This is not allowed **even if that object is removed** before the stroke is made.

While the stroke is being made, the caddie must not deliberately stand in a location on or close to the player's line of play (except in attending the flagstick) to help the player or do anything else to point out the line of play.

(3) No Setting Down Object to Help in Taking Stance. A player must not take a stance for the stroke using any object that was set down by or for the player to help in lining up his or her feet or body, such as a club set down on the ground to show the line of play.

If the player takes a stance in breach of this Rule, he or she **cannot avoid penalty by backing away** from the stance and removing the object.

(4) Restriction on Caddie Standing Behind Player. When a player begins taking a stance for the stroke and until the stroke is made:

- The player's caddie must not deliberately stand in a location on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball for any reason.

- If the player takes a stance in breach of this Rule, he or she **cannot avoid penalty by backing away.**

Exception – Ball on Putting Green: When the player’s ball is on the putting green, there is no penalty under this Rule **if the player backs away** from the stance and does not begin to take the stance again until after the caddie has moved out of that location.

(5) Physical Help and Protection from Elements. A player must not make a stroke:

- While getting physical help from his or her caddie or any other person, or
- With his or her caddie or any other person or object deliberately positioned to give protection from sunlight, rain, wind or other elements.

Before the stroke is made, such help or protection is allowed.

This Rule does not prohibit the player from taking his or her own actions to protect against the elements while making a stroke, such as by wearing protective clothing or holding an umbrella over his or her own head.

Penalty for Breach of Rule: **General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.**

When Player’s Ball is Back in Play after Original Ball Was Out of Play

When a player’s ball in play is **lifted** from the course or is *lost* or *out of bounds*, the ball is no longer in play.

The player has a ball in play again only when he or she:

- Plays the original ball or another ball from the *teeing area*, or
- Replaces, **drops** or **places** the original ball or another ball on the course with the intent for that ball to be **in play**.

If the player returns a ball to the course in any way with the intent for it to be in play, the ball is in play even if it was:

- Substituted for the original ball when not allowed under the Rules, or
- Replaced, dropped or placed (1) in a **wrong place**, (2) in a wrong way or (3) by using a procedure that did not apply.

A replaced ball is in play even if the ball-marker marking its spot has not been removed.

Correcting Mistake Made in Substituting, Replacing, Dropping or Placing Ball

a. Player May Lift Ball to Correct Mistake Before Ball Is Played

When a player has substituted another ball for the original ball when not allowed under the Rules or the player's ball in play was **replaced, dropped** or **placed** (1) in a wrong place or came to rest in a wrong place, (2) in a wrong way or (3) by using a procedure that did not apply:

- The player may lift the ball without penalty and correct the mistake.
- But this is allowed only before the ball is played.

b. When Player May Change to a Different Rule or Relief Option When Correcting Mistake in Taking Relief

When correcting a mistake in taking relief, whether the player must use the same Rule and relief option originally used or may change to a different Rule or relief option depends on the nature of the mistake:

(1) When Ball Was Put in Play under Rule That Did Not Apply.

- In correcting this mistake, the player may use any Rule that applies to his or her situation.
- For example, if the player mistakenly took unplayable ball relief for his or her ball in a penalty area, the player must correct the mistake by either replacing the ball (if it had been lifted), or taking penalty relief and may use any relief option under the Rule that applies to his or her situation.

(2) When Ball Was Put in Play under Rule That Applied but Ball Was Dropped or Placed in Wrong Place.

- In correcting this mistake, the player must go on to take relief under the same Rule but may use any relief option under that Rule that applies to his or her situation.
- For example, if when taking relief for an unplayable ball, the player used the lateral relief option and mistakenly dropped the ball outside the required relief area. In correcting the mistake the player must go on to take relief using any of the relief options.

(3) When Ball Was Put in Play under Rule That Applied and Was Dropped or Placed in Right Place, but Rule Requires Ball to Be Dropped or Placed Again.

- In correcting this mistake, the player must go on to take relief using the same Rule and the same relief option under that Rule.
- For example, if when taking relief for an unplayable ball, the player used the lateral relief option and the ball was (1) **dropped** in the right relief area but (2) was **dropped** in a wrong way or came to rest outside the relief area. In correcting the mistake the player must go on to take relief and must use the same relief option.

c. No Penalties for Ball Lifted to Correct Mistake

When a ball is lifted under this Rule to correct a mistake:

- The player does **not** count any penalty for actions that were taken relating to that ball after the mistake and before it was lifted, such as for accidentally causing it to move.
- But if those same actions were also in breach of a Rule relating to the ball that was put in play to correct the mistake (such as when those actions improved the conditions affecting the stroke for both the ball now in play and the original ball before it was lifted), the penalty applies to the ball now in play.

Making Next Stroke from Where Previous Stroke Made

This Rule applies whenever a player is required or allowed under the Rules to make the next stroke from where a previous stroke was made (that is, when taking stroke-and-distance relief, or playing again after a stroke that is cancelled or otherwise does not count).

- How the player must put a ball in play depends on the area of the course where that previous stroke was made.
- In all of these situations, the player may use either the original ball or another ball.

a. Previous Stroke Made from Teeing Area

The original ball or another ball must be played from anywhere inside the teeing area (and may be teed).

b. Previous Stroke Made from General Area, Penalty Area or Bunker

The original ball or another ball must be dropped in this relief area.

Reference point: The spot where the previous stroke was made, which if not known, must be estimated.

Size of *relief area* measured from *reference point*: One club-length, but with these limits:

1. Must be in the same area of the course as the *reference point*, and
2. Must not be nearer the hole than the *reference point*.

c. Previous Stroke Made from Putting Green

The original ball or another ball must be placed on the spot where the previous stroke was made, which if not known, must be estimated, using the procedures for replacing a ball.

Penalty for Breach of Rule: **General penalty** of **two strokes** or **loss of hole** in match play.

Playing from Wrong Place

a. Place from Where Ball Must Be Played

After starting a hole:

- A player must make each stroke from where his or her ball comes to rest, except when the Rules require or allow the player to play a ball from another place.
- A player must not play his or her ball in play from a wrong place.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule: General penalty of two strokes or loss of hole in match play.

b. How to Complete a Hole after Playing from Wrong Place in Stroke Play

(1) What a player does next depends on whether it was a serious breach – that is, whether the player could have gained a significant advantage by playing from a wrong place:

- Not a Serious Breach. The player must play out the hole with the ball played from a **wrong place, without correcting the mistake.**
- Serious Breach.
 - a. The player must correct the mistake by playing out the hole with a ball played from a right place under the Rules.
 - b. If the player does not correct the mistake before making a stroke to begin another hole or, for the final hole of the round, before returning his or her scorecard, the player is **disqualified.**
- What to Do If Uncertain Whether Breach Is Serious. The player should play out the hole with both the ball played from a wrong place and a second ball played from a right place under the Rules.

(2) If the player tries to correct the mistake under (1) by playing a ball from a right place:

- The player must report the facts to the Committee before returning the scorecard.
- This applies whether the player played out the hole with only that ball or with two balls (and even if the player scores the same with both balls).

If the player does not report the facts to the Committee, he or she is **disqualified.**

(3) When Player Tried to Correct Mistake, Committee Will Decide Player's Score for Hole. The player's score for the hole depends on whether the Committee decides that there was a serious breach in playing the original ball from a wrong place:

• No Serious Breach.

- a. The score with the ball played from a wrong place counts, and the player gets the general penalty which means that **two penalty strokes** are added to the score with that ball.

b. If a second ball was played, all strokes with that ball (including strokes made and any penalty strokes solely from playing that ball) do not count.

• **Serious Breach.**

- a. The score with the ball played to correct the mistake of playing from a wrong place counts, and the player gets the general penalty which means that **two penalty strokes** are added to the score with that ball.
- b. The stroke made in playing the original ball from a wrong place and any more strokes with that ball (including strokes made and any penalty strokes solely from playing that ball) do not count.
- c. If the ball played to correct the mistake was also played from a wrong place:
 1. If the Committee decides that this was not a serious breach, the player gets the general penalty (**two more penalty strokes**), making a total of **four penalty strokes** that are added to the score with that ball (two for playing the original ball from a wrong place and two for playing the other ball from a wrong place).
 2. If the Committee decides that this was a serious breach, the player is **disqualified**.