

before it ended up in the hazard (the "line of flight"). Unfortunately, playing a ball that is dropped along the "line of flight" would, in most cases, result in a penalty for playing from a wrong place. If the offense for playing from a wrong place is serious enough, it could result in the disqualification of the player.

A serious breach of the Rules often occurs when a player loses the ball or hits the ball out of bounds. Rather than taking the stroke and distance penalty as prescribed in **Rule 27: Ball Lost or Out of Bounds**, a golfer drops a ball where the original ball might be lost or out of bounds. Whether this mistake is based on ignorance or is done to save time, it will result in a penalty of disqualification unless the breach is corrected. The penalty of stroke and distance has been regarded as one of the more severe penalties in golf. However, currently no other equitable alternative for a ball that is lost or out of bounds exists.

As for **Rule 28: Ball Unplayable**, how many times has a player measured two club lengths from the edge, or side, of a bush rather than where the unplayable ball lies in the bush? Unfortunately, this is another wrong-place issue that could require a penalty.

For most golfers, mastering the Rules of Golf can be just as complex as succeeding at playing the game itself. Therefore, playing by the Rules can offer a great challenge. Sometimes, this challenge of the game leads players to choose to ignore the Rules altogether or simply fail to follow the correct Rules procedure. All golfers are encouraged to learn, apply and honor the Rules as they define this game we all love.



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A RULES Q&A

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Q. What are the consequences if a ball moves after address?

A. Rule 18-2 b, Ball Moving After Address, states that if a player's ball in play moves after he has addressed it (other than as a result of a stroke), the player shall be deemed to have moved the ball and shall incur a penalty stroke. The player shall replace the ball unless the movement of the ball occurs after he has begun his swing and he does not discontinue his swing.

Q. If competing in stroke play (e.g., league activity), what is the Rule if I am chipping to the green and a fellow competitor's ball is in my line and he refuses to mark it?

A. According to Rule 22, Ball Interfering with or Assisting Play, any player may:

- lift his ball if he considers that the ball might assist any other player (or)
- have any other ball lifted if he considers that the ball might interfere with his play or assist the play of any other player, but this may not be done while another ball is in motion.

In stroke play, a player required to lift his ball may play first rather than lift. A ball lifted under this Rule shall be re-placed.

Penalty for breach of Rule: in match play, loss of hole; in stroke play, two strokes. Note that this Rule also stipulates that except on the putting green, the ball may not be cleaned while lifted.

Q. If vandalism has left scratches on a green, am I allowed to repair the damage prior to putting or chipping to the hole?

A. Rule 16-1 c, The Putting Green, Repair of Hole Plugs, Ball Marks and Other Damage, permits the player to repair an old hole plug or damage to the putting green caused by the impact of a ball, whether or not the player's ball lies on the putting green. If the ball is moved in the process of such repair, it shall be re-placed, without penalty. Any other damage to the putting green shall not be repaired if it might assist the player in his subsequent play of the hole.

Q. How much time is allowed if a ball is overhanging the hole to see if it will fall into the hole? (We've all seen *Caddyshack*, right?)

A. Rule 16-2, Ball Overhanging Hole, states that when any part of the ball overhangs the lip of the hole, the player is allowed enough time to reach the hole without unreasonable delay and an additional 10 seconds to determine whether the ball is at rest. If by then the ball has not fallen into the hole, it is deemed to be at rest. If the ball subsequently falls into the hole, the player is deemed to have holed out with his last stroke, and he shall add a penalty stroke to his score for the hole; otherwise, there is no penalty under this Rule. (For an explanation of undue delay, see Rule 6-7.)