



## Rule of the Month, Rule 18, April 2015

### To Replace or Not to Replace?

Here are the **Answers** to this Month's questions:

1. **Replace.** In this case the ball has been moved by an outside agency and it must be replaced with no penalty to the player. The fact that the movement was vertical is irrelevant. When replacing, if the ball will not remain at rest in its previous location it must be placed in the nearest location where it will remain at rest. This could be directly below its original location.
2. **Replace.** Rule 18-2b states that once a player addresses the ball and it moves he is deemed to have caused the movement and incurs a one stroke penalty. He must replace the ball to its original position. Failure to replace when required to under Rule 18 moves the penalty from one stroke to two.
3. **Play it as it lies.** Once the ball was replaced and at rest it is in play regardless if the ball marker is removed. As the player did nothing to cause his ball to move he must play his next stroke from the ball's new location. If the ball had rolled down the slope and into the hole he is deemed to have holed out with his previous stroke. (Decision 20-4/1)
4. **Replace.** As the player had no intention to move his ball in play he has not made a stroke but has incurred a penalty of one stroke under Rule 18-2 and must replace the ball.
5. **Replace.** In this situation the player has caused his ball to move and has incurred a one stroke penalty under Rule 18-2a and he must replace the ball. However, if he declares the ball unplayable, he does not need to replace and may proceed under any of the options of Rule 28 (Ball Unplayable) incurring an additional penalty stroke for a total of two. (Decision 20-3a/3)
6. **Replace.** The ball has been moved by an outside agency and it must be replaced. If the exact spot on the green is not known, it must be estimated and the ball placed on that spot. If this happens in the fairway and the spot is not known, the ball must be dropped as near as possible to the estimated spot not nearer the hole.
7. **Replace.** The ball at rest that was moved must be replaced while the ball in motion is played as it lies after the deflection. See Rules 18-5 and 19-5.
8. **Play it as it lies.** In 2012, an exception to Rule 18-2b was added that absolves the player from penalty if it is known or virtually certain that the player did not cause the ball to move after addressing it. In this case, the wind caused the ball to move and although the player had addressed the ball he incurs no penalty and must play the ball as it lies. See the following answer for further information regarding this new exception.
9. **Replace.** If gravity or the slope of the green causes the ball to move after the player addresses the ball he is deemed to have caused his ball to move and must replace the ball with a one stroke penalty. Gravity may not be used when applying the exception noted in Answer #8. It must be known or virtually certain that some agency caused the ball to move. Examples include wind, water, an animal or another ball in motion. However, only in the case of wind or water would the ball be played as it lies. In other cases, the Rule applicable to the agency involved would govern and the ball must be replaced. See Rule 18-2b.
10. **Play it as it lies.** Once a dropped ball comes to rest and subsequently moves it must be played as it lies. In this case, the player may either play it as it lies or once again take relief under Rule 26 for a ball in a water hazard incurring a second one stroke penalty for the relief.

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