

Under the Rules of Golf, you are allowed to mark your ball on the putting green at any time so you can lift, clean, and replace it.

Key rules for marking your ball on the green:

- You must mark the spot before lifting the ball.
- A ball-marker, coin, tee, or even the toe of your putter may be used.
- The marker should be placed right behind or right next to the ball.
- After cleaning, the ball must be replaced on its exact original spot.
- There is no penalty if you accidentally move the ball or marker on the green, as long as you replace it correctly. If you do not replace it and put your ball you will receive a two stroke penalty for playing from the wrong place.

### **The Golden Fix: Avoiding the Penalty**

If you realize you have misplaced the ball but catch the mistake *before* you hit your putt, you can fix the error and replace it in the correct spot with **no penalty**.

### **Rule 14.7a – Playing from Wrong Place**

Penalty:

#### **General penalty**

- Match play: loss of hole
- Stroke play: two strokes

A common example is:

- Marking your ball on the green,
- Accidentally replacing it a few inches away from the original spot,
- Then making the stroke from that incorrect spot.

That counts as playing from a wrong place under Rule 14.7.

#### **What you can do:**

- You may also repair ball marks, spike marks, and other damage on the green before putting.

One important restriction:

You cannot place a coin or object in front of the ball as an aiming aid for your putt. That is a penalty under Rule 10.2b(3).

Here is the official USGA rule page on putting greens:

[USGA Rule 13 – Putting Greens](#)

**And a helpful video explanation: (please skip any adds that may come up.)**

[Golf Rules Tip: Ball on Green Struck by Another Ball](#)

[6 Putting Rules Golfers Break](#)

[Golf Rules: Playing from a Wrong Place](#)

