

If a player's **ball moves in the General Area**, the Rules are straightforward.

Rules Involved

Rule 9.4b – Penalty for Lifting or Deliberately Touching or Causing Ball to Move

- A player must not deliberately lift or move their ball at rest unless the Rules allow it.
- **Penalty: One penalty stroke.**
- The ball **must be replaced** on its original spot.

Rule 14.2 – Replacing Ball on Spot

- If a ball has been lifted or moved, it must be replaced on its original spot before the next stroke.

Rule 8.1a – Actions That Improve Conditions Affecting the Stroke

- A player must not improve the conditions affecting the stroke by moving the ball to obtain a better lie.

Player's Options

The player has only one correct option:

- **Replace the ball on its original spot** (Rule 14.2).
- Add **one penalty stroke** under **Rule 9.4b**.
- Continue play from the original spot.

The player **may not** simply play from the improved lie.

If the Player Plays from the Improved Lie

If the player makes a stroke from the better lie without replacing the ball:

- **Rule 14.7a – Playing from a Wrong Place** applies.
- **Penalty: General penalty**
 - **Stroke play:** Two penalty strokes.
 - **Match play:** Loss of hole.

Under **Rule 1.3c(4)** (No Multiple Penalties), the player receives **only the general penalty** for playing from a wrong place. The one-stroke penalty under Rule 9.4b is **not added** because both breaches result from the same act.

Video below includes examples of where the ball can move without penalty. If the ball moves it must always be placed back in the original location and lie.

Click the on the Video below: (please skip any adds)



Summary

Situation	Rule	Penalty
Deliberately moves the ball in the General Area	Rule 9.4b	One penalty stroke
Ball must be replaced	Rule 14.2	Required procedure
Improves the lie by moving the ball	Rule 8.1a	Breach of Rule 8.1a (covered by Rule 9.4b if the ball itself is moved)
Plays from the improved lie	Rule 14.7a	General penalty (2 strokes in stroke play or loss of hole in match play)
Multiple penalties for the same act	Rule 1.3c(4)	Only the general penalty applies

Key Point:

- **Moves the ball, then replaces it: One penalty stroke** (Rule 9.4b).
- **Moves the ball and plays from the better lie: General penalty only** (Rule 14.7a: two strokes in stroke play or loss of hole in match play).