

The Back Nine: Advanced Questions on Rule 8 of the Rules of Golf

10. Before playing your ball from under a tree, you hook one tree branch that interfered with the backswing underneath another branch, improving the area of intended swing. Before the stroke, another player questions your actions. What is the ruling in stroke play?
- There is no penalty so long as the branch returns on its own when it is unhooked or it is returned as nearly as possible to its original position and, in doing so, the improvement created by moving the branch in breach of Rule 8.1a is eliminated before you make the stroke.
 - You get no penalty so long as you eliminate the improvement by returning the branch to its exact original position. If you do not return the branch to its exact original position before making the stroke, you get the general penalty.
 - You get the general penalty and cannot avoid that penalty.
11. In which one of the following situations are you not allowed to restore the original conditions under Rule 8.1d?
- Your stance is worsened when another player makes a stroke that creates a large divot hole.
 - Your line of play is worsened by a cart driving across it.
 - Your lie is worsened by another player's stroke after you lifted your ball under Rule 15.3b (Ball Anywhere on Course Interfering with Play).
 - Your area of intended swing is worsened by a branch that became partially detached when a spectator walked through the same area while searching for another player's ball.
12. You attempt to lay up short of a penalty area fronting the green. While you are walking toward the penalty area, your caddie is lagging a bit behind and notices two large divot holes in the fairway and quickly repairs both by returning the divots that were left nearby into the divot holes. When your caddie catches up, you have learned the approach shot took an unfortunate bounce off a sprinkler head and ended up in the penalty area, so you decide to take penalty area relief under Rule 17.1d(2) (Back-on-the-Line Relief). You drop a ball near the reference line and it rolls back and to the left about two feet, coming to rest within the relief area established by where the ball hit the ground. You play the next stroke, and in doing so are standing on one of the large divots that your caddie had recently replaced. How many total penalty strokes do you get, if any?
- 0
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3

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13. Your ball comes to rest in bounds but very close to a large boundary stake. Before playing, you remove the stake from behind your ball, improving the area of intended swing. When you removed the stake, the stake broke into two pieces (one piece is about a foot long and the other is about 3 feet long). Before the stroke, another player questions your actions. What is the ruling in stroke play?
- There is no penalty so long as you tape together the two parts of the boundary stake and replace it back to its original position.
 - There is no penalty so long as you can and do eliminate the improvement before making the stroke. If this can be done by replacing either piece of the broken stake, then either piece may be used to do so.
 - There is no penalty if you take another nearby full-length stake and place it in the hole so that the improvement is eliminated before making the stroke.
 - Because the stake broke into two pieces, you cannot avoid getting the general penalty.
14. Before playing the ball from the general area, you notice that your left foot for the intended stance would be in a deep divot hole. You find the divot from that hole and improve the intended stance by replacing it in the hole. You then decide to play in a different direction and the new stance is unaffected by your previous actions. At that point, another player questions your actions. What is the ruling in stroke play?
- You get no penalty because by changing the stance you are considered to have eliminated the improvement.
 - You could avoid penalty so long as you eliminate the original improvement by removing the divot before making the stroke. If you do not remove the divot before the stroke, you get the general penalty.
 - You get the general penalty and cannot avoid that penalty.
15. Your ball comes to rest in a position where there are various artificial objects on your line of play. Most objects are movable obstructions but a sponsor sign has been defined as a temporary immovable obstruction by the Committee. Without any instruction, but while you are watching and waiting for the green to clear, another player removes a number of the objects believing that they are in your way, including a directional sign, some roping and staking and the sponsor sign, which you and the other player both believe to be a movable obstruction. You then make your stroke to the green. What is the ruling?
- You get the general penalty and the other player gets no penalty.
 - The other player gets the general penalty and you get no penalty.
 - You and the other player both get the general penalty.
 - Neither of you get a penalty.

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16. True or False: Your ball is embedded in its own pitch-mark in the fringe just off the putting green. After lifting the ball and before taking relief, you tap down the pitch-mark to care for the course and then realizes the repair of the pitch-mark could help you if the ball came to rest in a position where you might have to play through it. The dropped ball hits and comes to rest in the relief area and you play a low running chip shot directly over the repaired pitch-mark. You get the general penalty under Rule 8.1a for improving your conditions affecting the stroke.
- True
 - False
17. In Four-Ball stroke play, your ball comes to rest in the fringe between the putting green and a bunker. Your partner's ball comes to rest in the bunker behind your ball. Your partner plays from the bunker and deposits sand on and around your ball. Which one of the following is correct?
- You must play the ball as it lies since the worsening of the lie was a result of your partner's actions.
 - Only you may restore the lie by removing the sand and lifting and cleaning the ball if necessary.
 - Either you or your partner may restore the lie by removing the sand and lifting and cleaning the ball if necessary.
18. True or False: Your ball comes to rest in the fairway with a worm cast immediately behind the ball. Before playing the ball, you press down the cast, improving your lie and area of intended swing. You get no penalty.
- True
 - False