

Rule 12 - 2 (Searching For & Identifying Ball)

(R & A Decisions on the Rules of Golf **2014 – 2015**)

NOTE: The Rule below **ONLY** deals with lifting ball for identification, and players should familiarise themselves with the other Rule 12 rules dealing with Searching, Seeing Ball, Identifying ball covered by sand, identifying ball covered by loose impediments in Hazard, searching for ball in Water or Water Hazard, Searching for ball within Obstruction or Abnormal Ground Conditions.

12-2 LIFTING BALL FOR IDENTIFICATION

The responsibility for playing the proper ball rests with the player. Each **player should** put an **identification mark** on his¹ **ball**.

If a player believes that a ball at rest might be his, but he cannot identify it, the player may lift the ball for identification, without penalty. The right to lift a ball for identification is in addition to the actions permitted under Rule 12-1.

Before lifting the ball, the player **must announce** his **intention** to his opponent in matchplay or his marker or a fellow-competitor in stroke play **and mark** the position of the ball. He **may then lift** the ball and identify it, **provided** that he **gives** his opponent, marker or fellow competitor an **opportunity to observe** the lifting and replacement². The ball must not be cleaned beyond the extent necessary for identification when lifted under Rule 12-2.

If the ball is the player's ball and he fails to comply with all or any part of this procedure, or he lifts his ball in order to identify it without having good reason to do so, he incurs a penalty of one stroke. If he fails to do so, he incurs the general penalty for a breach of Rule 12-2, but there is no additional penalty under this Rule.

Note: If the original lie of a ball to be replaced has been altered, see Rule 20-3b.

***PENALTY FOR BREACH OF RULE 12-2:**

Matchplay – Loss of hole; Stroke Play – Two strokes

***If a player incurs the general penalty for a breach of Rule 12-2, there is no additional penalty under this Rule.**

12-2/2 – Touching and Rotating Half-Buried Ball in Rough for Identification Purposes.

Q: A ball is half buried in the rough. Having announced his intention in advance to his opponent, marker or fellow competitor, the player, for the purpose of identifying the ball, touches the ball and rotates it. By so doing he identifies the ball as his ball. Is there a penalty?

A: **YES.** For touching the ball other than as provided for in the Rules (Rule 18-2a). Under Rules 12-2 and 20—1, a ball may be lifted (or touched and rotated) for identification purposes after its position has been marked. If the player had marked the position of the ball before rotating it, there would have been no penalty, assuming the rotating did not result in the ball being cleaned beyond the extent necessary to identify it.

¹ Within the R&A Rules of Golf the reference is always to "HIS or HE" and not their or his/her or her. Not happy Jane please contact the R&A not the Club. Thanks

² **REPLACEMENT** – means just that 'replace' the ball do not drop. The lie of the ball should be as originally found.

