

Rule 18 - 2 (Ball at Rest Moved)

(R & A Decisions on the Rules of Golf 2010 – 2011)

NOTE: This CLARIFICATION only deals with the ball moving whilst the player is getting ready to play their shot.

18-2b/1 BALL MOVES AFTER STANCE TAKEN BUT BEFORE ADDRESS

Q: Outside a hazard¹, the player took their stance but did not ground their club. The ball moved. What is the ruling?

A: As the player had not addressed the ball, they **did not incur a penalty** under Rule 18-2b (see **Definition of “Addressing the Ball”**).

If however, the player caused the ball to move, they are subject to penalty and the ball should have been replaced (Rule 18-2a).

Definitions (Section 2):

Addressing the Ball – A player has ‘addressed the ball’ when they have taken their stance and has also grounded their club, except that in a hazard a player has addressed the ball when they have taken their stance.

18-2b/4 – BALL MOVES AFTER PLAYER GROUNDS CLUB BUT BEFORE STANCE COMPLETED.

Q: A player’s routine prior to making a stroke is as follows: they first ground the club directly behind the ball with their feet together. Then they gradually widen their stance feet to shoulder width. At that point the player makes the stroke. If the ball moves after they ground the club but before they widen their stance to shoulder width, does the player incur a penalty stroke under Rule 1802b (Ball Moving After Address)?

A: **NO.** A player has not addressed the ball until they complete taking their stance, i.e. their feet are essentially in the position in which they normally place them when making a stroke.

However, if the ball moved after the club was grounded but before the player had completed taking their stance, they incur a penalty stroke under Rule 18-2a for having caused the ball to move and must replace the ball, unless there is strong evidence that wind or some other agency caused the ball to move.

18-2b/5.5 – PLACING CLUBHEAD ON GROUND IN FRONT OF BALL WHEN ADDRESSING.

Q: A player takes their stance and places their clubhead on the ground in front of the ball without pressing anything down. Before the player grounds the club behind the ball, the ball moves. Has the player “addressed the ball” so that that they are subject to penalty under Rule 18-2b?

A: **YES.**

¹ HAZARD is covered by different rule.