

# HOW TO PROPERLY SPAN A GOLF BALL

*Under Rule 14 - Procedures for Ball: Marking, Lifting and Cleaning; Replacing on Spot; Dropping in Relief Area; Playing from Wrong Place*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrLxiK9jJBs>

There is more than one correct way to move a ball marker on a green. The most important thing to remember, when you are asked to move/span your ball marker off someone's line of putt, is:

**“WHATEVER PROCEDURE YOU USE TO MOVE IT, YOU MUST REVERSE THAT PROCEDURE WHEN YOU REPLACE IT.”**

Here are a couple of scenarios:

1. You have already marked your ball.

Someone asks you to move it one club head-length to the left. Place the heel of your putter alongside your marker, line the toe up with a fixed object on the course (a tree would do the job nicely), pick up your marker and place it in front of the toe. When you reverse the procedure, you will replace your marker and then replace your ball.

2. You have not yet marked your ball when asked to move it.

You may mark it and then follow the procedure in #1 above. You may, instead, place the heel of the putter at the side of your ball, line up the toe with a fixed object, and place a marker in front of the toe. When you reverse the procedure, you will line your putter up with the fixed object and replace the ball at the heel of your putter.

*Note 1:* Repositioning of your ball or ball marker on the putting green is by CLUBHEAD lengths, NOT by CLUB lengths. We're talking inches, not feet!

*Note 2:* If you forget to replace your ball before you putt, you will experience some pretty harsh penalties. In stroke play, you would incur a two-stroke penalty and you would then have to place the ball in the correct spot and putt it from there. Even worse, if this occurred in a tournament and you failed to putt the ball from the correct spot before you teed off on the next hole, you would be disqualified! (Sounds a bit like overkill, don't you think?) In match play, you would lose the hole.

*USEFUL TIP:* I learned this from a wily old veteran. When you move your ball marker on a green, place it upside-down in its new position. That way, even if you have been distracted by a goose flying overhead or a deer prancing by, the unusual occurrence of seeing the flip side of your marker will trigger your memory and remind you to replace the ball.

*ETIQUETTE SUGGESTION:* If you notice someone forgetting to replace a moved marker, please remind them to replace it BEFORE they putt.

