

# Does this count as being “holed?”



According to the definition of “holed” in the Rules of Golf, a ball is not technically holed until it is both at rest within the circumference of the hole and the entire ball is below the level of the lip.

Rule **17-4** allows the player, or someone authorized by him/her, to move or remove the flagstick to allow the ball to fall completely into the hole. It is then deemed to have been holed with the previous stroke.

If a player whose ball is wedged between the flagstick and the lip of the hole carelessly removes the flagstick and causes their ball to end up somewhere other than in the hole, there is no penalty to the player, but the ball must be placed on the lip. The player then needs to play another stroke for their ball to be officially holed.

If a player simply picks up their ball that is stuck between the flagstick and lip of the hole believing it to be holed, the player incurs a one-stroke penalty for lifting their ball without marking its position. This situation is covered directly in **Decision 17-4/1**. The player must replace the ball against the flagstick and proceed as above.

It is important to note that the examples above all involve a stroke that is holed from off the putting green.

If this occurs after a stroke from the putting green, the penalty for striking the flagstick under **Rule 17-3** applies – a two-stroke penalty in stroke play and loss of hole in match play. The player can then proceed by moving the flagstick and allowing the ball to fall into the hole.