



Below are the Colorado Golf Association's guidelines and recommendations for Committees on preferred lies when bunker rakes have been removed from the golf course and playing the ball as it lies is not an option. It is recommended that playing the ball as it lies be the first option.

Please note that this is only for use during COVID-19 precautions. When normal play is resumed, the Rules of Golf will override these procedures.

Lift, Smooth and Replace. If a Committee needs to use preferred lies in a bunker, the Committee should allow players to lift their ball, smooth the lie and replace the ball back on that spot, for no penalty. This procedure is recommended over letting players place a ball within one club length of where the original ball came to rest.

“Lift, Smooth and Replace – When a player's ball is in a bunker, a player may lift his or her ball, smooth the sand to ground level (flat, not teed) and replace the ball back on its original spot. The player may clean the ball when lifting it under this procedure”

In Rule 8 (Course Played As It Is Found), there are four applicable “conditions affecting the stroke”, which are:

- The lie of the player's ball at rest,
- The area of the player's intended stance,
- The area of the player's intended swing,
- The player's line of play.

The goal here should be to retain as many “conditions affecting the stroke” as possible. By only adjusting the “lie of the player's ball at rest”, the player may still retain three out of four “conditions affecting the stroke”.

However, if the Committee allows the player to place a ball within one club length of where the ball currently lies, the player may retain zero out of four “conditions affecting the stroke”.

This picture illustrates how different those two procedures would be if the player were allowed to make the next stroke by being able to move the ball one club length directly backwards. It would entirely change the next shot and the outcome of the hole.

By placing the ball back on its original spot in an adjusted lie, the player would be nearest to that general principle of playing the ball as it lies and would retain three other conditions affecting the stroke that the previous stroke had given the player, rather than zero.

