

SCENARIO:

A player’s ball in motion, played from the putting green accidentally strikes another ball in motion on the putting green.

RULING:

Without penalty, the stroke must be replayed.
If the stroke is not replayed, the player gets the general penalty but has NOT played from a wrong place [Rule: [11.1b\(2\)](#)].

There has been ‘some confusion’ with the introduction of the 2023 Rules of Golf with respect to this situation.

The relevant Rule is:

The 2019 Rule was: A ball in motion, played from the putting green without penalty, must be replayed.



Now Covered by Clarification
4th January 2024
Clarification: 11.1b(2)/1

However, the Rule ‘leaves the ball in motion’ is an [outside influence](#).
Now
Whilst it is a ball in motion’
A ‘ball in motion’ is an exception without penalty.



CLARIFICATION

Statement from the USGA

The removal of the parenthetical reference from 2019 to 2023 was not a change in the outcome.



A ball in motion is still a movable obstruction and if a ball played from the putting green is deflected by a ball in motion on the putting green, Rule 11.1b(2) requires the stroke to be replayed.

Rule 11.1b(2) goes through several phases to get to the various outcomes. A general overview statement (in general accidental deflections by player or outside influences are played as they lie), but then 3 buckets/categories of exceptions that would require a replay (any person, movable obstruction or animal), and then we pull specific types of things out from those buckets that are play as it lies (player, person attending flagstick/club used, flagstick, ball at rest, ball-marker/animal also defined as loose impediment). **We leave all the other items not mentioned in the replay bucket and that would include a ball in motion, which is not just an outside influence but also a movable obstruction.**

[Taken from the official Facebook page of the United States Golf Association]

2019 Rules of Golf

11.1 (Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Person or Outside Influence)

11.1b (Exception 2)

When Ball Played from Putting Green Accidentally Hits Any Person, Animal or Movable Obstruction **(Including Another Ball in Motion)** on Putting Green:

The stroke does not count and the original ball or another ball **must** be replaced on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated) (see Rule 14.2), **except** in these two cases:

- **Ball in Motion Hits Another Ball at Rest or Ball-Marker on Putting Green.**
The stroke counts and the ball must be played as it lies. (See Rule 11.1a for whether a penalty applies in stroke play).
- **Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Flagstick or Person Attending Flagstick.**
This is covered by Rule 13.2b(2), not by this Rule.

Penalty for Playing Incorrectly Substituted Ball or Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Rule 11.1:

General Penalty under Rule 6.3b or 14.7a.

If multiple Rule breaches result from a single act or related acts, see Rule 1.3c(4)

2023 Rules of Golf (January 2023)

11.1 (Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Person or Outside Influence)

Rule 11.1b(2)

When Ball Is Played from Putting Green.

If a player's ball in motion played from the putting green accidentally hits the player or an **outside influence**, the ball must normally be played as it lies.

But if it is known or virtually certain that the ball in motion hit **any of the following on the putting green**, the player **must** replay the stroke by playing the original ball or another ball from the spot where that stroke was made (see Rule 14.6):

- Any person other than:
 - # the player, or
 - # a person attending the flagstick (this is covered by Rule 13.2b(2), not by this Rule).
- **A movable obstruction other than:**
 - # the club used to make the stroke,
 - # a ball-marker,
 - # a ball at rest (see Rule 11.1a for whether a penalty applies in stroke play), or
 - # a flagstick (this is covered by Rule 13.2b(2), not by this Rule).
- An animal other than those defined as a loose impediment (such as an insect).

If the player replays the stroke but does so from a wrong place, they get the general penalty under Rule 14.7.

If the player does not replay the stroke, they get the general penalty and the stroke counts, but the player has not played from a wrong place.