

ROM  
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Dropping and Redropping  
Rule 20-2

Rule 20-1 through 20-6 is a long, complicated rule set covering procedures for lifting, dropping and placing a ball. Rule 20-2 deals specifically with dropping and redropping a ball. One commonly misunderstood aspect of this rule is when to use the “drop, redrop, place” procedure.

Rule 20-2a tells us that “if a ball, when dropped, touches any person or the equipment of any player before or after it strikes the course, and before it comes to rest, the ball must be redropped, without penalty. [There is no limit to the number of times a ball must be dropped in these circumstances.](#)” I like to think of equipment and other players in this situation as affecting the right outcome of the drop, sometimes unfairly. This rule eliminates the possibility a player could position her club so that the dropped ball is more likely to come to rest in a favorable position. Even if there is no intent to do this, equipment and other players need to be outside the action.

Rule 20-2b tells us...”A ball when dropped must first strike a part of the course where the applicable rule requires it to be dropped.” If the ball is not dropped there, the player must redrop using Rule 20-6 (commonly known as the eraser rule), until it does strike the right part of the course, when dropped. Otherwise, a player could drop anywhere that was most favorable though Rule 20-7 does prohibit playing from the wrong place.

So where does the “drop, redrop, place” apply? [The key phrase in Rule 20-2c is “roll and come to rest”](#). There are nine places where a ball cannot roll and come to rest without a required redrop. Rule 20-2c lists all of them. Here are a few.

The ball [cannot roll and come to rest](#):

- where there is interference by the condition from which relief was taken;
- more than two club lengths from where it first struck a part of the course;
- nearer the hole than the nearest point of relief (Rules 24 and 25);
- nearer the hole than where the original ball crossed the margin of the hazard (Rule 26).

If any of these or others covered by 20-2c happen, the ball must be [redropped](#). If the ball, when [redropped](#), rolls and comes to rest in any of these positions, the ball is to be placed as near as possible to the spot where it first struck a part of the course [when redropped](#).

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