

Loose Impediments

What is a Loose Impediment?

Loose impediments are natural objects such as-

- Stones, leaves, grass clippings, twigs, branches, animal droppings, fallen fruit, a picked flower, dead animals, insects and worms
(not man made objects like rakes, cans, cigarette butts, garbage cans, pieces of paper, benches, ball washers, etc.)
- As long as they are not fixed or growing, solidly embedded, or adhering to the ball

Sand and loose soil are loose impediments on the putting green only. Snow and natural ice, other than frost, are either casual water or loose impediments – whichever the player decides. Dew and frost are never loose impediments.

You may NOT move a loose impediment

- When both the ball and the loose impediment are in a bunker or a water hazard, or
- When a ball is moving and the loose impediment is in the way
(loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play)

You may move a loose impediment without penalty

- Before you tee off, or
- Before you drop a ball in the area as long as you're not dropping in a hazard

You may move a loose impediment without penalty in the rough or fairway

- As long as the ball doesn't move. If it does, add one penalty stroke to your score and replace the ball.
- If you don't replace it, you either lose the hole (match play) or add a total of two penalty strokes to your score (stroke play)

You may move a loose impediment without penalty on the putting green

- If the ball moves as a result of moving the loose impediment, there is no penalty and the ball must be replaced

Some Examples of Loose Impediments



Dead Rat



Twigs and Picked
Flowers

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