

**Obstruction:** Any artificial object except for *integral objects* and *boundary objects*. *Examples:*

- Artificially surfaced roads and paths, including their artificial borders
- Buildings and rain shelters
- Sprinkler heads, drains, and irrigation or control boxes
- Stakes, walls, railings, and fences (but *not* when they are boundary objects that define or show the boundary edge of the course)
- Golf carts, mowers, cars, and other vehicles
- Waste containers, signposts, and benches
- Player equipment, flagsticks, and rakes

**Immovable Obstruction:** One that

- Cannot be moved without unreasonable effort or without damaging the obstruction or the course, and
- Otherwise, does not meet the definition of a movable obstruction.

The Committee may define any obstruction to be an immovable obstruction, even if it meets the definition of movable obstruction.

**Movable Obstruction:** An obstruction that

1. can be *moved with reasonable effort*,
2. and *without damaging* the obstruction or the course.

If part of an immovable obstruction (such as a gate or door or part of an attached cable) meets these two standards, *that part* is treated as a *movable* obstruction.

But this does not apply if the movable part of an immovable obstruction is not meant to be moved (such as a loose stone that is part of a stone wall). Even when an obstruction is movable, the Committee may define it to be an immovable obstruction.

[USGA Video](#)

**Note:** *Playing the ball as it lies is an option and sometimes a better option than dropping a ball.*

## Obstructions and Boundary Objects

Obstructions (plus an embedded ball and dangerous animal conditions) are not treated as part of the challenge of playing the course, and free relief is *generally* allowed except in a penalty area.

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**Boundary Objects:** Free relief is *not* allowed from artificial objects defining out of bounds, such as walls, fences, stakes, and railings.

**Don't pull OB stakes out.** (2-stroke penalty unless you put it back in before hitting. [USGA](#))

This includes any base and post of a boundary fence, but does not include:

- Angled supports or guy wires that are attached to a wall or fence, or
- Any steps, bridge or similar construction used for getting over the wall or fence.

Boundary objects are treated as *immovable* even if they are movable or any part of them is movable (see Rule 8.1a).

**Do Not Remove a Boundary Stake:** These are *not* obstructions or integral objects and may not be moved. If you move one and hit your shot, you get a *two-stroke penalty*. If you remove one and put it back before your shot, there is no penalty.

An obstruction is either a *movable obstruction* or an *immovable obstruction*. If part of an immovable obstruction (such as a gate or door or part of an attached cable) meets the definition of movable obstruction, *that part* is treated as a movable obstruction.

### Immovable Obstruction Checklist:

#### Is Free Relief Allowed?

Yes, **IF**, and only if, an immovable obstruction interferes with *one* of these:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Your Lie
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your Stance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your Swing

If none of these are affected, you do **not** get free relief.