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| FAQ 7: | <i>a) Someone told me you can't hold the flagstick while tapping in a two inch putt, is that right?</i> |
| | <i>b) Someone I was playing with removed an out-of-bounds stake. When I told him that wasn't allowed he replaced it before playing his shot, what is the ruling on this?</i> |
| Applicable Rule(s): | a) Rule 4-3a (Unusual Use of Equipment. Allowed and Prohibited Uses of Equipment) |
| Applicable Rule(s): | b) Local Rule 6 (Movable Obstructions) |
| | b) Rule 8 (Improving Conditions Affecting the Stroke) |

Answer:

a) Not necessarily.

You may hold the flagstick while you putt out without penalty provided that you hold it in the air and do not rest it on the ground. If you do rest it on the ground then you are in breach of rule 4-3 **the penalty for which is the general penalty (2strokes) for the first occurrence and disqualification for further breaches of this rule!**

b) He incurs a two-stroke penalty (or loss of hole if it was matchplay).

Objects defining out of bounds are fixed, not movable obstructions, and so may not be moved. The player was in breach of Rule 13-2 the moment he moved the post and there was nothing he could then do to avoid the penalty. The replacement of the post before the next stroke was irrelevant.