

The Halfway Rule (Offside) - Rule 10

The 2007 Rule is little different to the old *Rule 11* except in one aspect: a ball ordered to a Penalty Spot becomes an outside agency - *Rule 10(c)(1)*.

The commentary below is written in a different way from the actual rule, but the actual *Rule 10* ought to be read carefully in its entirety.

The Halfway Rule – Rule 10 (written differently)

1. After a hoop point has been scored, any ball which is resting **beyond** the specific halfway line between the hoop just scored and the next hoop is an **‘offside ball’** - unless it is an **‘exception’**. This means that it reached its position:
 - 1.1. as a result of the stroke just played; (the ball that ran the hoop - a ball that pelted another ball or a ball that hit a hoop that caused another ball to run the hoop, even without actually hitting that ball)
 - 1.2. as a result of an opponent's stroke; (Bab's blue ball hit the red ball across the halfway line and Ray has not struck the red since **or** the red ball was across the halfway line (and would have become an offside ball) but it was hit by the blue ball that just ran the hoop)
 - 1.3. as a result of contact with an opponent's ball; (the red ball touched the blue ball and crossed the line and has not been struck since)
 - 1.4. as a result of being moved to a penalty spot;

‘beyond’ means *all of the ball is past the halfway line*.

2. If a ball is across the halfway line and it appears that it might be an exception (Points 1.1 to 1.4 above) it is important to note that if it did originally cross the line in this manner, that the owner has not actually struck it since, as this nullifies its ‘exception’ status.
3. Before the next stroke is played, the opponent of the owner of an offside ball is entitled to direct that the offside ball is to next be struck either from:
 - 3.1. where it lies or
 - 3.2. from either of the D or E penalty spots, as chosen by the opponent of the owner.
4. If Bab, the owner of an offside ball, plays (either ball) before the opponent (Ray) has given a direction under *10(c)(1)* Ray may stop play and may then order the offside ball to one of the penalty spots or to be replayed (and any balls moved to be replaced).
Also, Bab possibly suffers a further penalty. If Ray also has an offside ball and Bab is ordered to replay either of their balls as above, Bab then loses the right to implement the offside penalty against Ray's ball.
But if Bab plays either an offside ball or an onside ball and Ray then strikes one of their balls, Bab's stroke and the position of the offside ball is condoned.
5. However, this placement on the penalty spot may be delayed (for the sake of convenience). But it is an outside agency, *Rule 9(d)* and if hit by a ball *Rule 9(f)* applies (see also *Commentary 9(f)* – which means that it ought to be moved if there is the slightest chance that it could be hit).
6. Referees: The referee is required not to draw attention to an “offside ball” about to be struck (as it is not an error or a fault) nor to draw attention to it after it occurs (the referee is not to call or announce it). The opponent is to discover it or by failing to do so, condones (ignores) this action and play continues.
7. Penalty Spots: There are only two: the ends of the D—E line.

Short comment on Rule 10 - Halfway & Offside

This Rule requires careful reading and the significance of *Rule 10* is **not always fully understood**. The interpretation of *Rule 10(b)(2)* can be explained thus:

Bab scores the hoop (in order) with Blue.

Ray's red ball is 'onside' but yellow and black are 'offside'.

Ray then 'plays' red. Ray has played red before the offside yellow has been dealt with – Bab has two choices:

- 1 Bab may accept the position where red has come to rest and play continues,
- or
- 2 Bab may stop play and require Ray to replace red and take the option of dealing with the offside yellow ball (e.g. by requiring it to be sent to a penalty spot).
- 3 In either case Ray is then required to **replay** the stroke. This might be to Ray's disadvantage if red had gained a really good position.
- 4 Ray also loses the right to deal with Bab's offside black ball.
- or
- 5 If Bab fails to recognise this and strikes black, that action condones red's position.

