

HOW TO RETRIEVE A BALL STUCK IN A TREE

If your ball is lodged in a tree, you have the option to play it as it lies or declare it unplayable. No matter which decision you make, you will need to climb the tree to access the ball.

1 Attempt to identify the ball from the ground.

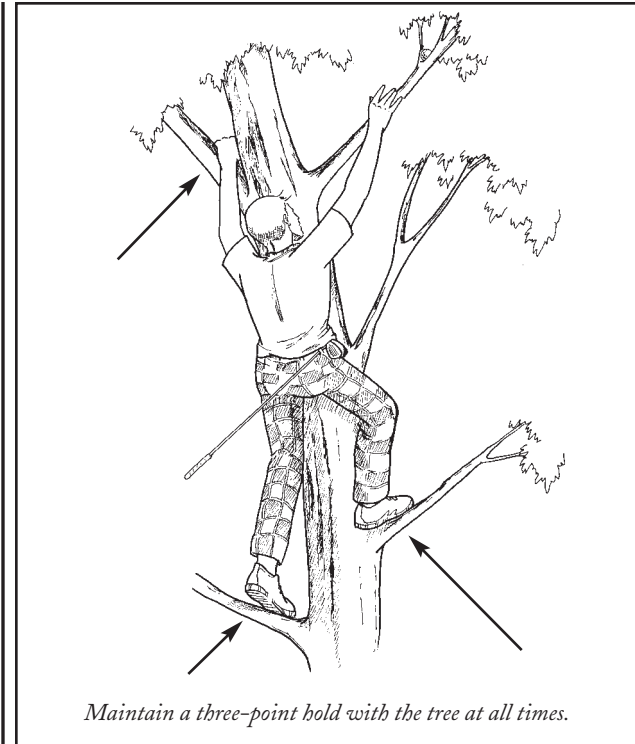
The rules require that a player identify his or her ball prior to hitting or moving it. You will save yourself a climb if you can determine from the ground that the ball is not yours.

2 Determine if the tree is dead or alive.

Do not climb dead trees—they are much more dangerous than living trees. A dead tree's limbs may break unexpectedly.

3 Survey the tree and surrounding area for hazards.

Do not climb a tree that is touching or is intertwined with power lines. Look into the tree to determine if there are any animal nests near your ball. Although most animals will flee when you get close, squirrels protecting their nests and raccoons living in the hollow of a tree may be dangerous.



4 Grab a branch at its base or "crotch."

The strongest and thickest part of the branch is the place it splits from the trunk. The farther you go out on the branch, the weaker it is. Be careful not to grab a dead branch.

5 Use your legs, not your arms, to power yourself up the tree.

Your arms should only guide your ascent.

6 Maintain a three-point hold when you are in the tree.

Make sure that three parts of your body are attached to or touching the tree at all times; for example, if both feet are on the trunk, have at least one hand on a branch above as you reach to go farther.

7 If you need to rest, wrap your arms around the tree or a sturdy branch.

Try to use your legs to support you, if possible, rather than your arms.

8 Reach out to your ball.

Either knock it to the ground or put it in your pocket.

9 Begin your descent.

Your arms should bear your weight on the way down. To increase your grip on the branches during your descent, turn your palms toward you when gripping the branches.

10 Follow the same path to go down as you took when you went up.

Be Aware

- Buds or leaves on a tree indicate that it is living. Although the tree as a whole may be alive, you still need to watch for dead branches. Dead branches may be discolored compared to the rest of the tree and they may be missing their bark.

- Do not climb a tree if you are alone. If you encounter problems, your partner might be able to assist you or find someone who can.
- Cover your eyes with glasses or sunglasses prior to climbing, if possible. Twigs and branches may poke you. Wear a hardhat or baseball cap to help protect your head.
- Do not climb a tree when it is raining or if the tree is wet. The tree will be slippery.

The Rules

If you shake the tree to get the ball down for the purpose of identifying it (before declaring it unplayable), you will incur a two-stroke penalty.

If, before declaring your ball unplayable, you swing at a branch lower than where your ball sits and you move the ball, you have incurred a one-stroke penalty for moving your ball. You must replace the ball. You are not charged a stroke for the swing at the branch. If you cannot replace the ball, you must now declare the ball unplayable and add a stroke to your score.