

Efficient Play

Move your group along. You don't have to rush, just keep things moving. If your group is slow, you don't hold up just the group behind you. You hold up the entire course behind you. Your green fees do not include that privilege.

1. On the tee, be standing beside the tee box, club and ball in hand, ready to hit when it becomes your turn.
2. Watch your ball until it stops so you don't have to ask someone else where it is.
3. Go directly to your own ball. Do not go to everyone's ball in turn as a group.
4. Check the ball before you hit it to make sure it is yours.
5. When you get to your ball, make your next stroke if no one else is making theirs.
6. If someone else is making their stroke, use that time to get ready for yours.
7. In general, prepare for and play your stroke without delay. Take one practice swing if you want to, then hit the ball. Avoid taking multiple practice swings.
8. After you make your stroke, start walking immediately. You can clean your club and put it back in the bag when you get to your ball and are waiting for someone else to hit.
9. When you get to the green, put your bag or cart on the side of the green nearest the next tee.
10. After everyone has holed out, leave the green immediately. Talk and record scores on the way to the next tee.

11. If you have hit the ball five times and it is not on the green, pick up your ball and drop it on the green when you get there. If you have hit the ball eight times and it is still not in the hole, pick it up and cease play on that hole.

12. On the green, read your putt without too much delay. If you cannot decide, make your best guess and play the stroke.

13. If your group is slow anyway, or a faster group is behind you, let groups behind you play through in this manner: Your group tees off, then waits for the following group. That group tees off. Stay at the tee box until that group has hit their second shots. Then your group may start down the fairway.

14. Play from tees appropriate for you. If you do not break 100 regularly, use the red tees. If you do not break 85 regularly, use the white tees. Use blue tees only if, in addition to these scoring guidelines, you regularly drive the ball 260 yards or more.

The Rules of Recreational Golf

The USGA's rule book is meant for governing competitions and establishing a USGA handicap. If you are playing outside of those environments, use these rules instead for a more enjoyable outing.

Remember that the primary reason to play recreational golf is to have fun in the out-of-doors with your playing companions. The score you shoot is of secondary importance.

by

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Rules the Game

1. Golf is played by hitting a ball from a teeing ground into a hole on the associated putting green. A player's score is the number of times the ball was struck from the tee to the hole, including penalty strokes. The total of scores on each hole played is the score for the round.
2. Tee up your ball inside the teeing box, a rectangle between the tee markers and two club-lengths deep. If you accidentally knock the ball off a tee peg when not intending to hit it, that does not count as a stroke. Re-tee the ball and play on.
3. You must play the ball as it lies, except under these conditions:
 - a. If you hit the ball into a water hazard, defined by red or yellow stakes, remove the ball if you can find it, or use another ball if your ball is lost in the hazard, and drop it outside the hazard at another spot no nearer to the hole than where the ball crossed the hazard's boundary. Penalty: one stroke. If you decide to play your ball from inside the hazard, there is no penalty.
 - b. If you find your ball out of bounds, defined by white stakes, you *must* remove your ball, and drop it in bounds at another spot no nearer to the hole than where the ball went out of bounds. Penalty: two strokes.
 - c. If you have looked for your ball for two minutes and cannot find it, your ball is lost. Drop another ball at another spot no nearer to the hole than where you last saw it. Penalty: two strokes.
 - d. At any time, you may declare your ball to be unplayable, pick it up, and drop it at another spot no nearer to the hole. Penalty: one stroke.

- e. If heavy rain or flooding has caused water to collect in a place where there normally is no water, you may pick up your ball and drop it at the nearest spot no nearer to the hole that is clear of casual water. No penalty.
 - f. If your ball is in a part of the course that is enclosed by a white circle, that is ground under repair. You *must* pick up your ball and drop it at another spot no nearer to the hole. No penalty.
4. If you play someone else's ball, play your ball and take a one-stroke penalty. The player whose ball was incorrectly played is to drop another ball at the spot from where you hit it.
 5. If your ball is on the wrong putting green, pick it up and drop it within two club-lengths of the nearest spot off the green but not nearer to the hole of the correct green. No penalty.
 6. If an artificial object (including a cart path or a road) that is fixed interferes with your swing or stance, you may pick up your ball and drop it at another spot no nearer to the hole. No penalty.
Note: Drops from where the ball originally lay are two club lengths if there is an accompanying penalty, one club length if not. Drop the ball from knee height.
 7. A natural object that is fixed or growing and which interferes with your swing or stance may not be moved, bent, broken, or detached. Penalty: one stroke
 8. Artificial and natural objects that are not fixed (soda pop can, twig) may be moved without penalty anywhere on the course.
 9. If mud adheres to your ball, you may clean it.

10. Finish the hole with the same ball you started with unless it became lost or unfit for play.
11. The ball needs to be struck at, not pushed or nudged. If you swing at the ball with intent to hit it and you miss, you must count that as one stroke.
12. Situations and events not covered by these rules should be resolved with fairness to the player and respect for the game.

Good Manners

1. Do not make noise or move around when someone near you is making their stroke.
2. If someone else's ball might be lost, play your ball and then go help them look.
3. If a ball you hit is heading for players in front of you, yell, "Fore!"
4. Make sure greenskeepers ahead of you are aware that you are about to hit.
5. Leave portable electronic devices turned off. Give your attention to the people you're playing with.
6. Carefully rake your footprints and ball marks when leaving a sand trap after you have played from one.
7. Repair divot holes you make by replacing the sod and stepping on it.
8. Repair ball marks you make on the green by pushing the edges of the gouge toward the center.
9. Lay the flagstick down on the green. Do not drop it.
10. Do not step on the line of another player's putt.
11. If a player wishes to mark and lift her or his ball on the putting green before you play your stroke, wait until this has been done.