

SWINGERS GOLF

Some of the Basics

Golf Etiquette

Etiquette is a word that's often heard in relation to golf, more so than with any other sport. But it's not just about good manners.

The guidelines for good golf etiquette are there for several very important reasons:

- Many of them relate to the safety of golfers
- Many relate to pace of play (which helps keep the game enjoyable)
- Other rules of golf etiquette relate to maintaining the quality of the golf course.

In other words, golf etiquette is an essential part of the game. And it's something that newcomers to the game often learn as they go - on the course, when playing with more experienced golfers. If you are new to the game, or just need to brush up on your golf etiquette, here are some basic rules that will help keep the game enjoyable for you and those around you.

Keep It Safe

- Do not swing your club until you know that others in your group are at a safe distance.
- Likewise, keep your distance when others are swinging
- Be aware to steer clear of trouble.
- When practicing your swing, never swing in the direction of another player. There may be pebbles or twigs or other matter in the grass that could fly up and injure a playing partner
- Do not hit the ball until you are certain that the group ahead of you is out of range
- If your ball appears headed toward another player or another group, give them a warning by yelling out, "Fore!" (an internationally recognized alert)
- Never throw clubs in anger. In addition to being rude and childish, it could also be dangerous.

Maintain a Good Pace

- Keep the round moving by being prepared to hit your shot when it is your turn. You probably don't like waiting on other groups - don't make other groups wait on you
- The player who is "away" hits first in a group. However, in friendly matches (as opposed to tournament play), this rule can be ignored in favour of "ready play"(players hit as they are ready)
- Do not spend too much time looking for a lost ball, particularly if there is a group behind you ready to play. If you insist on taking the full five minutes allotted in the rulebook to look for lost balls, golf etiquette says wave up the group behind to allow them to "play through"
- Always try to keep pace with the group ahead of you. If space opens in front of you, allow a faster group to play through
- When two players in a cart hit to opposite sides of a hole, drive to first ball and drop off that player with his club, then drive to the second ball. After both players hit, meet up farther down the hole
- When walking from your cart to your ball, take a couple clubs with you. Taking only one club, then having to return to the cart to retrieve a different club, is a huge time-waster
- Always leave the putting green as soon as your group has finished putting

Be Kind to the Course

- Observe cart rules. Some courses will post "cart path only" signs; others will ask you to observe the "90 Degree Rule" Do as you are told
- Keep carts away from greens and hazards. The wheels on carts can damage these sensitive areas
- Repair your "divots" in the fairway
- Repair your "ball pitch Marks" on the green
- Always rake sand bunkers after hitting to erase your footprints and damage to the area where your ball was
- Avoid taking a divot on a practice swing.

And a Few More Golf Etiquette Hints

- Quiet, please! Never talk during another player's swing
- Do not yell out following a shot. Even if boisterous behaviour doesn't bother your playing partners, there are other people on the course who may be within earshot
- Be aware of your shadow on the putting green. Don't stand in a place that causes your shadow to be cast across another player or that player's putting line
- Never walk through a playing partner's putting line. Your footprints might alter the path of a partner's putt. Step over the putting line, or walk around (behind) the partner's ball.

Dealing with Slow Play

Slow play is the blight on modern golf and is usually a condition that a golfer acquires over time, as he or she acquires bad habits or it's the result of the golfer never having been taught proper golf course etiquette. This means a slow golfer can usually be "cured". Of course, that golfer has to be aware that he's slow, and that's where friends come into play.

*As we often take a look at other golfers on the course and notice the things they do to slow down play, we should look at ourselves. Before running down a list of suggestions to speed up play, it's important to note that many of these tips have nothing to do with rushing your play, but rather with simply being ready to play. **The bottom line is, as soon as it's your turn to play, you should be ready to step right up and make the stroke.***

Here are some tips for speeding up slow play on the golf course:

- Choose the correct set of tees from which to play. If you're a 20-handicapper, you have no business playing the championship tees.
- Members of a group should not travel as a pack, with all members walking together to the first ball, then the second, and so on. Each member of the group should walk directly to his own ball
- When two players are riding in a cart, drive the cart to the first ball and drop off the first player with his choice of clubs. The second player should proceed in the cart to his ball. After the first player hits his stroke, he should begin walking toward the cart as the second golfer is playing
- Use the time you spend getting to your ball to think about the next shot - the "yardage", the club selection. When you reach your ball you'll need less time to figure out the shot.
- If you are unsure whether your ball has come to rest out of bounds, or may be lost, immediately hit a provisional ball so that you won't have to return to the spot to replay the shot. *If you are playing a recreational match with, shall we say, a "loose interpretation" of the rules, then simply drop a new ball somewhere around the area where your ball was lost and keep playing.*
- Begin reading the green and lining up putts as soon as you reach the green. Don't wait until it's your turn to putt to start the process of reading the green. Do it as soon as you reach the green so that when it's your turn you can step right up and putt
- Never delay making a stroke because you're having a conversation with a playing partner. Put the conversation on hold, make your stroke, then pick up the conversation again
- After putting out, don't stand around the green chatting or take any practice putting strokes. Leave the green quickly so the group behind can play
- When leaving the green and returning to your cart, don't stand there fussing with your putter or other clubs. Get in the cart, drive to the next tee, and then put away your putter
- Likewise, mark your scorecard after reaching the next tee, not while lingering on or near the just-completed green
- When using a cart, never park the cart in front of the green. Park it only to the side or behind the green. And don't mark your scorecard while sitting in the cart next to the green (do it at the next tee)
- If you're the type who likes to offer tips to playing partners, save it for the driving range - or only do so on the course when you're sure that you're not slowing down play
- Don't ask your playing partners to help you search for a lost ball - unless you are absolutely certain there is time for them to do so (e.g., there is no group behind waiting). If the course is crowded, your partners should continue moving forward, not slow things down further by stopping to help your search
- On the tee, pay attention to your partners' drives. If they lose sight of their ball, you can help direct them to it and avoid any searching
- When waiting on the tee for the group in front to clear the fairway, don't be so strict about order of play. Let the short hitter - who can't reach the group ahead anyway - go ahead and hit

- Work on building a concise pre-shot routine. If your pre-shot routine is a lengthy one, it's probably in your best interests to shorten it anyway. Limit practice strokes to one or two at the most
- Don't bother marking lag putts - go ahead and putt out if it's short enough
- **Leave your cell phone in the car**
- Walk at a good pace between shots and no, you don't have to look like a speed-walker. But if your between-shot stroll can be described as a "shuffle" or an "amble," you're probably going too slow. Speeding up your walk a little is both good for your health, but also might help your game by keeping you loose
- Carry extra tees, ball markers and an extra ball in your pockets so you never have to return to your bag to find one when needed
- When chipping around the green, carry both the club you'll be chipping with plus your putter so you don't have to return to the bag
- Try playing ready golf, where order of play is based on who's ready, not on who's away

SOME BASIC GOLF TERMS & HOW THEY APPLY

• **BUNKER**

- **Definition**
 - *A part of the golf course termed a hazard and if a depression filled with sand. As with any hazard a player may not ground his club when playing the shot.*
- **Also known as**
 - *Sand Trap*
- **How to approach and rake a bunker**
 - *Find the best entry and exit point (usually shortest point to the ball)*
 - *Enter bunker with the rake*
 - *Play your shot, remembering not to ground the club while addressing the ball*
 - *Rake your shot marks and footprints smooth as you back out of the bunker*
 - *Exit bunker and complete raking*
 - *Admire your work*



• **FORE**

- **Definition:**
 - *A word of warning yelled out by a player who has hit an errant shot. If your shot is in danger of hitting or landing very close to another player or group of players on the course (for instance, if you slice a ball into an adjoining fairway), you should yell "fore!" to warn players to watch out.*
- **History**
 - *"Fore" is another word for "ahead" (think of a ship's fore and aft). Yelling "fore" is simply a shorter way to yell "watch out ahead" (or "watch out before"). It allows golfers to be forewarned, in other words.*

• **PREFERRED LIES**

- **Definition**
 - *"Preferred lies" (also known as "winter rules") is a condition that exists by local rule only and under which golfers are, on certain parts of a golf course, allowed to improve their lies without penalty*
 - *"Preferred lies" is not codified in any of the 34 rules that make up the Rules of Golf. The practice is only mentioned in an appendix to the rules, where there is also a sample local rule for use by courses, clubs or committees*

- Generally, preferred lies are put into place when adverse weather conditions (such as harsh winters) impact the golf course itself. Under the most common usage of preferred lies, a player whose ball is in the fairway would be allowed to improve the lie if that ball was, for example, on a bare patch of ground (where the turf had died due to weather conditions).
 - Preferred lies can differ from course to course; only a course, club or committee can declare preferred lies in effect (a player may not declare, in absence of a ruling from the club or course that he is playing under preferred lies).
- **Also known as**
 - *Placing*
 - *Winter Rules*

- **OUT OF BOUNDS**

- **Definition:**
 - *Those areas outside the course from which play is not allowed, or any area designated as out of bounds by the committee*
 - *Out of bounds will be marked in some way - often by the use of white stakes or some barrier (a fenceline, for example). Items used to designate OB are not considered obstructions, are considered to be fixed, and therefore cannot be removed in order to play*
 - *In all cases, the innermost portion of whatever is designating OB is itself considered out of bounds. For example, if stakes are used to mark OB, then the inside of the stake is where OB begins; if a line is on the ground, then the line itself is considered OB*
 - *A ball is considered out of bounds when all of it is outside the boundaries.*
 - *If a player's ball goes out of bounds he must play another ball from where he hit the original shot and add a penalty stroke*

- **IMMOVABLE OBSTRUCTION**

- **Definition:**
 - *An obstruction that cannot be moved (this would include, for example, cart paths or maintenance roads).*
 - *Taking free relief from an immovable obstruction is permitted if the ball lies in or on the obstruction or close enough that it interferes with the stance or swing.*
 - *The nearest point of relief is determined and the player drops without penalty within one club length of that point. If the ball is in a bunker, it must be dropped in the bunker (unless you are willing to take a penalty). If it's on the putting green, the ball can be placed at the nearest point of relief no nearer the hole, with the nearest point possibly being off the putting surface.*

- **WATER HAZARD**

- **Definition:**
 - *A pond, lake, river, stream, sea, bay, ocean or any other open water on the course, including ditches and drainage ditches.*
 - *Did you know that there doesn't have to be water in a water hazard? If a seasonal creek, for example, is defined as a water hazard by the committee, but your ball finds it when it's dry, it's played under all the rules for water hazards*
 - *Also, water hazards extend vertically and their boundaries should be defined by yellow stakes or lines*
 - *Those boundaries often extend out a few feet from the surface of the water itself. If your ball crosses the marked boundary but sits on dry land, it's still considered in the water hazard*
 - *The stakes or lines defining the hazard are considered to be in the hazard.*

- **LATERAL WATER HAZARD**

- **Definition:**

- *The reason the rules differentiate a "lateral water hazard" from a "water hazard" is that in the case of a lateral water hazard, the option to drop behind the hazard does not exist. Because the lateral water hazard runs along the side of the playing area, not across it*
 - *The official definition of "lateral water hazard" is a water hazard situated so that it is impossible or impractical (in view of the committee) to drop behind it - as you would do with a normal water hazard*

- **AWAY**

- **Definition**

- *When playing in a group of two or more, being the farthest away from the hole. The player whose ball is farthest away - whether in the fairway or on the green - is said to be away. The player who is away plays first*

- **Also Known As:**

- *Out*

- **Examples:**

- *The Golf Guide was away, so he played first. "Who's out?" the Golf Guide asked. "You're away," his playing partner replied.*

- **READY PLAY**

- **Definition**

- *Players hit as they are ready. All players should agree to "ready play" before it is put into effect.*

- **PLAY THROUGH**

- **Definition:**

- *When a faster group of players is allowed to pass a slower group on the course. This usually happens at the invitation of the slower group - etiquette dictates that a slower group allow a faster group to play through. The slower group may allow the pass to occur from any part of the hole, but it usually occurs when the faster group approaches a tee box on which the slower group is still playing. The slower group usually stands aside and waits for the faster group to complete the hole before resuming play. Sometimes the move is required by a course marshall, who tells one group to stand aside while another group, plays through.*

- **90 DEGREE RULE**

- **Definition:**

- *The 90-Degree Rule is something golf courses may put into place when they want to allow the convenience of golf carts but minimize the impact of those carts on the golf course*
 - *When the 90-Degree Rule is in effect, golfers are required to keep carts on the cart path until they are even with a golf ball in the fairway. Only then should the cart leave the path, turning sharply (90 degrees) to drive straight across to the golf ball. After playing the shot, the cart should be driven directly back to the cart path, then remain on the path until pulling even with another ball. In this manner, golfers have the convenience of carts but damage to the course is minimized*
 - *The 90-Degree Rule is permanently in effect at many courses; at others, it will be put into effect following rains or when course conditions warrant. Look for signs near the first tee that might indicate whether the condition is in effect, or ask in the pro shop.*
 - *Even when the 90-Degree Rule is not in effect at a course, it's a good practice to follow because it helps maintain a healthier turf.*

- **GROUND UNDER REPAIR (G.U.R)**

- **Definition:**

- *Exactly what its name implies: ground that is being repaired by the course superintendent or maintenance crew*
- *Ground under repair should be designated as such by the course, either by staking, roping, painting with white paint or otherwise marking the area affected. Relief is given to any golfer whose ball comes to rest in the area or touching it.*
- *Any hole dug by a green keeper, and any material piled for removal by a green keeper, is ground under repair even if it is not so marked.*
- *Grass cuttings left on the course are not considered ground under repair unless they are marked as such.*
- *In the rulebook, check.*

- **Also Known As:**

- GUR

- **FOOT WEDGE**

- **Definition:**

- *"Foot wedge" is a slang term for a "club" that helps a golfer cheat his way out of trouble. Specifically, "foot wedge" is what a golfer uses when he kicks his ball or nudges the ball into a better position for the next stroke. He used his foot to improve his lie - hence, "foot wedge."*
- *Needless to say, the "foot wedge" is an illegal club and its use is against the rules.*

- **Examples:**

- *Bob must have used his foot wedge to get out from behind that tree.*

- **DIVOT**

- **Definition**

- *Most good swings on well-struck iron shots produce a divot in the fairway (or tee box). The word "divot" actually refers to two different things: the top layer of turf that is sliced off and sent flying as your iron enters the ground; and the resulting scar, or patch of bare earth, that is left in the fairway*

Repairing divots is an important duty of golfers who create them. According to the Golf Course Superintendents, a repaired divot can speed up the healing process (meaning: the grass will cover over the scar in the fairway) by a couple weeks, as opposed to an unrepaired divot.

- **How to repair divots**

- Identify your divot
- Use sand container (ensure it is full before entering playing)
- Pour sand into divot
- Smooth sand level with grass
- If you don't have sand replace the displaced turf
- Tramp down replaced turf



- **BALL PITCH MARK**

- **Definition:**

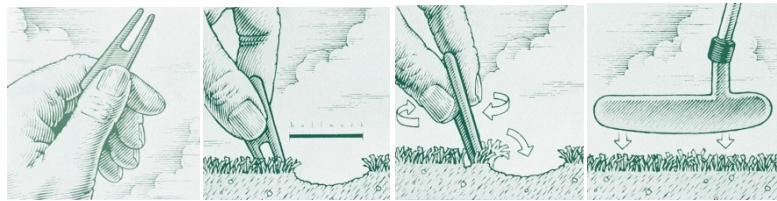
- *The indentation that a ball makes on a green upon landing. (Pitch mark is the synonym.) Typically, this occurs on high approach shots struck with mid- to long irons, or on approach shots from a greater distance struck with fairway woods. But it can occur with any club, particularly on soft greens. Ball marks should be repaired using special tools made for that purpose in order for the green to properly heal. It is also customary to repair other ball marks (other than your own) if you notice them on a green.*

- **Also Known As:**

- Pitch mark
- Ball mark

- **How to repair ball pitch marks**

- Pitch mark repair tool
- Insert the pitch mark repair tool
- Push edges of pitch mark towards the centre
- Smooth over and pat down your repair area



Beginners Golfer?

Suggest you visit the following site for a better understanding of the game:-

http://golf.about.com/od/beginners/a/faq_beginners.htm

