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SPHM
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SPHM – GOLF ETIQUETTE



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Golf Etiquette

Golf Etiquette... Learn The Rules Of Basic Golf Manners

According to golf etiquette, the sport of golf is **played without** guidance, supervision, or control by a coach, referee, or an umpire on the golf course. Beginning golfers usually are not aware of the *customary practices and behavior* on the course.

Basically the game relies upon each golfer to be considerate of their fellow players and to abide by the **"Rules "**.

There are *unspoken rules of etiquette* and more stringent rules of good golf etiquette. The rules are in place to make the game more enjoyable, but many of them relate to the **golfers safety** and to the **pace of play** (which helps keep the game more enjoyable).

Several other rules of etiquette relate to *maintaining the overall quality of the golf course itself.*



All players on the golf course should demonstrate a *high degree of sportsmanship and courtesy* at all times (Basically just good manners!).

Therefore it is very important that the individual golfer *understands the fundamentals of golf etiquette.*

Following are the essentials a player must understand concerning golf etiquette during the process of playing the game of golf:

CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS

Arrive on Time! (This is definitely included in good Golf Etiquette)

Leave home with enough time to reach the golf course at least 45 minutes before your "Tee" time. This is extending consideration for your playing partners as well as the starter and other players immediately following your established "Tee" time.

(Besides, you don't want to be stressed out before you even get a chance to have the "**1st-Tee jitters**"!)

Golf etiquette includes showing respect to the bag-handler and starter for starting your golf day out on a positive note. Maybe even an appropriate tip is in order!

Extending respect and consideration during your "warm-up" on the practice putting green and golf driving ranges is appropriate.

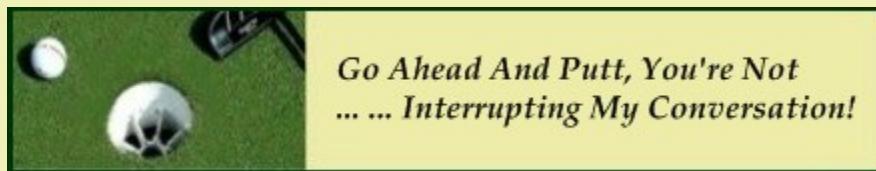
Golf etiquette includes showing respect to the Golf Marshal out on the course, and the Caddy! Tip the Caddy commensurate with his/her performance.

On the Putting Green

DO NOT:

- Walk or stand on another players putting line.
- Leave your ball on another players putting line.
- Leave your golf ball marker on another players putting line if it is bothersome to them.
- Cast your shadow on another players putting line or setup area. (Your shadow should not be visible at all to the player when he is about to putt).
- Stand within a player's peripheral vision while they are putting.
- Stand behind another player to visualize the path of their ball during the process of putting.
- Talk or whisper while another player is preparing to putt or during the process of putting.
- Leave the putting area until all other players in the group have holed out.

(That's also part of the etiquette of golf!) (See "Putting Green" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page)



No Distraction and/or Disturbance

Professional etiquette requires that you do not bring electronic devices to the course which will bother other players. If you must carry a cell phone for emergency purposes, use it only for emergencies and put it on "**vibration**" ringing mode.

In general on the golf course, **act as if you are in the "library"!**

- Don't talk prior to or during another players turn at taking their shot. Avoid any *unnecessary noise or movement* that will distract or disturb other players.
- At the Tee Box, *do not take practice swings or tee your ball* when another player is about to play.
- Avoid shouting loudly anywhere on the golf course, as there are always other players nearby.
- **Do not stand directly behind** a player who is about to play. Stay out of their **peripheral vision** to avoid distracting them.

(See "Avoiding Distraction" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page)
Do not give advice to your opponent or fellow-competitor.

(Official Rules of Golf)

Rule 8:

8-1. Advice

During a stipulated round, a player must not:

- Give advice to anyone in the competition playing on the course other than his partner, or*
- Ask for advice from anyone other than his partner or his golf caddie.*

*The Less Skilled The Player,
The More Likely He Is To Share His Ideas
... About The Golf Swing!*



PACE OF PLAY

Play At A Good Pace

Play at a pace which keeps up with the group ahead. If there is an open Hole ahead, and the group behind is pushing your group, either pick up your groups pace, or invite the group behind you to play through regardless how many players are in that group. This is considered good golf etiquette.

Take only one practice swing for each shot, and then hit the ball.

(See "Playing at a Good Pace" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page for more golf etiquette tips)

Plan your shot before it's your turn. Decide in advance where you want the to land the next shot , and which club you will use to make the shot.

(See "Being ready to play" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page)

The **player who is away hits first** in a group, this "rule" eliminates the confusion as to whose turn it is *and keeps the game moving!* (This is essential in beginners golf etiquette)

(Official Rules of Golf)

Rule 10:

The Order of Play

- a. *The player who has the **lowest score** on a Hole has the right to play his/her ball first on the next Hole. This is called the "honor."*
- b. *While playing a Hole, the player whose ball is **farthest from the Hole** plays first.*

Play Ready Golf whenever you can (non-tournament play).

Ready Golf means that the player who is ready first, plays first even if that player is not the farthest away from the hole. Have an agreement with your playing partners to play "**Ready Golf**" before you Tee Off.

Ready golf can really save a lot of time waiting for the "correct" player to hit.

Quickly leave the putting green when your group has finished their putting.

Do not waste a lot of time looking for a lost ball. You are by rule only allowed five minutes to find the ball. Golf etiquette rules require allowing the group behind to play through if you violate this time restriction.

(Official Rules of Golf)

Rule 27:

Ball Lost or Out of Bounds

- a.** *A ball is lost if it is not found within five minutes after you first begin to search or you have put another ball into play.*
- b.** *If your ball is lost or out of bounds, you must add a penalty stroke to your score and play another ball from where you played your last shot (known as "stroke and distance").*
- c.** *If you think your ball may be lost or out of bounds, you may play a provisional ball from the place where your first ball was played.*
- d.** *You must notify fellow players that you are playing a provisional ball and play it before you leave the area to look for the first ball.*

(See "Saving time with a lost ball" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page)



Priority on the Course

Priority on the golf course is determined by **a group's pace of play**.

- a.** Any group playing **an 18-Hole round** is entitled to pass a group playing nine Holes.
- b.** Individual or **single players must acquiesce** to larger groups.

(See "Priority on the Course" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page)

CARE OF THE GOLF COURSE

TEEING GROUND:

- If you leave a divot when teeing off, **repair that divot** as well as others you may find.
- Upon hitting your drive, pick up your Tee afterwards. If the tee is broken, pick it up along with any others you may find and discard them along with any other trash you may have at the time.
- If you inadvertently **move a Tee Marker**, return it to its proper placement. Even if you personally have not moved the Tee Marker, if any one of them is out of place, place them properly.
- If you use the **ball washer and towel** to clean some balls, handle them gently so as not to damage them. If the ball washer is inoperative, and/or if the towel is torn or missing, notify the pro shop upon completion of your round.

FAIRWAYS:

- **Repair Fairway divots** by retrieving and replacing the sod or turf pieces and pressing them down with your foot into the divot recess. If the sod pieces are too small and scattered, *fill the divot hole with a sand/seed mixture* if provided with the golf cart.

(See "Divot Repair Etiquette" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page)

- *Avoid driving the golf cart on wet or soggy fairways*, as this tends to put "grooves" in the turf, which in turn may affect a golf ball when landing and rolling on the fairway.
- Most courses have a **90 degree cart rule** during inclement weather.
- If you hit your ball up to or beyond the **out of bounds marker**, and that happens to be a fence which belongs to the golf course or a private citizen, **do not damage the fence!**
- If you hit your ball out of bounds and it **damages private property**; broken window, damaged furniture etc, notify the pro shop upon completion of your round. Saying nothing is not good golf etiquette.

BUNKER:

- Enter the sand bunker **with rake in hand** from the low side nearest your ball.
- Avoid walking on the **steep face** of the sand bunker.
- Upon successfully escaping from the bunker, **rake all evidence of your presence in the trap**, along with any other footprints or disruptions to the sand. (You may land in the same trap again next time!)

- **Place the rake outside the bunker** when leaving, with the handle running parallel to the fairway. Some courses provide a receiver or hole in the ground next to the bunker to receive the rake handle.

(See "Bunker Etiquette" **Animation Video Link** at bottom of this page)

PUTTING GREEN:

- Putting etiquette suggests upon reaching the Green **repair ball marks** caused by your ball impacting the putting surface. As time and opportunity presents, repair other ball marks as well.
- You cannot repair pitch marks or spike marks on your putting line **until after you have putted**.
- **Avoid dropping the Flagstick** on the putting surface; it should be placed on the Fringe.
- **The Flagstick should be carefully replaced** in the Hole to avoid damaging the rim of the Hole, before all players leave the putting green.
- **To avoid damaging the rim of the Hole**, players and caddies alike should not stand too close to the Hole and should take care during the handling of the flagstick and the removal of a ball from the Hole.
- When on the putting green, golfers **should not lean on their putter** when removing the ball from the hole, which could impart a dent on the putting surface.

SAFETY ON THE GOLF COURSE

- **When preparing to make a practice swing or stroke**, golfers should make sure that other players in the vicinity are not standing in a position to be *hit by the golf club, ball or any twigs, pebbles or stones*.
- **Maintain a safe distance** from players in your own group when they are preparing to play.
- *Players should not play* until the group in front is **clearly out of range**.
- Players need to **be aware of Green Staff workers** on the course. Alert any staff who might be in view prior to making a stroke with your golf club.
- It is the **hitting golfer's responsibility** to shout the traditional word of warning "**Fore**" when a ball is hit towards or near other players or Green Staff personnel. *When you hear someone else shouting "Fore" cover your head and duck!*
- **Never throw clubs in anger**. In addition to being rude it could also be dangerous to other players. This is definitely not good golf etiquette.
- Observe the safety precautions posted in golf carts. Drive responsible and safely.
- **Be very cautious** if you find it necessary to venture into an **adjoining fairway to retrieve a ball, or play an errant shot**. Also be careful if you are near an adjacent fairway, golfers may be hitting toward you.

*"If Profanity Had An Influence On The Flight Of The Ball,
The Game Of Golf Would Be Played
... Far Better Than It Is! ~ Horace Hutchinson*

We hope this adventure into **Golf Etiquette** has been interesting and helpful.

Thanks again for **Visiting Us!**

Jim

The United States Golf Association (USGA) has prepared some excellent Animated Videos on Golf Etiquette which we feel are worthwhile observing.

Following are the Animated Videos we referred to in the above information on Golf Etiquette:

- Putting Green Avoiding Distraction



- Playing At A Good Pace
- Being Ready To Play
- Saving Time With A Lost Ball
- Priority On The Course
- Divot Repair Etiquette
- Bunker Etiquette

You can go to the primary website address of the **USGA** listed below and see all of these Animated Videos and much more.

When you reach the website, scroll down part way until you see "**Avoiding Distraction Animation**" in red lettering.

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