

GOLF ETIQUETTE and PACE OF PLAY

Your compliance with these requests and guidelines is critical for everyone's enjoyment of the game of golf. Remember that pace of play is the Number One dissatisfaction among golfers! Please be part of the solution, not part of the problem. **PLEASE STUDY THESE CAREFULLY AND ADHERE TO THESE SUGGESTIONS WHENEVER AND WHEREVER YOU ARE PLAYING!**

“From the time I first stepped onto a golf course, my father made sure that I observed golf etiquette. What that meant to me then and what it means now, is being considerate of other golfers, taking care of the course, playing quickly and controlling my temper.”

Arnold Palmer

Golf is played, for the most part, without the supervision of a referee or umpire. The game relies on the integrity of each individual to abide by the Rules, while simultaneously demonstrating sportsmanship and showing consideration for the other players. This code of conduct is a big part of what makes golf the greatest game of all.

Over the years good players have adopted a set of informal Practical Playing Tips and common sense Courtesy, Safety, and Course Care guidelines which have proved to facilitate playing by the Rules while, at the same time, helping everyone get the maximum enjoyment out of this wonderful game. These tips and guidelines have come to be known as Golf Etiquette.

Enough is Enough: One Practice Swing!

Before a full shot, one practice swing is enough. If you make two or three practice swings, how do you know which one you will use on the ball?" Elaborate pre-shot routines and multiple practice swings are just annoying to your playing partners! And to those behind you!

Here are some of the most common of these etiquette and pace of play suggestions. As you read through them, you will notice that many of them are designed to help speed up the game. We urge you to follow them as we know from experience that our members enjoy the game much more when the round lasts no more than 4 ½ hours. (4.5 hours is the expected 18 hole playing time at Brookline Golf Club as of this writing).

Practical Playing Tips

1. *On the Tee*

- Get to the first tee 5-7 minutes before your tee-time. If the starter is right there, you will be told when it is OK to tee off. If you start late on the first hole, you may remain frustrated and behind throughout!
- The player who is ready should hit. In fact, **always play READY GOLF**, so long as it is safe!
- Players who hit short should hit first so they can be ready to walk off the tee as soon as the last drive is hit, getting them to their second shot more quickly.
 - Tee off as soon as the group ahead is clear. Do not assume that every shot will be your best ever shot!!!
 - Always carry an extra golf ball in your pocket to be ready to hit a provisional ball, if your original ball may be lost.

- Move up tee selection if the tee selection is providing too high a level of difficulty. Don't be shy about using the Most forward tees if they are best for you.
- ***Placing Bags and Parking Carts:*** *Place your golf bags and pull carts well off the teeing ground out of the way of other players. Park motorized carts in the designated area near the tee*

2. *On the Fairway*

- Hit when ready. ***Do not use the Honors system. Whoever is READY should hit, so long as it is safe!***
- When driving a golf cart, drop your cart partner at her ball and continue on to your ball.
- Take appropriate clubs to your ball and hit without delay. ***It is not acceptable to walk to your ball, measure distance, return to the cart and then meander out to your ball to hit.*** Choose an array of clubs most likely to be correct and proceed!
- ***Ask that your group watches where each shot goes.***
- ***Lost balls: Do not search forever. Three minutes is legal,*** and three minutes is perfect, and it's the rule.
- It is lovely to have nice ***conversations while moving between holes, but you must pause the conversation when you arrive at your ball or someone else's ball.*** Too often, the conversation continues to the detriment of pace of play!

3. *On the Green*

- Keep carts at least 30 feet away from the greens.
- At the green, place your bag or cart away from the fringe, ***near where you will exit the green,*** so that you do not delay the group behind.
- Since ***the flagstick may remain in the hole at all times,*** leave it there unless someone specifically requests that it be pulled out.
- Mark your ball with a coin or marker directly behind the ball if it is in the line of another's putt.
- Study your putt while others are putting.
- Do not stand in the line of any putt or walk on the intended line of another player's putt.
- Use continuous putting - ***have each player putt out once she starts putting*** instead of marking the ball.
- ***If you already have a high score for the hole, be considerate of others and pick up your ball and move on. (this would be handled differently in a tournament setting, of course!)***
- ***Leave the green immediately after holing out*** and proceed to next tee; the first person to arrive should hit immediately if the hole is open.
 - ***Recording Scores: Complete your scorecard AFTER you have left the green,*** preferably when you arrive at the next tee box.

4. *General*

- **Keep up with the group in *Front* of you.** The group behind you has nothing to do with your pace of play – **ONLY the group in front of you!!!!** To be in proper position, your foursome must be in position relative to the group in front of you, NOT just ahead of the group following you. If there is more than one clear hole between your group and the group ahead of you, let the group behind you pass through. **A round of golf should take no longer than 4 ½ hours.** Remember, look ahead not behind.
- If your group becomes out of position, the Ranger may ask you to close the gap. If the gap persists you may be required to skip ahead to the hole in front of you.
- New players to the game should set a maximum score for each hole, and pick up on a hole when your group is out of place.

Courtesy, Safety, and Course Care

1. *Courtesy*

- Distractions: **Do not move, talk, or stand close to or directly behind the ball or the hole when a player is addressing the ball or making the stroke.**
- Electronic Devices: Turn off or silence all cell phones and pagers before you begin.
- Dress Code: Dress appropriately and in good taste. Some individual club policies have stricter dress codes, and, as their guests, you must adhere to their rules. **Before playing at another club be sure that you know its dress code.**
- Players must report to the Starter 15 minutes prior to their allotted starting time.

2. *Safety*

- Players should **ensure that no one is standing close by or in a position to be hit** by the club, the ball or any stones, pebbles, twigs or the like when they make a stroke or practice swing.
- Players should not play until the players in front are out of range.
- Players should always alert greens staff nearby or ahead when they are about to make a stroke that might endanger them.
- **If a player plays a ball in a direction where there is a danger of hitting someone, she should immediately shout a warning. The traditional word of warning in such situations is “fore.”**

3. *Course Care*

- **Fill Divots, Fix Ball Marks, Rake Bunkers:** Use the prepared divot mix on the tee to repair your divots. **When a ball lands on the green, it will leave a small indentation. Repair the ball mark.** (To repair ball marks, use a tee or repair tool and work the edge around the center but be sure not to tear the grass. Then smooth the area with your putter.) Help course management – repair one ball mark on each green in addition to your own.

- **Before leaving a bunker**, use the provided rake(s) to carefully fill up and smooth over all the holes and footprints made by you or left by others.
- **Prevent unnecessary damage:** Please avoid causing damage to the course, such as creating divots when taking practice swings or by hitting the head of a club into the ground, whether in anger or for any other reason.

Please leave the course in the way you would like to find it!

If we ALL follow the guidelines in this section, we will make the game more enjoyable for everyone.