

De Smet Bulldog Golf Guide

Beginner Golf Terms

Birdie: Completing the hole in one less stroke than the par.

Bogey: Completing the hole in one more stroke than the par.

Double Bogey: Completing the hole in two more strokes than the par (catch the trend?).

Eagle: Completing the hole in two fewer strokes than the par.

Fairway: The stretch of shorter grass that directs you to the hole (it's where you want to be)

Fore: What golfers yell (hopefully loudly) when they hit a bad shot to alert the golfers in the area where their ball is headed. Generally translated as "duck and cover."

Green: The area of finely trimmed grass at the end of each hole (it's where you want to end up).

Hazards: The obstacles golf course architects put in your way like water, sand traps, and tall grass.

Hole-in-One: Hitting it in the hole on your first shot; a moment a golfer, nor their bar tab, will ever forget.

Hook: A golf shot that moves severely right to left for right-handed hitters and the opposite way for lefties, not to be confused with Peter Pan's nemesis.

Lie: The way the ball has come to rest on the ground. The ball may be on a "good lie" in short grass on the fairway or a "bad lie" in deep grass in the rough. You may have a sidehill lie, where the ball is either above or below your feet.

Mulligan: An unofficial "re-do" or "re-hit" that is undoubtedly a golfer's best friend. There are no mulligans in competitive golf.

Out of Bounds: Golf's point of no return; white stakes designate an area that is out of play for golfers.

Par: The number of strokes the powers that be determined a golfer should take to complete the hole.

Pin or Flag: The object used on the greens to give you hope

Ranger: The woman or man who drives around in the cart monitoring the speed of play. You do not want to be visited by the ranger, that means you are a slowpoke which will not win you fans on the golf course.

Rough: The areas of longer grass that line the fairway (it's where you don't want to be).

Sand Trap: The sand-filled pits of despair that line fairways and guard the greens. Slang for bunker.

Slice: A golf shot that moves severely left to right for right-handed hitters and the opposite way for left, which also happens to be the most common shot shape in golf.

Starter: The woman or man stationed at the first tee who makes sure you tee off on time.

Stroke: What you have when you miss a short putt; just kidding, refers to the act of making a swing.

Tee Box: The designated area that marks the beginning of each hole (It's where you tee off from).

The Beach: Another name for the bunker/sand trap. Pass the sunscreen.

Three-Putt: When it takes you three putts to get your golf ball in the hole; also the quickest way your putter earns a trip to the time-out closet

Intermediate Golf Terms

19th hole: Golf lingo for the clubhouse where your rounds are always enjoyable.

Ball Mark: The indentation left behind after your golf ball lands on the green (best to fix these).

Break: The movement your golf ball will make on the green after you putt it (or what you will do to your putter after you missed).

Bunker: The official term for what is commonly referred to as a sand trap.

Caddie: The kind fellow who carries your clubs during the round.

Dogleg: Refers to a bend to the left or the right in fairways.

Divot: The piece of turf you take out of the ground after you hit a golf shot (best to replace these).

Draw: A gentler hook.

Fade: A gentler slice.

Fat: Taking a little too much turf when hitting a golf shot, catching it heavy as they say.

Gimmie: A putt so short that you wouldn't miss it, so your golf buddies give it to you. The rule of thumb for measuring gimmie is often "in the leather" which is the length of the grip of your putter.

Handicap: Refers to a number given to players that determines their "potential" average score in relation to par, not their day jobs.

Line: The imaginary path your golf ball will travel along the green on its way to the hole.

Match Play: A one vs. one format where golfers compete against each other on a hole-by-hole basis.

Pull: For right-handed hitters, it's when a shot goes immediately to the left after you hit it (opposite direction for lefties).

Thin: When you hit the golf ball too low on your clubface.

Top: When you hit the golf ball at the lowest point on the clubface, producing a rolling shot that doesn't catch much air.

Snowman: When you make an 8 on a hole (because the 8 looks like a snowman, get it?).

Shank: Feared by all golfers, this is one of the most dreaded shots in golf. Produced by hitting the ball on the hosel of the club.

Stroke Play: A format in golf where players count all their strokes to determine a final score (the common format of professional tournaments).

10 basics that help beginner golfers play better

As a beginner, you'll need to develop your skills, understanding and abilities. These are the basics to help you do that.

1. Nail the basic fundamentals

You can spot a good golfer before they even hit the golf ball. Their key fundamentals of posture, grip and stance are all good, and they usually have a very specific order which they do these things (known as a pre-shot routine) which helps them repeat these each and every time. First, put your hands onto the golf club. Next, step into the golf ball with one leg, and bow from your hips. And finally, adjust your feet so your weight is balanced, and your feet are about shoulder width apart. Put simply: Grip the club, step and bow, then adjust your feet.

2. Understand how the ball gets into the air

One of the greatest challenges beginners face is getting the ball in the air consistently. The basic concept is that in order to get the ball in the air, you need to hit the ground. Get into good posture, bending from the hips, and feel like your extending both arms into the ground during your swing, like you're throwing a ball (as you see me demonstrating below). Don't be afraid to hit the ground on your practice swings to get this feeling. You'll be launching beautiful shots in no time.

3. Know how far your clubs go

Even as a beginner, one of the golf basics you need to know is how far your clubs go. You may not think you're consistent enough to know this, but you are. Write all the clubs you have on a piece of paper, and when you hit a shot reasonably well, use an app like GolfLogix, a range finder like a Bushnell, or walk off the yardage yourself and write it down. These numbers will change over time but knowing your distances will help your consistency on the course.

4. Have a reliable club from the fairway

Once you tee off and your ball is on the ground in the fairway, new golfers may have a comfort level with one club over the other — you may prefer your hybrid over a fairway wood, for instance. The key is finding a club you're comfortable with, and one that goes a reasonable distance to help build confidence and help you to have fun. A great choice for a reliable fairway club might be your most lofted fairway wood, like a hybrid or mid-range iron (6, 7, 8-irons). A higher lofted club will still travel a reasonable distance and be more consistent than a lesser lofted option. Find your “go to” club and build confidence and consistency.

5. Be able to hit a basic golf chip

As a beginner, you need to be able to hit a basic chip. This shot doesn't need to be perfect and as a newer golfer, I would not expect you to have perfect distance control. Your goal is to have a go-to shot when you're close to the green. For a basic golf chip: Hold the club lower on grip, with a more narrow stance, lean your weight and torso towards the target, and make a basic putting motion that brushes the grass. I would choose a pitching wedge for this shot, and practice getting comfortable with it.

6. Short game priority order

Simply knowing how to manage risk by choosing the right shot can be one of those golf basics that will help you succeed as a golfer. The smaller the motion the less the chance for error, so remember my short game priority order: Putt whenever you can. Chip when you can't putt. Pitch (a longer, higher chip) only when you have to. Using this pecking order will help you keep the ball in play even when you miss.

7. Know how to hit a basic bunker shot

Sand shots are some of the hardest for beginner golfers. And like we talked about earlier: Remember that to hit the ball up, you need to hit the ground. This means overriding any instinct you have to lifting the ball up and commit to hitting the sand instead. To help with this, dig your feet into the sand and play the ball more forward in your stance.

8. Know what equipment you need

Beginner golfers need to be prepared with the necessary tools that you'll use on the course. You should plan on having six to 12 golf balls in your bag, a golf glove (if you wear one) and tees and a ball marker in your pocket and ready to go. Being ready to go when it's your turn to hit is an important part of golf. Having all these things will help you do that.

9. Distance control in putting

Learning how to putt is one of those golf basics that is fun to learn yet challenging. A good, basic putting posture is to bow from your hips, have your eyes over the ball and your arms hanging below your shoulders. After that, remember that your back stroke length controls distance. In other words, smaller strokes make the putter swing slower and larger strokes help the putter swing naturally faster. And while this may be extremely basic, it can help with the concept that stroke size controls distance and get you started. You can use your feet to help you regulate stroke size, assuming your feet are about hip width. For small putts, think about your putter head going from big toe to big toe. For medium putts, think little toe to little toe. For large putts, aim for two-to-three inches outside each foot. Facing an extra long putt? Go six-to-seven inches outside each foot.

10. Learn rules and etiquette

Other than your skills, you need to know it's important to fill your divots and fix any ball marks you leave behind. It is also not a bad idea to know a few of golf's basic rules: Familiarize yourself with the official way to drop a ball, to take relief from an unplayable lie, what to do if your ball is out of bounds and what to do if you hit your ball into a hazard.

These 7 most important golf rules will come up in nearly every round you play, know them.....

1) Lost ball

If you think you may have lost your ball, the first thing you should do is play a provisional. You can't just play another one, you have to use the word provisional when stating that you are playing one. If you don't declare it a provisional, that ball is now in play as your three off the tee even if you find your first one. If you haven't played a provisional but lose your original tee shot, you have to walk back to the tee and play another.

2) Impediments and obstructions

If your stance is impeded you can take a drop. Things like drainage covers allow for free drops when your ball is on one, your stance is impeded by one or the line of your swing is affected. If your ball is surrounded by loose impediments, you can move all of them (things like tree branches, twigs, leaves etc.) but the key is if you think moving one will move your ball, it cannot be moved.

3) Play it as it lies

You don't get relief from bare lies. You must play the ball as it lies even if you have found a bare lie or a divot. You can only get a free drop from things like pathways (if a Local Rule), drains, other greens and areas specifically marked as Ground Under Repair.

4) Dropping procedure

You can declare an unplayable lie from anywhere inside the general area.

Taking a drop? You have three options:

The **first option** you have is to go back to where you originally played the shot from via stroke and distance, so if your tee shot found an unplayable lie you could go back and play three off the tee. The **second option** is to drop two club lengths

from where the ball is, no nearer to the hole. The **third option** is to drop back in line with the ball and flag, as far back as you like. Once you've found the point where you wish to drop, you can then drop anywhere (no closer to the hole) within a club length arc from the side to the back.

5) Search time

Search time has been reduced from five minutes to three since 2019. You only have three minutes to search for golf balls. That three minutes starts when you or your caddie gets to the search area where the ball is believed to be. If a playing partner is searching for the ball before you that doesn't matter, call it 'bonus time' if you will, the three minutes only relates to you being there.

6) Teeing area

Don't tee off in front of the markers. The teeing area is the front and side extremes of the tee markers and two club-lengths back. You can stand anywhere on the tee as long as the ball is within the teeing area.

7) Clubs

The maximum number of clubs you can carry is 14, with the penalties for going over that number harsh, so be careful an extra wedge or putter you've been practicing with doesn't slip in. The penalty for carrying more than 14 clubs is two strokes per hole with a maximum penalty of four strokes. You can pretty much carry whatever make-up of clubs you like, left-handed/right-handed, two drivers, two putters etc. just make sure your clubs are conforming, some older drivers are now illegal.

Golf Etiquette 101

It's important to remember golf course etiquette. Both within your group and as a part of a busy golf course.

Inter-Group Golf Etiquette

Depending on the seriousness of you and your friends' golf game that day, you may or may not adopt some of the more formal golf etiquette practices. However, it's important to establish expectations before the round to make sure everyone is on the same page. Whatever your groups' unique rules are, make them clear and make sure everyone understands before you begin.

There are several golf etiquette practices that are universal:

- Lowest score on the previous hole tees off first.
- Player furthest from the hole goes first. Including on the green.
- Mark your ball when on the green while others are putting.
- Do not walk in-between a player's, or your own, ball and the hole on the green.
- Be quiet while others are hitting their shots.

It's customary to adhere to these universal golf etiquette rules unless you've asked your playing partners for an exception. You might be ready to hit your shot before the person closest to the hole, or maybe you're ready to tee off and the player who birdied the previous hole isn't. In these instances, you would offer to go first to keep pace of play moving.

Intra-Group Golf Etiquette

While playing a round of golf, you also have a responsibility to ensure other golfers on the course that day have the opportunity to enjoy their round as well. This means replacing or filing your divots in the fairway, repairing ball marks on the green, yelling "FORE!" when you hit an errant shot towards other golfers, and allowing faster players/groups to play through.

It's extremely rude to not let a group play through that is waiting on your group. The one exception is if you're also waiting because of the group in front of you. If this is the case, you should make this known to the group behind you.

Your ability to play golf doesn't have to dictate your pace of play. If you're new to the game, set a stroke limit of 8 for each hole. Once you get to 8, pick up your ball

and place it on the green. Finish the hole from there. There are also understood golf etiquette practices regarding pace of play. These include:

- Writing your scores down on the next tee box.
- Parking your cart/golf bag on the side of the green towards the next hole.
- Being ready to play when it's your turn. Don't sit in the cart while your playing partner is hitting. Get out and go to your ball, figure out what club you want to hit, and be ready when it's your turn.
- Limiting the amount of time spent at the turn (between holes 9 and 10). Or let the group behind you play through.
- Limiting practice swings to 2. You'll be surprised at how much time practice swings adds to a round of golf.

If your group is walking and there are 3 or 4 of you, send the first person to putt out to the next tee box. If you're in a foursome, send the second to putt out to the next tee box as well. The second to last person to putt out gets the flag. This practice can save 30 minutes in an 18 hole round. It's also the practice used by the American Junior Golf Association to maintain their impressive pace of play standards.

It's easy to get wrapped up in our own games while on the golf course. We may be having a great time with our friends and not realize the group behind us has been waiting on every shot for 3 holes. As golfers, we have to do a better job of being aware of our surroundings and putting ourselves in others' shoes.

10 Rules for Good Golf Etiquette

- Don't be the slowest player
- Keep your temper under control
- Respect other people's time
- Repair the ground you play on
- Be a silent partner

- Make your push cart / golf cart 'invisible'
- Always look your best
- Turn off the cell phone

IMPORTANT! Letting a group play through is not a reflection of how well you play the game of golf. It's okay if you let younger players through. You're not less of a golfer if you let a group of ladies play through. We can all play a role in making golf more accessible and fun for everyone who wants to play. Have fun!