

SOME BASIC ETIQUETTE

Golf can both fun and frustrating at the same time. We play our rounds with the rules that we know and prioritize. We are not professionals.

Did know that you can only have 14 clubs in your bag? When playing friendly golf with your buddies on the weekend, technical rules like this one may not matter much to you. However, there are a few unwritten rules of golf that everyone should abide by. It will keep the round friendly and you will not end up insulting or angering anyone else on the course.

Courtesy and common sense may not be all that common?

Here are some useful points to remember and follow:

1) Fore! We all shank shots left and right, on other fairways and greens or maybe even backyards. The most notorious unwritten rule in golf is screaming “Fore!” when you are in jeopardy of hitting someone else on the golf course with your ball. Odds are that you will not hit anybody, but if you come close and you don’t scream Fore, you’ll anger someone and it could potentially get you in trouble.

2) Get off my line: While most golfers obey this rule, some continue to break it simply because they do not know about it. It is always good golf etiquette to avoid walking in the line of a player’s ball on the green and the hole. Simple put, your shoe imprint in the line could alter the direction of the ball causing the player to miss the put.

3) Shut up already! When a player is teeing off, putting, or hitting any other shot, quit yapping with your buddies and let them hit in silence. Complete focus is essential in golf – that’s why you see people on the PGA TOUR with signs held up high stating “Quiet”.

4) Use the rake ... that is why they are provided: Are you really that lazy that you can’t rake the bunker after your done hitting from it? Far too many people don’t realize that it has nothing to do with the grounds keeping of the course, but rather, its done as a courtesy towards the other golfers who land in that same trap. The last thing you want to do is land your shot into someone’s sandy shoe imprint – because you can’t improve that lie!

5) Who goes first? It is important to acknowledge the player with the best score on the previous hole by allowing them to tee off first. It gives that person the “honor” of kicking the next hole off. When in play, you always want the person furthest from the hole to go – but stand back; don’t drive your cart in front of them to your ball. Keep out of their eye sight. Also, when playing a friendly match, you could throw this rule out if you all agree to play “ready golf” in order to finish the round faster. This little collective etiquette breach often prevents your spouse from yelling at you for being on the golf course for 6 hours on a Sunday.

6) If you made the divot, you fix it: Many times you'll chunk a tee or fairway shot that will cause a large divot. Don't disrespect the golf course and maintenance staff by not filling the divot or placing the chunk of grass back in its mark.

7) If you make a 'Ball Mark' repair it! When you ball flies onto the green, it usually makes a dent. You must repair this indentation so that the next golfer is not bothered by your 'Foot Prints'. Ball marks will throw the next guy's nicely rolling putt off line! Be courteous and considerate! What goes around comes around!

8) 'Cart Path Only' means just that: Golf courses may have certain holes that do not drain as well as others. It is the discretion of the golf course to place "cart path only" rules on certain or all the holes. They aren't putting this rule into affect to upset you and make you walk to your ball (maybe you should to lose some weight!), but rather to keep the course in great shape for all of its players year round.

9) Hats off please: A lot of people don't know that it is a 'respect thing' to remove your cap on the final hole of the match to shake hands with your opponents. You'll notice the pros doing it every time on the TOUR without hesitation – even their caddies. Just don't dilly-dally on the 18th green; people are probably trying to hit up.

10) Don't forget the Tee: So you just hit the 'big-boy' shot down the fairway and you think you're amazing ... but you did one thing wrong. You left your tee in the ground and didn't remove it – come on! This annoys other golfers as they get up the tee box to hit their first shot. Simply admire your shot, keep it professional, then bend down and pick up the tee if it isn't broken. Prevent clutter?

11) Um, your shadow: When standing on the green while others are putting, make sure your shadow is not in their line or proximal and moving. It is distracting and hence is rude. Plain and simple!

Have fun out there and obey your opponents, the courses, and the other golfers on the course.

“Welcome Aboard!”

“Enjoy The Ride!”

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