

Safety

Golf, when compared to other sports, is very safe. However, golf injuries can and do occur.

FORE!

One safety hazard in golf is the risk of being struck with a club by a fellow player. The best rule to follow is to “Stop and Look” before you swing. Make sure that your surroundings are clear and only swing when all is clear. When others are playing make sure to stand quietly, either directly behind or to the side of the per-

son playing a shot. A second safety hazard in golf is the possibility of being struck with a golf ball. Golf is a game where the furthest ball from the hole is played first. When playing on the course make sure that you are positioned where the ball cannot strike you. On occasion a player not in your group might hit an errant shot that lands close to you.

Golf uses its own safety warning, calling “Fore,” to warn other golfers that a ball in flight has the potential for reaching another group.

 Lightning can pose another serious danger on the golf course. Always move into a safe area when you see or hear thunder or lightning.

Speed of Play

The time it takes to play a round of golf depends on several conditions: the difficulty of the golf course, the number of players on the golf course and your skill level. On average an 18-hole round of golf should be approximately four to four-and-a-half hours. This breaks down to about 15 minutes per hole. To speed up play several strategies should be used:

1. Be ready to play: Make sure you have tees, an extra ball, ball markers and a divot repair tool in your pocket during play.
2. Limit your practice swings to one before it's your turn to play.
3. Watch your ball land and select a spot in the distance to use as a visual marker when looking for your ball. Have others in your group watch each player's shots. This helps speed up the time to find a ball that is not in the fairway.
4. Search for a lost ball for 5 minutes or less.
5. Carry your bag, roll your pull cart or park your golf car on the side of the putting green closest to the next hole. When carrying a bag or pulling a cart always move your equipment forward to avoid walking back to get your clubs.
6. Putt out. Play is faster if you finish putting rather than marking your ball on the putting green.
7. Record your score on the next tee, not on the putting green.
8. Keep up. You are playing too slow if the group in front of you is one hole ahead.
9. Let faster groups play through.

Golf Etiquette

Behavior on the course has easy rules to follow. A code of etiquette was established when golf originated as a game. According to the USGA the etiquette of golf is a series of suggestions that point out certain standards of behavior for play on the golf course. A few rules of etiquette include:

1. Safety first – Don't play until others in front of you are out of range.
2. A player who has the honor (low score from previous hole) should be allowed to play first from the teeing ground.
3. Do not talk, move or stand directly behind someone when they are playing.

4. Play without delay.
5. Allow others to play through when searching for a lost ball.
6. Take care of the golf course and repair any divots that your club makes on the teeing ground, fairway and ball marks on the putting green.
7. Before leaving a bunker, rake and smooth over all holes and footprints. When finished, lay rake with teeth down.