

GOLF ETIQUETTE

This information sheet should tell you most of what you need to know about golf etiquette. Golf etiquette is not something usually spoken about but it is needed to enable you to have a safe and enjoyable game of golf. Some people may feel that they already know all there is to know about golf etiquette, which is fine, while others, who may be relatively new to golf, may be a bit put off by reading this, believing that the club is very regimented. That is not the intention. Understanding the points made in this sheet should ensure that you and other members are safe on the course, take care of the course and behave courteously to others, so making your game a pleasant one, even if your score is not as good as you would have wished.

1 Learn the Rules of Golf

The R&A has a very useful multilingual golf rules app for mobile phones (iPhone & Android) at:

<https://www.randa.org/en/rules/rules-app>

The R&A also has a nice quick introductory video to the rules of golf on Youtube at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyoeL_pMJzI

The USGA has a useful set of short videos concerning golf rules on Youtube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnU5qUEfww3f5x5gRldQB9yWr5YdBwWwV>

The R&A here:

<https://www.randa.org/videos/the-quick-guide-to-the-rules-of-golf>

The excellent USGA Rules-101 course is free, but you have to register:

<https://rules.usga.org/courses/rules-101/>

2 Don't be late on the tee

Get there either just before or just after the group in front of you tees off.

3 Don't put people off who are playing

Don't stand on their line of sight or directly behind them. Don't move, talk, make noises or otherwise distract them while swinging or putting. Be aware of where your shadow falls. Don't step on someone's putting line. If you make a bad shot keep your observations to yourself, don't sulk or lose your temper. If profanity had an influence on the flight of the ball the game of golf would be played far better than it is.

4 Agree to play 'Ready Golf' (but not in matchplay)

However, ensure that it is safe for you to play without endangering others. If your ball goes offline and there is a possibility it may strike someone always shout "**Fore**" or "**Fore Left/Right**". If it lands close to someone, apologise to them. Watch your playing partners' (sometimes errant) shots to see where they go and help search for their balls.

5 Be sensible about when it is safe to play

If you think you can reach the group in front, wait. If you are on the tee and one of your group isn't a long hitter and could not reach them let that player tee-off before you (but not in matchplay).

6 Understand how to play and score the competition

Descriptions and example scorecards for the competitions played at Minthis are at:

<https://mhgcmembers.com/competitions/fun-comps.php>

If you have trouble keeping count of your shots consider getting a golf score counter e.g.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=golf+score+counter>

7 Play a provisional ball if you think yours might be lost or out-of-bounds

A lot of time is wasted having to trudge back to where you hit the ball to play another. Don't forget you only have 3 minutes to find a ball else it is lost, even if you find it 10 seconds later. If your partner doesn't use their provisional ball and you are close to it ask if you can pick it up for them.

8 Replace your divots, repair pitch marks, rake bunkers

You would hate it if your ball landed in someone's divot or someone's footprint in a bunker or was deflected on the green by a pitch mark, so sort out any you make and any others you see.

9 Don't mark and lift your ball every time on the green

This takes time and providing your ball is clean and not interfering with someone's putting line it shouldn't be necessary to do this, but if it is interfering offer to mark it. If your put ends up as a "tap-in", don't waste time marking it, tap it into the hole (but not in matchplay). If you are allowed to mark your ball on the fairway consider using your club to mark it rather than fishing about for a ball marker.

10 On and around the green

If a couple of players want the flagstick in the hole and a couple want it out try to schedule puts so you are not alternating taking it out and putting it back in multiple times (but not in matchplay). The first person to hole out should pick up the flagstick after holing out and replace it in the hole at the end. It isn't polite to walk off the putting green until everyone has finished the hole. Pick up any clubs that have been left on the green so your playing partners don't forget them

11 Keep up the pace

Don't take excessive practice swings, one or two at most. Be ready to hit or putt when it's your turn. Gather information while others play their shots (e.g. yardages, what club you might use, wind, how a putt breaks, etc.), If you lose a hole invite the group behind to play through.

12 Record your scores on the next tee box

Don't do this by the green you just played. If you are the first to tee off do that first, then record the previous hole's score.

13 It's OK to pick up on a hole

Unless you're playing in a competition where every stroke is counted, if a hole gets out of hand, and you can't score, or your score won't count towards your team's score, pick the ball up.

14 Golf buggy etiquette

Don't drive close to someone who is about to play a shot. Observe golf buggy rules: exit the fairway before the limit markers; obey the 90-degree rule if it is place. If you are sharing a buggy, rather than sit in it waiting for your partner to play it may save time if you walk to your ball while he's assessing his shot and get him to pick you up after you both have played. Do not park your buggy (nor your bag or trolley) where it could interfere with another player's shot. Near the green, position them close to the path leading to the next tee.

15 Cell phones

Silence your ringer and keep the speaker volume down. Only take/make phone calls that are really essential. Speak quietly and away from where others are playing their shots.

16 End of the round

At the end of the round remove any head-wear and shake hands with your playing partners, congratulate the winner and commiserate with the losers.