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# **A Guide to Golf: A Basic Introduction to the Game**

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# **A Guide to Golf: A Basic Introduction to the Game**

## **Overview**

Golf has seen an incredible rise in popularity over the past few decades, and that popularity continues to grow. From the days when golf was considered the pastime of a select few old folks who walked the greens in their checked pants, the sport today has a tremendous following. This can largely be attributed to players like Tiger Woods – charismatic players who have captured the attention of everyone, including those who have never picked up a golf club.

The golfing industry had changed significantly as well. There are resorts, vacation packages and even housing developments built around incredible golf courses. Finding a great place to golf has never been easier with the number of courses growing annually, and those managing the courses set to make the most of the property available. There's no way to really tell what prompted the rising popularity of the sport. But if you look at the number of young people walking the greens with parents and grandparents, and the number of schools with a golf program for their students, you'll see that golf is most likely a trend the popularity of which will continue for the foreseeable future.

## **The History of Golf**

Golf's interesting origin actually began five centuries ago. It is a historical fact that due to the interference of golf with much more serious combat drills, James II of Scotland banned golf in an act of Parliament on March 6 in the year 1457. There is general agreement among historians and golf fans alike that the Scots were the first golfers to become addicted to the sport. However the person or persons responsible for the invention of golf is open to debate.

It has been suggested that bored sheepherders became quite exceptional at knocking around shaped stones into rabbit holes with their wooden shepherds staffs. This and various other inventive forms of golf were played as early as the fourteenth century. These games were played in Holland, Belgium, France as well as in Scotland, thus the debate on golf's origin is rightly fueled.

There is another historical fact that Scottish Baron, James VI, was the man who delivered the game we know today as golf to the English. For many years the game was played on severely rugged terrain, where no proper upkeep was required. In most accounts golf was played with crudely cut holes in the ground where the earth was reasonably flat.

It was a group of Edinburgh golfers who first formed an organized club. In 1744 the Honorable Company of Edinburgh Golfers was established. At this time in history the first thirteen laws of golf were drawn up for an annual competition. This first competition consisted of players from Great Britain and/or Ireland.

One of the earliest Golf Clubs that were formed outside golf's debatable native home of Scotland was the Royal Blackheath Golf Club of England. Blackheath came into existence in 1766, and the Old Manchester Golf Club was founded on the Kersal Moor in 1818.

By the late 1800's the Royal Montreal Club and the Quebec Golf Club were to become the first clubs in North America. It wasn't until 1888 that golf resurfaced in the United States with more fervor than each prior surfacing. Even then it was a Scotsman, John Reid, who first built a three-hole course in Yonkers New York. St. Andrews Club of Yonkers was built in a thirty-acre site near to the original three-hole course.

From this hesitant and fitful start, golf grew rapidly as the new national pastime in America. Modern for its time the golf club, Shinnecock Hills, was founded in 1891. And in the nine years left in that century, more than one thousand prestigious golf clubs opened in North America.

The historical value of golf is as interesting as any part of our heritage. Following the path that golf took to get from a shepherds' field to the amazing golf courses that dot our culture today, it is no wonder that golf has developed into a popular pastime in all parts of the world.

### **Golf – More than a Walk Through the Pasture**

Mark Twain once wrote playing golf was a good way to spoil a walk through the pasture. The inimitable Mr. Twain, from this statement, could be believed not to be a golfer. After all, there is more to golfing than just walking through a pasture.

First and foremost, golf is a way to either work out stress and frustration, or, for many, to get even more stressed out and frustrated. It can be the most infuriating game ever played or invented, or the most fun. And, no two trips to the golf course will ever be the same, regardless of how good a player someone is.

This is because the weather conditions are never identical, and weather does play a big part in golf. The more intelligent golfers will not go near the course in a thunderstorm, but there are a few brave, and foolhardy, souls who will brave the elements just to play. The wind also plays a major factor in golf, as the wind will affect the way the ball travels. When hit, golf balls have spin. The spin can be enhanced by the wind, causing the ball to drift away from its intended target. Therefore, the golfer has to take the wind into consideration and plan his or her shot accordingly.

Golf is also a good form of exercise, for those golfers who walk the course. A good course is about two miles around, so playing eighteen holes is roughly equivalent to walking four miles. Any doctor will tell you that such a walk can only be beneficial to the walker's heart and lungs.

Additionally, playing golf is good for getting out of the house and being outdoors. Golfers can enjoy the sun and wind note the beauty of the nature they're surrounded by, as the majority of courses are well landscaped and quite pleasing to the eye. Golfers can also watch squirrels and rabbits on the course, sometimes, and take pleasure in the antics of these creatures. This also helps free the golfer from thinking about the mistake he or she made on the last shot or previous hole, calming them down and getting them ready for their next shot.

For others, however, playing golf is a great way to beat stress. After all, a golf course is about the only place a person can knock the crap out of something, not only not get in trouble for hitting something, but being praised and rewarded by knocking the crap out of the ball well. How perfect is that?

Golf is also a game of honor. Surprised? Don't be. After all, golf is the only game where a person can call a penalty on themselves, and those who play with honor do. Of course, there are the jerks who claim to play golf, but wouldn't think of calling a penalty on anything they've done. Their scores, though, are meaningless, and this kind of behavior will also show up in their day to day lives.

## **Getting a Grip on Golf Terminology**

Regardless of how much you've played golf, you're probably going to hear some new terminology every time you're golfing with a new group or working with a new instructor. The way to save face is to simply nod like you know exactly what they're talking about, even when they're touting new words. The smart thing to do is ask.

Even a casual golfer knows words like *bogey*, *slice* and *approach*. But did you know that *balata* is that rubbery substance that covers a golf ball? Here are a few terms that may be less well known to some golfers.

A *chunk* is that boo-boo of hitting the ground behind the ball – way behind the ball. The word came about because the chunk of grass (the *divot*) that flies up can sometimes travel a longer distance than the ball. When it's done on purpose – as from a sand bunker – the resulting shot is called an *explosion*. When the ball is really buried in that sand, it's known as a *fried egg*.

A *top shot* is when you simply hit too high on the ball. One of the most common causes is that you've hit several chunks and you're trying to compensate. When you hit a top shot, the ball will have little or no loft. If you're already in a *sand trap*, you're

likely to stay there for another shot. If there's one directly in front of you, a top shot will probably net you a fried egg.

A **Mulligan** is the same as a "do over" from your childhood days! This is when you aren't satisfied with your first shot and you simply pull another ball from your bag and start over. Typically, a Mulligan can only happen when you're playing alone or with very forgiving friends because few golfers are going to let an opponent have a free "do over."

**Yips** is a word used to denote the inability to complete a putt with a slow, steady movement. For various reasons, the golfer instead makes a sudden, jerky swing, usually causing the putt to go wild.

The **address** is commonly known as that moment that the golfer steps up to the ball. What some don't realize is that USGA rules say that the address has occurred once the golfer has rested the club behind the ball.

**Nassau** is a popular way of competing, especially for those who are something less than professional minded. In this game, golfers have one score for the first nine holes they play and a separate score for the back nine, as well as an overall score for the entire round. That means that golfers have three scores to compare, upping the odds of winning something!

There are other terms that you should know as well. The **grain** refers to the way the grass angles, similar to the grain of fabric. **Loft** is the angle of the face of the club. **Dormie** means that the person with the lower score can't hope for anything more than a tie.

Learning the terminology isn't necessary to playing a good game, but it probably is necessary to enjoying play with friends.

## **Drivers - Not Just for Chauffeuring You Around**

In golf, the **driver** is also known as the **1 wood**. Normally it's the longest club in the bag and has the largest head. This club is used to hit the ball off the tee out of the box, which is where the ball is teed up to start playing a hole. Of course, on a short par 3 hole, the driver would be left in the bag, and another club would be selected, unless the golfer just had a hankering to fly the green and blow any chance at making a birdie or par.

Now, it should be noted that the club known as the driver is not something that can be used to literally drive someone around. If anyone put this club behind the wheel of their car and climbed into the back seat expecting to be chauffeured to a specific destination, or just driven around in general, they will have a very, very, very long wait. After all, it is a golf club, not someone who gets paid to drive cars. It does not have arms or legs, nor

does it have eyes or ears. You will note there was no mention of a brain, but that is because there are so many people on the road who also do not appear to have a functioning brain while they are driving.

On the other hand, a driver (the golf club) is a great way to get the ball down the links on the golf course. A well hit ball can travel more than three hundred yards. However, this kind of driving power is most often seen on the Professional Golf Association (PGA) tour. The average golfer is doing well to hit the ball two hundred and fifty to two hundred and seventy five yards off the tee and these are not drives to be ashamed of.

There is no set average distance for holes on the golf course, which makes driving on different courses a major challenge, in some cases. Some par 4 holes can be as short as two hundred and eighty five yards, while others can be closer to five hundred yards in length. Either way, a well hit drive is required to do well in the game of golf.

The basic idea of driving the golf ball is to keep the ball in the fairway, out of the rough, avoiding sand traps, and most definitely staying away from any water hazards the course may have to offer. This concept, though, is easier said than done. After all, the least little thing can affect the golfer's concentration. This can result in the ball being, toed, or hit off the front of the driver, or heeled, which is when the ball is hit off the back part of the driver. Those are bad things.

Toeing a drive will send the ball sharply to the right if the golfer is right handed, or to the left if the golfer is a southpaw. Consequently, a drive hit off the heel of the club will go left for the right handed player and right for the lefty.

### **Getting Ready to Play Starts at the Driving Range**

All golf courses, reputable ones anyway, have driving ranges. This has nothing to do with the maneuverability of a golf cart, but the player practicing shots and getting loosened up for a round on the links.

The driving range is the best place to practice a new shot or technique that the golfer has heard about but has not tried as of yet. It is never a good idea for the golfer to attempt a new shot, or a new grip on the golf course. This is because a muffed shot, and those are easy to hit, can cause the golfer to lose faith in the stroke, the club or the grip he or she was using. Therefore, it is always best to work on the shot at the driving range before ever considering trying it on the course.

Every golfer has his or her own way of getting ready to play when they go to the driving range. For some, the idea is to take the smaller clubs, such as the pitching wedge, hit a few balls to get loosened up, then hit with larger and larger clubs, finishing up the workout with the woods. But, for others, he or she will start with the larger clubs, getting their stroke down with the driver and woods first, then working their way to the

smaller clubs, such as the pitching and sand wedge. For others, though, they will take one particular club to work on. This is normally done when a golfer is having problems hitting this club regularly.

By using only one club, the golfer has to focus on what they are doing with it. Are they gripping the club in a comfortable manner that will allow their wrists to be flexible on the follow through? Or, is their stance too closed or too open? This can have an adverse affect on a shot, with a closed stance preventing the golfer from getting the distance he thinks he or she should get with this particular club. A stance too wide open will affect the golfer's balance and, therefore, the accuracy of the shot. These are some of the things a golfer will work on at the driving range.

But, then again, there is always the new tip that is guaranteed to increase both the length and the accuracy of the shot (and there's also oceanfront property in Oklahoma for those interested in making such a purchase). A lot of these so-called "tips" are ways for someone else to make money from golfing equipment or videos. Still, there are some tips that are legitimate and will help. Regardless, all tips should be tried out on the driving range before any golfer ever thinks about stepping up to the tee on the first box.

Remember, though, the driving range is not for all terrain vehicles, four wheel drive pickups, monster trucks, or to see how sharp a golf cart can be turned. A driving range is a place where golfers go to get ready for their game and try new tips.

### **Are Golf Lessons For You?**

If you've been thinking about taking up golf, or if you're a golfer in search of a better game, you may have considered golf lessons. But are golf lessons really beneficial? And how do you find a pro who will offer good advice?

There are some who swear that lessons are vital and others who say that practice is the only thing that will improve your golf game. The truth seems to lie somewhere in the middle. But before you drop your coach or sign up for lessons, consider what it is that you hope golf lessons will accomplish. Outlining your goals may help you decide whether you truly need lessons or simply more time on the course.

If you play with others who play exceptionally well, you may want to find someone to give you some help with your game. Whether that's a paid coach or merely a friend who plays well is strictly a personal choice. Getting some pointers and tips may be a good way to ensure that you don't totally embarrass yourself in front of other players.

If you're serious about the game, you've probably been involved long enough that you don't need advice on whether to get a coach. But if you've only recently discovered the joy of golfing, you may find yourself looking for a way to improve your game. Golf lessons could very well be the answer.

Some people say that lessons give them a set time to practice and an opportunity to completely focus on the game. You'll typically be less interrupted than if you were playing on your own, stopping to chat with friends along the way. But others say the simple fact of having someone scrutinizing every move and offering constant advice is more distracting than helpful. Decide whether you're one of those who accept direction and works well in that situation. That's a major clue as to whether golf lessons are a good idea.

Remember that a golf coach's job is to teach you to golf correctly. That means that there are some habits that he (or she) will be trying to ingrain and others they'll be trying to break. While golfing correctly is a terrific goal, many golfers have some bad habits that they tout as benefiting their game. Changing your grip, adjusting your stance or even using different equipment may be among the "must do" list from your coach. You may resist those changes. You have two options. You can do your best to follow the instructions, or you can explain that you aren't planning to change that particular habit. If you don't plan to change, you may need to reexamine your decision to take lessons. Without following directions, lessons may become a waste of time and effort on both parts, and money on yours.

Golf lessons are great for some people. It's a personal decision whether you are one of those who will benefit from a coach – formal or informal. But remember that the most important thing to improve your golf game is *simply practice*.

### **Hitting the Ball - How Hard Can It Be?**

A golf outsider watches the game. How hard can it be to hit a stationary ball? After all, major league baseball players hit balls traveling high speeds all the time. With that in mind, the outsider decides to take up the game of golf with the notion that the game is so relaxing because it requires little effort.

Think again.

Most of those people give up on the game before they really understand the dynamics of hitting that little ball. It makes sense that an iron club could pelt a little ball hundreds of yards, yet when the new golfer takes his first swing there is often little movement at all... sometimes no movement (or worse, backward movement).

There is a lot more to hitting that little ball than meets the eye.

Human nature is to use the iron to cup it under the ball to hit the ball up into the air. But look at the club. It is angled back, not at all designed to cup beneath the ball. So, when a golfer tries to scoop up the ball, he or she is really trapping it between the

angled face of the club and the ground. That's why often times, the ball doesn't move – or worse, moves backwards just a little bit.

Instead of striving to hit up, it's best to learn to hit downward. By hitting down, the angled club will do the work for you, not the upswing of your club. When you hit down, the angle will bump your golf ball forward. It's that simple.

But putting power behind that little punt takes some practice. You'll be tempted to swing big and hard. It takes as much practice to resist that temptation as it does to learn to hit the ball! Once you have trained yourself against swinging upward, you will see your hitting start to improve.

Now you'll begin to understand why there are various golf club options and choices you have to make when making a shot. You'll need to pick your club based on the angle of the club face once you determine how far you want the ball to go and how you need it to perform.

If you've been practicing but still don't feel like you've got the hang of it, ask for help. Your golf course should have an attendant on hand who could give you some pointers. Maybe you could take some private lessons. The course pro shop should have suggestions for area teachers. Or, try the good, old buddy method. Ask another golfer you've seen play how he or she does it and if they have any tips for hitting the ball. You may think you sound silly, but when other golfers start to regale you with their tales of learning to hit the ball, almost everyone has had to address that challenge up front.

With those tips in mind and maybe even a few lessons behind you, go back to practicing. Just as it takes a while to train your mind to think about hitting downward instead of upward, it takes a while to train your body to actually do it the way you have in mind. Don't give up and remember, the game is all about relaxing so don't stress too much over hitting the ball.

### **Golf Courses – Same Course, New Game Every Time**

One thing every golfer will agree on is no golf course is ever the same. While playing different courses is fun and challenging, playing ones home course, no matter how many times it is done, is always going to be different.

Yes, it is the same course, nothing has been changed, except for the position of the cup on the green, but no golf course is ever exactly the same two days in a row, or, for that matter, the same day.

Will Smith in the movie "The Legend of Bagger Vance" told his protégé how the grass follows the sun, which means a putt that broke one way in the morning will break in the opposite direction in the afternoon.

Another thing that makes the same course different every day is the weather conditions. Weather plays a big factor in golf, and how a course plays. A wet course will play slower and the ball will not travel as far after hitting the ground. On a dry course, the ball will roll farther after hitting the turf.

A course will also play differently in hot or cold weather. Colder weather keeps the ball from traveling as far, while a well hit ball will go further on a warm or hot day. Additionally, if an area has been dry for any length of time, the fairways, unless they are watered heavily every day, will become as hard as concrete and provide extra distance once the ball hits the ground.

Then comes the golfer's attitude. Yes, the frame of mind a golfer is in will have a direct affect on how well he or she plays and reacts to the course. Golf is a game requiring a calm, focused mind, so the player can concentrate on what he or she is trying to do on any particular shot.

One other thing that will make the same course play differently is how the grounds are kept. If the fairway is allowed to grow a little long, balls will not be able to roll as far, whereas, if they are kept trimmed close to the ground, the ball will roll further.

The rough is a whole other problem, as are other obstacles on the course, such as sprinkler heads. The rough is always going to be thick and hard to play out of, but a heavy, wet rough makes it almost impossible for a golfer to do much more than simply attempt to chip back onto the fairway. Sprinkler heads, which are positioned all over the course, will have an adverse affect on a ball that happens to hit them.

Believe it or not, who a person is playing with, or if he or she is playing alone when he or she normally plays with someone else will affect the way the course is played. So, this only goes to show you how the same course, no matter how many times a person plays it, is never the same course twice.

### **What Makes a Good Golf Course?**

A question plaguing designers of golf courses all over the world is what makes a good golf course? The answer, simplified greatly, is the lay of the land it is being built on.

A good golf course needs to have rolling hills, preferably a pond or two, or three, or four, or five, trees, an area that can be used as a fairway, an area for a rough, and enough room for sand traps. However, there are a lot of so-called golfers who don't think a course should have any sand traps at all. They are wrong and the minority. Sand traps can improve both the course and the skills of the golfers who play them.

A good golf course should be designed so as every hole is different and unique unto itself. If every hole was straight and four hundred and twenty yards, the course would be boring to play. A good golf course should have holes that dogleg right and dogleg left, with enough obstacles so the flag cannot be seen from the tee box.

Good golf courses have elevated tee boxes to help the golfers get more elevation on their drives. Once the ball hits the fairway, the elevation will depend entirely on the skill of the golfer.

Another thing that makes a good golf course is the people who work to maintain it. Some courses have professional groundskeepers who have the job of keeping the fairways smooth, the roughs rough and the greens closely cropped. This can make the all the difference in the world to golfers, as can the type of grass used on the green.

Speaking of grass on the green, the better golf courses have bent grass greens. This helps keep the ball from rolling off the green once it hits, whereas a green with Bermuda grass, while still a good green, will not have ability to slow the ball down once it hits. Of course, the bent grass greens will wind up with more divots than those with Bermuda grass as the ground tends to be softer beneath them.

The attitude of the grounds crew and the personnel in the clubhouse has a great deal to do with whether a golf course is good or not. If the people working there have bad attitudes, the golfers will not be able to focus on their game, as they remember how they were mistreated, or thought they were mistreated. But, a helpful, friendly staff, will make the golfing experience pleasant and enjoyable.

Well maintained golf cart paths are also important to having a good golf course. A broken and rough cart path will beat the golfers to death, forcing them to drive on the fairways. While this is not a major problem, it can be a headache.

One of the things that makes a poor golf course, is rough terrain. Some golf courses have rocks all over the place. This has a negative affect on the balls once they hit the ground and damages the player's golf clubs.

## **The Ideal Golf Outing**

What is the ideal golfing trip? Clearly, it will be different for everybody.

For some golfers the ideal outing would be going to a major course and getting to play on it, knowing professional golfers had walked and played over these same greens. What golfer would not want to play the course where the Master's or U.S. Open is held? Most would kill (figuratively speaking) for the chance. These are courses where legends have played - players such as Arnold Palmer and Tiger Woods.

For others, though, ideal golfing is not so much *where* they play as *what it is like* when they play i.e. the weather conditions. Some golfers prefer a day with mild temperatures and a light breeze to help keep them cool, while others want a challenge and will go to the extremes weather-wise. There are those who will play when the temperature hits triple digits or drops well below freezing, just to see how well they play under these extreme circumstances.

And, there are golfers who will play in the snow and at night. There are some specially designed golf balls created for these golfers. The night players can chase their glow-in-the-dark golf balls all over the course, but need to take a flashlight to prevent running into a tree or some other hazard on the course. For those who play in the snow, fluorescent golf balls were created. These brightly colored balls are easy to see against the snow-covered course.

Either way, golfing in the extreme is a challenge, and not one for the faint of heart, or the poor of play. For golfers who play in extreme heat, they need to remember to bring plenty of water to drink and leave all alcoholic beverages alone. Those who play in the cold should have something warm to drink in a thermos to help keep their body temperature up, even if they are walking the course. But, whatever the discomfort and the accommodations they have to make, these people consider these a small price to pay for these "ideal golf outings."

For most golfers, though, the ideal golf outing is simply the chance to go to their favorite course with a few friends and chase golf balls all over the pasture, just having a good time and not taking the game too seriously. This is the most prevalent type of golfer, and these players can usually be found playing in couples and foursomes. They will chide one another on a bad shot, while complimenting one another on good shots and putts. The final score rarely matters (unless they tend to be serious golfers), as they are on the links to have a good time and get away from the stresses of every day life.

Oddly enough, there are golfers who prefer to play the game by themselves. The solo golfer will most likely walk the course, getting to know the feel of every tee box, fairway and green with his or her feet. But these golfers are in the minority.

By and large, golf is a social game. And, though it is a competitive sport, most golfers will tell you that their favorite part of the day, is the pints or drafts they share with their buddies on the 19<sup>th</sup> hole in the Club house at the end of a fulfilling round.

## **The Essentials of Golf**

At the core of golf there is competition. Yet the most essential part of golf is patience. Patient competition seems like a contradiction. Yet golf is not contradictory at all. On the other hand it has been said one person can find golf relaxing, while another individual might think it the most stressful sport in the universe.

Professional golfers tend to be graceful. It is as if they are very aware of how the muscles in their body propel them forward. Languid strides and flexibility are words that come to mind when imagining the professional golfer at work.

Some people link golf to sports like bowling or billiards. Not particularly something you want to watch unless you understand the game fully and know the participants well enough to be cheering one or more toward the grand first prize. Serious golf fans are loyal and just as radical (in a subdued manner) as any professional football fan can be.

As a spectator sport golf ranks high on the television ratings. It is highly unlikely anyone has seen the World Cup void of fans on any given year. The collective silences and cheers of golf fans exude a respect for the game. That respect is the attention grabber.

As with any sport, the interest of the young people is a natural part of survival. Without future golf players there is no future to golf. Since golf has been around for arguably five centuries it is not a concern that the sport will ever die away completely or vanish like a lost civilization. Fresh new blood keeps the arterial channels flowing more freely though.

The diversity of golf is found most obviously in the participants of golf. Any level of physically fit persons can choose golf as a sport. It is known to be beneficial exercise. When golf becomes a set part of your scheduled regimen it is very likely extra pounds will come off. Any societal level of persons can play golf. It is not the game of the rich and famous, on the contrary there are many affordable public golf courses emerging.

Whether you are male, female, young or mature golf is a game of competitive spirit. We mustn't forget it is a patient competitive spirit. Not only are you competing against other golfers you are also being constantly challenged by difficult golfing courses. A public or private golf course has its fair share of challenging factors on the fairways, in the sand traps and across the rolling hills. The most appealing challenge for most golfers is the challenge of improving your game.

You might have seen the cartoons where the golfer has a club wrapped around a tree limb in frustration or yet another where it appears Zen golf might be a new fad. Either account can be considered a fair account when you are talking about a sport with diversity, versatility and class. If you have never golfed in your life, think about it the next time you have some free time. You might be surprised how much fun golf can essentially be.

### **The Ups and Downs of Golf Tournaments**

World Golf tournaments are among the many golf tournaments that are popular today. Junior Golf tournaments are also a popular golfing event. Keeping the young golfers

interested and entertained is an important aspect for the future of golf. Without the interest of junior golfers the professional sport of golf would dwindle. Tiger Woods created a new interest in golf from the younger crowd and renewed interest from the more mature golf fans. This type of player popularity fuels the interest in golf.

Professional Golf Association (PGA) tournament tours are well planned out in advance and affordable to the fans of golf that have no qualms about the cost. With first place prizes being the best in golf, PGA tournaments have the most loyal fan base as any sport. The PGA tour is a championship golfing event. There are four major championships. The PGA tournament is played yearly and a different golf course is chosen for the honor of supporting this extraordinary event each year.

There are more to golf's major events. The Masters is played every four years in Augusta Georgia. The Masters is a tournament founded by Bobby Jones and is highly respected by all golf fans. The U.S. Open and British Open are two more of golf's major events. The Ryder Cup is played every other year. The Ryder Cup is unique in that it is played between teams of golfers from both Europe and the United States. The Presidents Cup is also played every second year.

The Ladies Professional Golf (LPGA) tournament is an amazing event to watch. It is important that young girls have an array of sports heroes in which to admire. Ladies European Tour, Ladies Senior Tour and the Futures Tour are all part of the ladies tournament scheduling. Ladies golf has been around for sometime but the popularity has consistently grown and the association has not disappointed its fans.

The LPGA has kept up with the changing times. In the most recent tournaments scheduled they are gearing toward the creation of a more competitive structure where by the first place prize will be the most phenomenal in the history of women's golf. Every major golf event improves each time it is offered to the public.

There are websites and magazines that list "this weeks golf tournaments" and you will be amazed at the in depth list of accurate information pertaining to the many golf events. Local golf tournaments are listed in the "events" portion of the local newspaper and are great fun for the entire family to participate in supporting.

If you are considering planning a golf tournament or event of your own there are several ways to accomplish this feat. You will be able to raise a considerable amount of funds for any type benefit in very little time and with minimal costs to the events treasury. Golfers are always willing to donate time money and effort to a great cause. Any reason to play a little golf is a great reason to most golf fans.

## **Online Golf Lessons**

There are many different ways to achieve golf lessons, and many ways to effectively acquire valuable lessons out there. Among the many ways to learn lessons of golf, online golf lessons are one of the fast effective ways to gain knowledge of strategies and techniques. Improving your golf game while realizing your best potential is one great reason to utilize online golf lessons.

Finding the best website for online golf lessons is relatively simple. Perhaps you have already established a comfortable, user-friendly golf website and that site lends you access to online golf lessons. If not, there are many reputable websites from which to choose. Also there are varied means in which to utilize the lessons offered.

Online golf lessons can include tips on how to improve specific aspects of your golf game. Normally on most websites, an overall generalization is provided so that you can see the broad scope of golf. This occurs at first and as you gain more direct knowledge toward where your particular golf game suffers you can find information that will seem personalized.

There will also be valuable information about stance, follow through of an effective swing and the finer points of swing analysis. Online golf lessons can even include time and effort geared toward the mental aspect of the game. As we know golf is a competitive sport in which you are competing against other golfer, the course and most importantly yourself.

In most case online golf lessons are offered on a non-paying basis and are simply included in your favorite golf website. In some cases you may find golf lessons that are presented in acrobat reader formatting and are downloaded into your personal computer at a minimal cost to you. Payment is made in a secure fashion with a credit card.

One benefit from utilizing online golf lessons to improve your golf skills is that you can experience the lessons at your leisure. You can study and practice at your leisure and then too have the lessons handy for reviewing when you forget exactly what was being taught. Once you have improved your golf game and see the results you were hoping to see it is possible you will search for a more specific online lesson for your needs.

## **Using Golf Learning Software**

Learning how to play golf is definitely a "hands on" process. However, there are other ways of learning golf that will actually enhance your understanding of the game and its addictive components as well as improve your physical skills. Software that teaches an individual to play golf is a valuable resource in the quest for perfected golf skills. You may be surprised exactly how much knowledge, expertise and understanding you can gather just from golf learning software.

The instructional golf software that explains various golf lessons and is available to the general public may easily be the exact same lessons that professionals value also. Easy to follow techniques are explained and presented in unique formatting so that no one could misunderstand them. Different levels of instruction and varying degrees of cost are two diverse ways learning golf by means of software can accommodate any level of golf enthusiast.

A very important key factor to any type of instructional golf software is discovering just how effective it has been. Your favorite golfing website will have pro's and con's guides to various instructional software. Golf websites should also have direct links to free trial downloads for different golf learning software. With free trial offers you can dabble in the world of software instructions and evaluate whether a certain product would benefit your needs.

Some of the most recent technological advances have been applied to instructional golf software. Improving your golf game is the reason to experience the latest software available, however there are many older versions of reliable software that may suit your needs completely. As golf can be a tremendously relaxing sport it is also a competitive sport and to achieve your best swing, your accurate puts and the best score you have ever dreamed of having most of us have to endure at least a few lessons.

There are natural golfers, as well as there are some natural football players. Sport participants that shine at what they do with minimal guidance are a rarity. Unfortunately most of us need not only instruction but also time and effort to gain a sense of the game. Gaining a sense of the game has nothing to do with actually becoming proficient at playing golf so with the help of golf learning software you can learn what your best is in no time.

Golf tends to be just as much a game against your self as against an opponent. You face individual goals as well as attempting to outscore your golf mates. Software that encapsulates all the methods and techniques that need to be a focal point on any golf course worldwide is a great tool to have in your arsenal. Finding the right software for your needs is simple.

Favorite golfing websites will have links of interest and possibly free trial downloads for various software products. Perhaps a friend or co-worker has suggested a specific golfing software that has worked wonders for him or her. Or perhaps you have simply noticed that your Saturday morning golf partner has become more proficient at his or her game. You could ask for a recommendation. These are some of the best ways to find the correct software for your personal needs as a golfer.

So no matter what level of golf you are playing, no matter what income level you are in or what knowledge of computers you may have, there is software available to aid in your skills as a golfer. You will be playing like the professionals in no time.

## **Video Game Golf – Virtual Golf at its Best**

Where virtual golf is concerned, the consensus is... if you have not played a golf video game in a while then you don't know what you are missing. The simulated real life action is unbelievable, or better yet it is believable and that is even better!

Video games have come a long, long way and video golf is no exception. The newest gaming technology is available in the most remote corners of cyber space, video streaming and video games. And this technology can be all at your fingertips no matter your budget or skill level. Whether you are great at real time golf or are simply a novice, golf video games are good clean fun.

Tiger Woods PGA Tour Series is a dominating force in the new age of golf video games. In years past there were other games mentioned more frequently and a broader scope of golf video games, but just as Tiger Woods has become a force to be reckoned with in the real world of golf so has it become 'the' word in virtual golf.

The Tiger Woods Series has continually upgraded. Both the graphics and the difficulty have grown through the years so fans can be challenged with each new release. Where as there is no need to buy this years game if you have last years you may want to anyway. Some gaming series are phenomenal but are stagnant in their growth and new releases. Tiger Woods PGA Tour Series does not disappoint.

Life-like features, unsurpassed graphics and amazing accuracy are among the reasons the popularity of video games have grown to accommodate staggering amounts of fans. Here again video golf is no exception. With Sid Meier's SimGolf, in the true tradition of simulation, you can become a golf course magnate and design your own golf course. You can also design your own resort community, serve as the head professional golf expert and sit back and watch your resort and business grow larger by the day.

These types of virtual gaming are the wave of the future. The popularity of golf has grown recently to encompass all types of income levels and all types of personalities and ages. This is due to many factors but the most important of which has to do with the increasing interests in certain potential golf legends in the making.

Truly what sport would be complete this day and age without a fantasy league to entertain the fans? Apparently not golf. Fantasy golf is available in video format and is just as riveting to manage and play as the real thing. Mario Golf is a golf video game and a great way to begin or continue your fantasy golf experience.

Entertainment purposes are the main reason video games exist and you are sure to be entertained by any golf video game you purchase, download, or play in an interactive format in your favorite gaming room online. Perhaps it is questionable whether mastering these virtual golf videos will actually improve your game in real time. After playing a few video golf games you have to agree doing so can cause some great fun.

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