

# GOLF STUDY GUIDE

(revised 07/05)

## I. History

- Although the actual origins of golf are unknown, there is evidence that the game began on St Andrews, Scotland, before the founding of the University in 1411.
- The first reference of golf in America was the banning of golf from the streets of Albany, New York, in 1659
- The United States Golf Association (USGA) governs play in the United States and The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews governs the rules of golf in Europe.
- The first 18-hole course in the US, the Chicago Golf Club, was founded near Wheaton, Illinois in 1893.
- There were 80 courses in the US in 1896, almost 6,000 courses had been built by 1930 and today golf is considered one of the fastest growing sports in the world.
- There are four major tournaments on the PGA Tour: The Masters, The US Open, The British Open and The PGA Championship. On the LPGA Tour there are two majors: US Women's Open and LPGA Championship.

## II. Playing the Game

Golf is a game in which a ball is struck with a club from a prepared area, known as the *tee*, across *fairway* and *rough*, over *bunkers* and *hazards* to a second prepared area, which has a hole in it, known as the *putting green*. The object of the game is to complete what is known as a *hole* by playing a ball from the tee into the hole on the putting green in the fewest possible number of strokes. A *round* of golf consists of playing **18 holes**. There are two forms of play: *match play* which is decided by holes won and lost, and *stroke play* which is decided by the total number of strokes taken in a round. You are allowed a maximum of **14 clubs** to play a round.

## III. Rules

1. Tee off between and behind the front line of the tee markers.
2. The ball must be played where it lies.
3. The *lie*, may not be improved by moving, bending, or breaking anything fixed or growing when playing the ball.
4. If the ball lies in a bunker (sand trap) or a water hazard, the sand or the water may not be touched before the downswing.
5. On the putting green, a ball may be marked, lifted, and cleaned, but it must be replaced on the exact spot.
6. If the ball is at rest and it is moved by the player, or if it moves after the player addressed it, a penalty stroke is added and the ball is replaced.

## IV. Etiquette Rules of Golf

Etiquette includes courtesy on the course and care of the course. The following rules of etiquette are not rules that incur a penalty, but they are an important part of the game of golf.

1. Don't move, talk, or stand close to a player during his/her swing.
2. Don't play until the group in front of you is out of the way.
3. Always play without delay, Leave the putting green as soon as all players in your group have holed out.
4. Invite faster group to play through.
5. Replace all divots. Smooth footprints in bunkers (by using a rake).
6. Don't step on the line of another player's putt.
7. Don't drop clubs on the putting green. Place your golf bag off the putting green.
8. Replace the flagstick carefully.

## V. Golf Clubs

- A set of clubs consists of 14 clubs (woods, irons and putter)
- The higher the number of the club, the shorter the club's length and the more sharply angled the club face (which gives the club a greater degree of loft).
- Parts of the club: grip (made of leather or synthetic material), shaft (made of steel or graphite composite material), hosel, heel, face (the place where you contact the ball), toe, and head.
- The loft of the club increases by 4 degrees and shaft decreases by ½ inch with each number. There are approximately 20 yards between the distance of consecutive clubs (i.e. 9 iron = 58 degrees loft, 35 inch shaft length, 130 yards, 8 iron = 42 loft, 35.5 shaft length, 140 yards, 7 iron = 38 loft, 36 shaft length, 150 yards, etc.)

## VI. Basic Golf Grip, Swing and Putting

- A **proper grip** is essential to a controlled and constant swing. The goal is to adopt a relaxed but firm grip that prevents any twisting of the shaft, causing the club face to open or close at the moment of impact with the ball. The overlapping grip is the most commonly used golf grip.
- There are **five stages of the golf swing**: address, take away, backswing, downswing, and follow through. Your eyes should stay focused on the ball at all times. Your head should stay over the ball and look up only after you have made impact with the ball. Your feet should never move or take a step. Your weight will shift from side to side. On your follow through, your bellybutton will be in line with your target.
- Concentration, confidence and the basic fundamentals are required to successfully putt the golf ball. The **four stages of putting the golf ball**: address, take away, impact and follow through. Your eyes should be directly over the ball. Elbows against your hips, knees should be flexed, and the rest of your body relaxed but upright. Bring the club back as far as your back foot in a smooth motion. Your lower body and head should be kept absolutely still when contacting the ball. After contact, the ball is pushed forward by the putter. The arms, hands and putter follow and the lower body and head are kept still. Looking up at the ball directly after impact causes the ball to be pushed off the target line.

## VII. Golf Terms

1. Ace: a hole in one.
2. Address: a golfer takes his /her stance and lines up the club to make a stroke.
3. Approach: a stroke to the putting green.
4. Away: ball farthest from the hole, played first.
5. Birdie: one stroke under par for the hole.
6. Bogey: one stroke over par for the hole (double bogey = two strokes over par, etc)
7. Bunker: a hazard filled with sand or grass. Practice swings and grounding the club are not permitted in the bunker.
8. Chip: a stroke from an area next to the putting green to the putting green, usually 50 to 15 feet from the edge of the green.
9. Club loft: The angle of the club face that affects the flight and the distance of the ball when struck.
10. Divot: a piece of turf typically on the fairway and lifted when the ball is struck using an iron.
11. Eagle: to score two under par for the hole (double eagle = three shots under par for the hole)
12. Face: the part of the club head that comes into direct contact with the ball.
13. Fairway: the closely mowed playing area between tee to green.
14. "Fore": a shouted warning to other players that a ball has been hit in their direction and may hit them.
15. Green: the area of short grass surrounding the hole.
16. Grounding the Club: to place the club on the ground prior to striking the ball when addressing it.
17. Hole-in-one: the ball goes straight into the hole from the tee shot.
18. Honor: the right to play drive or play first at the next hole, determined by the lowest score on the hole before.
19. Hook: a ball curving to the left of the intended flight of the ball (for a right-hander).
20. Loft: the angle of the club face in relation to the ground which dictates the trajectory of the ball as it rises in the air.
21. Match Play: play in which the winner is determined by the number of holes won.
22. Out-of-Bounds: the area on the course (hole) from which the ball may not be played.
23. Par: the score an expert is expected to make on a hole. Par for a hole is measured by the number of shots needed to reach the green plus two for putting. Par for the round (course) is calculated by adding all of the hole's pars together.
24. Penalty Stroke: a stroke added to a player's score due to breaking a rule.
25. Pull: a ball going straight but to the left of the intended line of flight.
26. Push: a ball going straight but to the right of the intended line of flight.
27. Putt: act of hitting a golf ball towards the hole on the green.
28. Rough: high grass area next to the fairway and the green, to increase the difficulty of play.
29. Slice: a ball curving to the right of the intended line of flight of the ball.
30. Stance: to place the feet in preparation for a swing.
31. Stroke: any forward motion of the club with the intent of hitting the ball.
32. Stroke Play: play in which the winner is determined by the total strokes taken during the round or rounds .
33. Tee: a small peg struck into the ground on which a golf ball is placed, used only on the area where golfers plays the first stroke of any given hole.