




2021

Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club Players Manual

Revised: April 24, 2021

Where women come together for the  of the game . . .

This manual has been prepared to assist you in better understanding the game of golf and to explain the Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club (MWLGC) activities and special events.

You will find additional information and sign-up sheets posted on our bulletin board in the room behind the restaurant (referred to as clubroom in this document).

If you have any questions, feel free to ask any member of the executive, other experienced members, or the pro shop staff.

Mill Woods Golf Course phone number (780) 448-1601

Mill Woods Golf Course website www.millwoodsgolfcourse.com.

The purpose of the Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club is:

The primary purpose of this golf club is to provide for the recreation of the members, to promote and afford opportunity for friendly and social activities, and to encourage and promote amateur games and exercise.

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Booking Tee Times

Day Ladies Tee Times: 8:20 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.

Business Ladies Tee Times: 3:30 p.m. - 05:50 p.m.

You have two options when it comes to booking tee-times for Club Play:

1. The Mill Woods Golf Course website (www.millwoodsgolfcourse.com), and hover over the drop down `Book a Tee Time` and select `Book A League` or
2. The Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club website (www.mwlgc.ca) where you will find a link at the bottom of each page "Book a Tee Time".

If you are a new member, the first time you go to sign in you will need to click on the words "can't sign in" and enter the email address that you provided to the Mill Woods Ladies Club. A User Name and Password will be sent to you. You now have the tools you need to book a tee time!

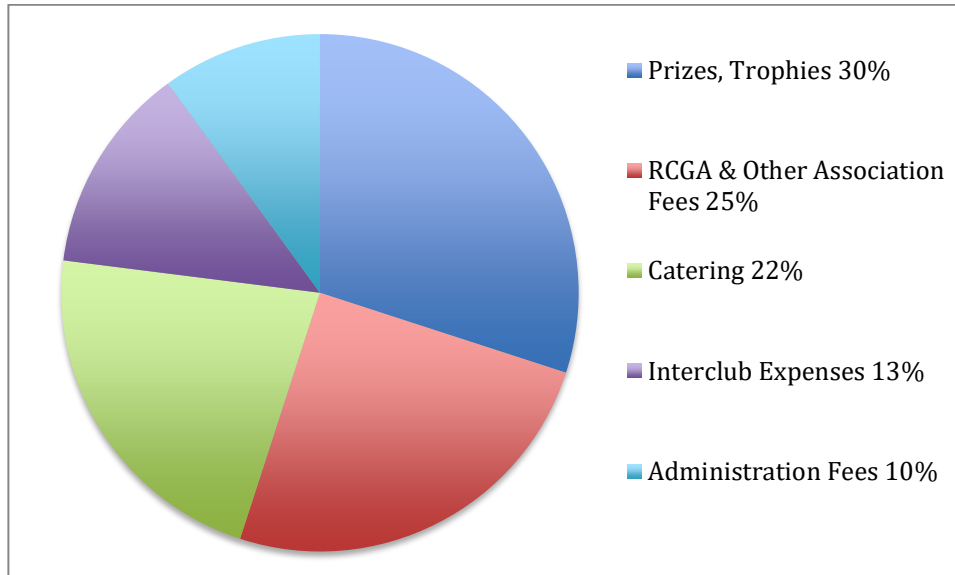
1. One week prior to the Tuesday on which you plan to golf, go to the Mill Woods Golf Course website or www.mwlgc.ca and click "Book a Tee Time" and then "Book a League." (Booking opens at 7:00 a.m.) Use your User Name and Password to enter the booking system.
2. Choose the upcoming Tuesday as the date you wish to play and choose an available time. You may book for yourself and one player with whom you wish to play.
3. You will receive a confirmation email with your date and time.
4. You can cancel or edit your tee time by clicking the button Menu, a drop down appears, click "Edit a Tee Time" and proceed from there. If you can't get to a device to cancel on-line, you may call the Pro-Shop at 780 448 1601.

The ladies in our league who do not have computers may call the Pro Shop on the Tuesday prior to league play and ask to have a tee time made or they may ask a friend to book a tee time and play together.

Our tee times are set on the booking system. In the case a Tuesday is not available, the Tee-On Booking System will prompt you to the alternate day that has been made available.

Breakdown of Registration Fees

MWLGC - \$120.00 Entry Fee



Club Policies

Please note the following MWLGC policies:

Refunds

If a member withdraws from the club before the spring meeting, they will be issued a full refund. A \$20 administration fee will be charged if membership is cancelled after the spring meeting but before May 1st. No refunds issued after May 1st.

Handicap Index Establishment

The Handicap Index is calculated using the lowest eight (8) of the player's most recent 20 Score Differentials and updated with each new round played. The Handicap Index travels worldwide with the golfer from course to course (and tee to tee) and is used to calculate a "Course Handicap". The Course Handicap is the number of strokes a golfer receives from the specific set of tees at the course. The more difficult the golf course, the more strokes the golfer receives and vice versa.

No one may compete in a tournament or other competition until she has established a handicap or has a transfer of a handicap from another accredited course, unless the event has a special section for such members.

Eligibility for Club Championship

In order to be eligible to play in the club championship proper, a member needs to have established a Handicap Index. A member must have entered in the Golf Canada website 54 holes from any combination of 18-hole and 9-hole rounds.

Medical Policy

If you are unable to golf with MWLGC for a season for medical (i.e.: pregnancy, surgery, etc.) or other approved personal reasons, you may still be considered a returning member the following year at the Executive's discretion. In order to do so, you must provide written notice (an email will suffice) to the Club Membership Coordinator. No refunds will be given after May 1st.

Club Activities

Birdie Cage

If you make a birdie during MWLGC rounds, place your name on a "Birdie Cage" chit located in the clubroom. A draw will be made at the Annual Banquet and an award presented.

Note: Only birdies made during club play rounds and tournaments are eligible.

Break '100', '90', '80'

Congratulations! Pins are awarded to those players who break 100, 90 and 80 (gross score) for the first time. There is a list posted on the Ladies Bulletin Board in the clubroom. When you achieve one of these milestones record it on the list. Your pin will be awarded at the end of the year Banquet.

Note: A pin is awarded for the first time break only.

Match Play

This is an individual competition for members with an **established handicap**. Each player is guaranteed 2 rounds.

Sign-up sheets are available at the Spring Meeting and are posted thereafter on our bulletin board in the clubroom. Please sign up by mid-May. There is a small fee (\$5 for the season) as well as the green fees.

Match play begins in early June. A double elimination format is used. The number of rounds played will depend on the number of players who sign up to play.

All competitions must be played by the deadline dates stipulated so players may need to be flexible in order to schedule a tee time for the match. Matches are played using current Handicaps. Players must verify their Handicaps before play. Maximum allowed Handicap is 40.

Matches consist of 18 continuous holes. The outcome is determined based on the holes won rather than total number of strokes. In the event of a tie after 18 holes, players continue to play on a hole-by-hole, "sudden death" basis.

The Match Play Committee will provide more detailed information about the format and rules of play to the players who register for match play.

A cash prize will be awarded to the winner and runner-up in both day ladies and business ladies competitions.

Ringer Board

The Ringer Board is a hole-by-hole record of your personal game improvements (stroke for stroke) through the season. This is open to all members. Scores from club play (9 or 18 holes)

or weekend club tournaments may be used. The competition commences with the first day of club play and concludes mid-September.

- On the first day of club play, take a card from the Ringer Board box, put your name on it and then circle the score that you shot for each hole. This is week number one.
- Record any pars, birdies, eagles and chip-ins at the top of the card and keep a running total of these for the entire season.
- Each week when you golf, pull your card and circle any scores on each hole that you improved on from previous weeks.
- After entering your improvements, pars, birdies, eagles and chip-ins, file your card back in the Ringer Board box alphabetically.

Prizes will be awarded, by flights, at the year-end banquet.

Weekly Proximity Prizes

Each week, except for when we have a mini tournament, during regular club play everyone has the opportunity to win a prize by participating in the proximity challenges of the day. There is no cost involved for these prizes. Each week there will be a different competition that will be indicated in the Pro-Shop as well as by a marker on the appropriate hole. These competitions could range from shortest drive, to being in a sand trap or water hazard, to getting onto a Par 5 green in regulation.

There is also a Toonie Pot each week. This competition will cost you \$2. There is a sign-up list in the Pro Shop that will tell you where and what the competition is for that week. It could be longest drive or longest putt, you never know, so keep your eyes open. The Pot is divided between the Winner and the Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club.

These are just little fun competitions to add a touch of variety to your day – and who knows – maybe you'll get a free lunch out of it!

Major Tournaments

Classic Tournament

This is the first tournament of the season. There is a fee that must be paid in the pro-shop in order to register. Play is 18 holes using the RCGA rules of golf. Golfers are grouped in flights, according to their established handicaps, so you will be playing with others of a similar skill level. You must have an established handicap to participate.

The player with the lowest gross score is named the tournament champion. The player with the lowest net score is the runner-up. Winner's names are engraved on permanent trophies that the winner has in her possession for a one-year period.

Flight prizes and proximity prizes are also awarded.

Better Ball Tournament

This is a tournament that is played with a partner. There is a fee that must be paid in the pro-shop in order to register. Play is 18 holes with each team member playing her own ball. The team scores are determined by using the best net score of the two players on the team. You must have an established handicap to participate.

The top teams with the lowest net scores will be awarded prizes. The number of prizes awarded is dependent on the number of participants.

Proximity prizes are also awarded.

Club Championship

Stroke Play is used. Two 18-hole rounds (Tuesday & Saturday) are played using the RCGA rules of golf. Golfers are grouped together according to handicap, so you will be golfing with others at a similar skill level. You must have an established handicap to participate.

The player with the lowest gross score is named the Club Champion. The player with the lowest net score is the runner up. Winner's names are inscribed on permanent trophies that the winner will have in her possession for a one-year period.

Flight and proximity prizes are also awarded.

Mini Tournaments

We have two mini tournaments each season, the format of each to be determined by the Club and Assistant Club Captains. The mini tournaments are followed by a hosted meal in the banquet room. Rules will be provided on the day of the tournament. Prizes are awarded at each Mini Tournament. Ties are broken by a count back where applicable. There will be sign-up sheets for these tournaments posted in the clubroom.

Interclub Events

Interclub tournaments are held amongst clubs registered with the Edmonton Golf Association. These tournaments are **open to members with a valid handicap**. Signup sheets will be posted well in advance of the event.

Interclub Tournaments include:

Marshall Cup

This tournament, with a trophy donated in 1932 by R.C. Marshall, is intended to encourage inter-club competition, foster good sportsmanship and promote inter-club friendship. Both Day Ladies and Business Ladies represent the Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club. Three Mondays and One Sunday (designated for Business Ladies) in May or early June. Match play takes place at both the home club and at the other participating club courses. Participants must have established handicaps. Each club organizes two "A" teams, with lower handicap members, and two "B" teams. Each team consists of two club members. Sign-up sheets and more information about this event are provided at the Spring Social and posted on our bulletin board in the clubroom.

Podersky Cup

This tournament, with a trophy donated in 1948 by the Louis Podersky family, is intended to encourage sociability among the clubs. The competition is set up to provide the higher handicap golfer with a chance to compete, since the combined handicap of each team has to be 30 or more. Participants must have established handicaps, no higher than 40. Each club visits two other clubs each day of the draw. Games are played with pairs using 1 ball and alternating shots. Presently these matches are played on Thursdays from mid-May to mid-June with eight ladies representing their home club. Sign-up sheets and more information about this event are provided at the Spring Social and posted on our bulletin board in the clubroom.

Visiting Days

During the season Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club will have the opportunity to visit another club of the Edmonton Golf Association and in return we will host a club. These golf days will usually start with coffee, a shot gun start to our golf and culminate with lunch with the other club. There is an extra charge to participate in the lunch, but the away golf is free. There is a limit as to how many golfers can be accommodated, dependent upon the host club.

Glossary of Frequently Used Terms

- Adjusted Score:** Your score after applying 'equitable stroke control' (ESC). It is this score that is entered into the computer for handicap purposes.
- Course Handicap:** This is the handicap you will use on a given course, by comparing your handicap index with the course handicap conversion chart (posted in the clubhouse). This is used to determine your ESC limit and your net score.
- Course Rating:** The evaluation of the playing difficulty of a course for scratch golfers under normal course and weather conditions expressed as number of strokes (e.g. 72.5).
This is a rating of how difficult a course is for a scratch (0.0 handicap index) golfer.
- Net Double Bogey:** Starting in 2020, net double bogey on any hole is the maximum allowed, whether it's a par 3, par 4 or par 5. So, for handicap purposes, you can count a maximum of two strokes over par plus any strokes you are entitled to, based on the stroke allowance for that hole. Net Double Bogey will replace the existing Equitable Stroke Control (ESC) procedure for determining the maximum hole score.
- World Handicap System:** Launches in Canada January 8th, 2020 and will feature the following:
- Flexibility in formats of play, allowing both competitive and recreational rounds to count for handicap purposes and ensuring a golfer's handicap is more reflective of potential ability.
 - A minimal number of scores needed to obtain a new handicap. The number of scores needed to establish a Handicap Index is 54 holes from any combination of 18-hole and 9-hole rounds.
 - A consistent handicap that is portable from tee to tee, course to course and country to country through worldwide use of the World Handicap System.
 - An average-based calculation of a handicap, taken from the best eight out of the last 20 Score Differentials and factoring in memory of previous demonstrated ability for better responsiveness and control.
 - A calculation that considers the impact that playing conditions (including course set up and weather conditions) might have on a player's performance each day.
 - Daily handicap revisions, taking account of the course and weather conditions calculation.
 - A limit of Net Double Bogey on the maximum hole score (for handicapping purposes only). Net Double Bogey will replace the existing Equitable Stroke Control (ESC) procedure for determining the maximum hole score.

- A maximum Handicap Index of 54.0, regardless of gender, to encourage more golfers to measure and track their performance to increase their enjoyment of the game.

Gross Score:	This is your total score for a round of golf, not adjusted for either ESC or handicap.
Handicap Index:	Through the World Handicap System, each golfer establishes a “Handicap Index” which is the measure of a player’s demonstrated ability on a course of standard playing difficulty. This is the number given to you based on your ability on a course of average difficulty. It is a number with a decimal point. A player should use 40.4 as a handicap index until they have an official index after posting five 18-hole scores from rated courses into the computer.
Net Score:	This is your score once your course handicap has been subtracted from your gross score.
Par:	This is the score that would be expected of a scratch (0.0 handicap index) player on any given hole.
Regulation:	On a par 3 hole: 1 shot onto the green and 2 putts On a par 4 hole: 2 shots onto the green and 2 putts On a par 5 hole: 3 shots onto the green and 2 putts
Slope Rating:	The evaluation of the relative difficulty of a course for players who are not scratch golfers compared to the difficulty of the course for scratch golfers. The lowest Slope Rating is 55 and the highest 155. A course of standard playing difficulty will have a Slope Rating of 113.

Entering Scores for Handicapping Purposes

Why enter your scores? By entering your scores you will establish a handicap. A handicap is required to play in golf tournaments. It is used to enable golfers of differing abilities to compete equitably. Golfers are grouped with other ‘like’ handicappers for a fair competition. In addition, your handicap will help you to monitor your progress in the game of golf.

MWLGC requires members to establish a handicap and maintain a handicap in order to compete in special events and tournaments.

Early in the season, (usually by mid-May) new members will be entered into the Golf Canada Network and can begin entering their scores. New members will receive notification from the Membership Coordinator indicating when they can start entering scores.

Scores from rounds of golf played on any course that is rated should be entered into the Golf Canada scoring system.

If you wish to print your Golf Canada membership card, from the Menu, click Membership Kit then click Print on the right hand side of the screen.

How to Enter Your Score

The computer at the clubhouse will always be on the Login Screen. If you are using your home computer, go to Golf Canada at <https://www.golfcanada.ca/>. Click Login or Post a Score at the top right.

Enter your USERNAME (L # assigned to you by the Membership Coordinator) and PASSWORD (default is 123456 unless you have changed it).

This will bring you to your personal home page.

To enter your **TOTAL SCORE**, click the **POST TOTAL** button in the box on the left side of the screen (below your Handicap Index), and follow these steps:

1. Enter the correct date
2. Use the drop-down list to pick the Course (To add courses to your list see "Creating a Course List")
3. Use the drop-down list to pick how many holes were played
4. Click on the tournament box if appropriate (**Note:** Match Play and PIN Days are considered Tournament Play)
5. Use the drop-down list to select the appropriate tee-box
6. Enter your **TOTAL ADJUSTED SCORE** (using the Net Double Bogey Adjustment), this replaces the ESC (Equitable Stroke Control)
7. If this is an attested score, click yes
8. Click on **POST SCORE**

How to Enter a Hole by Hole Score

Some courses will allow you to enter your hole-by-hole score. To enter hole-by-hole scores, click on the **ENTER HOLE BY HOLE SCORE** button in the box on the right side of the screen (buttons are located above your Handicap Factor) and follow these steps

1. Enter the correct date
2. Mill Woods Golf Club (default), to enter a different course start typing the course you golfed at and select the correct course from the drop down menu.
3. Use the drop-down list to pick how many holes were played
4. Click on the tournament box if appropriate
5. Use the drop-down list to select the appropriate tee-box
6. Click on any of the boxes that you would like to keep statistics on, such as Track Stats
7. A scorecard will pop up. Fill in the appropriate information in the Scorecard
8. Click **POST SCORE**

Handicaps and Acceptable Scores

Rules of Golf

Golf scores must follow the RCGA Rules of Golf. Members are urged to learn the Rules of Golf and how to apply them to specific areas or questions that may arise during a round of golf. Study and carry a rulebook, attend rules clinics, and ask questions. Alberta Golf Association has good information as well (<https://albertagolf.org>).

Corralling the Sandbagger!

Be completely honest by putting all your scores - good and bad - into the computer. This will make it fair for both you and others. Putting in high scores only will give you an artificially high index; this may give you the reputation of a "sandbagger" with an unfair advantage, or disqualify you from a tournament.

Temporary Greens for Handicap Purposes

If there are fewer than six temporary greens, post your score to the handicap computer. If there are six or more, do not enter a score.

New Golfers

- Every Golf Canada member is entitled to a Golf Canada Handicap Index and is required to maintain an up-to-date and accurate index at all times. Each member is responsible for adjusting the gross score of all acceptable rounds of golf using the Equitable Stroke Control table and posting the scores.
- A new golfer must post a minimal number of scores needed to obtain a new handicap. The number of scores needed to establish a Handicap Index is 54 holes from any combination of 18-hole and 9-hole rounds. For competition purposes, a handicap of 54.0 shall be the highest handicap.

Net Disqualification Not Affecting Score

- If a competitor in stroke play is disqualified for playing with a higher handicap than that which she is entitled to under the conditions of competition, her adjusted gross score shall be recorded for handicap purposes.

Unacceptable Scores for Handicapping Purposes

- **Incomplete round.** If fewer than 13 holes are played in an 18-hole round or fewer than 7 holes are played in a 9-hole round, do not post a score to the handicap system.
- **Partial round.** Enter a round of less than 18 holes but at least 14 holes by adding to the number of strokes played, the total par for the unplayed holes plus any handicap strokes to which you are entitled on the unplayed holes. A 9 hole score can be posted when 7-13 holes are played, using the same principle to find your score on the unplayed holes.
- **Limited club usage.** If competition limits the type or maximum number of clubs to less than 14 (i.e. 3 club tournament), do not post a score for handicap purposes.
- **Short course.** When the length of the course is less than 3000 yards for 18 holes, do not post a score for handicap purposes.
- **Inactive season.** When you play a round in an inactive season area, do not post a score for handicap purposes. **The Active Season in Alberta is March 1 to October 31.**
- **Rules of golf not followed.** When the majority of the holes are not played in accordance with the Rules of Golf, do not post a score for handicap purposes.
- **Scores made while playing alone.** To support the key System premise of peer review, scores made while playing alone will no longer be acceptable for handicap purposes. This change underscores the importance of providing full and accurate information regarding a player's potential scoring ability, and the ability of other players to form a reasonable basis for supporting or disputing a posted score.

Match and Stroke Play Rounds

- Post your score for handicap purposes. Indicate that the round was a “tournament” (a checkbox on the computer system).

Golf Etiquette

The Spirit of the Game

Golf is played, for the most part, without the supervision of a referee or umpire. The game relies on the individual to show consideration for other players and to play by the Rules. All players should show courtesy and sportsmanship at all times, no matter how competitive they may be. This is the spirit of the game of golf.

1. If you’re playing with people you don’t know, introduce yourself on the first tee.
2. After finishing play and leaving the last green, thank them for their company and shake their hand.

Safety

1. Make sure no one is near you when you swing your club.
2. Make sure no one is in front of you and make sure the group in front is clearly out of range before you make a shot.
3. Always shout “Fore” when your ball is in danger of hitting someone.
4. Do not stand directly behind the player, the ball or the hole when a player is making a stroke.

Consideration of Others

1. Make sure you follow the dress code of the golf course.
2. Do not use cellular phones on the course. Some clubs may allow cellular phones in the clubhouse. Be aware of the club policy.
3. Stand still and don’t talk when another player is playing.
4. Do not stand directly behind the ball or on the opposite side of the hole when a player is making a stroke.

Putting Green

1. Do not stand on another player’s line of putt.
2. Stay on or around the putting green until everyone in your group has holed out.
3. Mark your scorecard on the next tee, not on the putting green.
4. The decision to have the flagstick in the hole must be made before your stroke, by either leaving the flagstick in the hole or having a removed flagstick put back. Replace the flagstick carefully when your group has finished playing the hole. Rule 13.2.
5. Do not stand directly behind the player, the ball or the hole when a player is making a stroke.

Pace of Play (POP)

Our club places an emphasis on ‘Pace of Play’. This awareness has had a positive impact on our relationship with the Pro Shop!

Here are some of the behaviors you can adopt to help keep the pace.

1. Be ready to play when it is your turn. Many times on the golf course, you'll hear someone say "Let's just play Ready Golf". This is often interpreted that the first person to arrive at the tee box should tee off first. This is simply not true! Ready golf means that the player with the **honor** should be **READY TO HIT FIRST**. This philosophy continues from tee to green.
2. Save your conversations for when you're walking or when waiting on a tee box.
3. Develop a pre-shot routine with only one practice stroke.
4. If you're on the opposite side of the fairway to a player who is 5-10 yards further from the hole, go right up to your ball and be ready to play.
5. Think about your next shot while approaching your ball.
6. Without interfering with your fellow competitors, line up your putt while another player is lining up hers. Don't replay missed putts.
7. If your group falls behind, send the first 2 players to hole out on to the next tee box.
8. If you are a brand new golfer (not in a tournament) and are really struggling on a hole, pick up your ball and drop it on or near the green. This way, you still get to practice chipping and putting.
9. If you're riding in a cart with someone, don't stay glued to the seat. If your ball is 20-30 yards away, grab a couple of clubs and walk to your ball while your playing partner is hitting her shot.
10. It is not necessary to put your club in your bag immediately after your shot. Drive (or walk) to the next ball and then put your club away.
11. Your mission is to keep up to the group in front. The group behind is not your concern.
12. If your group loses position because of looking for a lost ball, it is the responsibility of the entire group to pick up the pace and close the gap.
13. Mark your score on the next tee box. It can even wait until you've hit your tee shot.
14. You don't have to mark your ball on the green when someone is chipping on unless you are asked to do so.
15. Place your bag or park your cart between the green and next tee.

Everyone forgets at times to follow the above suggestions. When you are raising awareness in your group – be nice. For example, say `we' are falling behind and `we' need to speed up and here's how `we' might do it.

Please refer to The Ready Golf section in this manual for more information on how you can keep up with the group in front of you.

Care of the Course

1. Always wear golf, tennis shoes or sneakers.
2. Replace your divots.
3. Rake bunkers after you play from them. Leave them in the condition you would like to play from.
4. Fix your ball marks on the putting green and fix any others you see.
5. Keep your golf bag off the putting green. Remove and replace the flagstick carefully to avoid damaging the hole.
6. Keep pull carts and power carts away from greens and tees.

Rules of Golf

2019 was a year of significant change when it comes to the Rules of Golf. The **R&A** and the **USGA** have been collaborating since 2012 on the Rules Modernization Initiative. The final changes to the Rules of Golf for 2019 went into effect on January 1, 2019. These changes bring the Rules up to date to fit the needs of the game today globally.

The background to the initiative and the major changes are provided on the golfcanada.ca website, along with extensive resource materials. Resources include: the Player's Edition of the Rules of Golf, the 2019 Rules of Golf, videos explaining the changes, and a Rules Education opportunity.

In addition to the information available on the Golf Canada website, the Mill Woods Ladies Golf Club offers each spring a Rules and Handicap Clinic that is held in April before club play begins. Our Rules and Handicap Committee offer this clinic, and are also available throughout the season to answer any of your rules and handicapping questions.

The Rules of Ready Golf

(Article courtesy of Eagle Glen Players Club)

We all know what Ready Golf is, don't we?

It means playing our shots when we're ready. Right? WRONG?

Ready Golf means THINKING AHEAD so that you're READY TO PLAY when it is YOUR TURN.

Ready Golf applies EVERYWHERE on the golf course -- on the tees, on the fairways and on the greens.

On The Tee

Ready Golf, we often hear, means that the person who is ready at the tee should hit first. That is simply not true. Ready Golf means that the player with the honors should be READY to HIT FIRST. If the player with the honors isn't ready, only then should someone else hit first.

On The Fairway

Golfers are typically at their worst AFTER they have hit their tee shots. How often do you see players watch other players hit first, and start thinking about their shot only when it's their turn? How often do you see drivers of carts wait for their partners to hit before driving to their own balls? How many times do you see four golfers walk to the player's ball that is farthest from the hole and wait for that player to hit, then move down the fairway to the other balls as if they were a caravan?

Ready Golf means that ALL golfers should go to their balls as soon as possible and get READY to play their shots. While waiting to hit, PLAYERS should SURVEY their shot, SELECT their clubs, TAKE them from their bags, and STAND at their balls READY to step up and make the shot when it is their turn. That's Ready Golf!

Ready Golf particularly means that the DRIVERS of carts should DROP OFF their partners, let them CHOOSE their clubs (take extra ones if required), DRIVE to their own balls, and then get READY to play. DRIVERS should NOT wait for their partners to hit the shot, and then drive to their own balls to make their shots.

All players should GO TO THEIR BALLS as soon as possible. The only time players should wait for other players is if the first player's ball is in front of the other players' in such a way that the other players could be hit by the first player's shot. In particular, a CARAVAN of players should NEVER CONVERGE unless their balls are all in the same location. The only time players should stop in a group and wait for a player to hit is if the line of flight of that player's shot prevents the other players from going to their own balls.

Hint: Walk down the sides of the fairway to reach your ball, determine your club selection while waiting, and then move towards the center to your ball. You can usually get close to your ball and get ready to play the shot, while players behind you can still make their shots.

Helping To Find Lost Balls

It is important that everyone try to help out to find a lost ball in order to keep play moving. But players should do it AFTER hitting their shots, not BEFORE. How often do you see four or five players searching for a lost ball, while NONE of them are getting ready to hit?

Use common sense. The player who is closest to the pin and scheduled to hit last should be the first to help the player whose ball is lost, while the players who are farthest away from the pin should PLAY THEIR SHOTS FIRST. When the players farthest away have played their shots, they should resume looking for the lost ball, while the players who are closest should get ready to PLAY THEIR SHOTS. In this way, slow play is not compounded because of a lost ball.

Entering and Exiting Greens

How many times do you see players leave their clubs in front of a Green? When the players finish, they then walk to the front to get their clubs. ALWAYS, and we mean ALWAYS, leave clubs at the back or side of the Green closest to the next tee. If a shot is played in front of the Green first, the player should move his or her clubs to the back or side of the Green before playing the next shot. NOTHING is MORE ANNOYING than watching players walk to the FRONT of a Green to retrieve their clubs AFTER everyone has puttied out. AND don't stand around chatting and writing down scores either. After the group has puttied, go to the next tee, so the group behind can play their shots.

Speeding Play on the Greens

Emulating the pros around the putting green has done more to slow down golf than any other single event. How often do you see players waiting until it is their turn to play, and then walking around the putt as though they were putting to win a green jacket at the Master's?

Playing Ready Golf around the Greens means getting READY to putt BEFORE it is your turn! Players should line up their putts WHILE other players are putting, so they're ready to putt when it's their turn.

Ready Golf also means putting CONTINUOUSLY if the ball is not in someone else's line, and if the player does not have to spend a lot of time surveying the putt. If you miss a putt by one or two feet, for example, and have an open stance to make the next putt, you should MAKE the putt INSTEAD of MARKING the ball and waiting for another turn -- unless it is a tricky putt and you want extra time to survey it. In that case, mark the ball and survey the putt while someone else putts. When it is your turn, walk up to the ball, take your stance and make your putt.

While there are no time rules associated with putting, a rule of thumb is to get off your putt within 20 seconds from when it is your turn. This means you should be able to approach the ball, take your stance and make your putt within 20 seconds. Obviously, you can only do this if

you SURVEY the putt WHILE other players are putting. When you putt, you should always take your time, so you make a smooth, unhurried stroke. Ready Golf DOES NOT mean RUSHING.

If you prepare in advance to putt, you can take your time AND play Ready Golf.

Farthest From the Hole

There is no reason Ready Golfers can't play in the order of who is farthest from the hole. In Ready Golf, the person farthest from the hole should be READY to play first. There are, however, a few common sense exceptions.

In a foursome in which one or two players are walking and one or two are using carts, the players with the carts should hit FIRST if they reach their ball first and are Ready to play.

When someone hits a shot, but is still farthest from the hole, players should hit BEFORE that player if they are Ready. Here are two examples. If a player hits a tree or some obstruction with a second shot and is still farthest from the hole, the players closer to the hole should hit first to speed up play.

If someone is off the Green in a sand trap and hits it furthest from the hole, the other players should not wait for that player to walk around the green to play the next shot. Play should continue until that player is READY to make the next shot. In fact, NOTHING is more DISCONCERTING than watching three players on the green WAITING while the fourth player cleans up the sand, walks to the ball, surveys the putt and then plays.

Summary

Ready Golf means BEING READY to play, not playing when you're ready. Here are some simple rules.

1. Walk to your ball as soon as possible, so that you can choose your club and think about the shot in ADVANCE, not when it is your turn.
2. When driving a cart, drop off your partner first, let your partner choose his or her club, and then drive to your own ball to get READY to play.
3. When a ball is lost, hit your shot FIRST and then help look for the lost ball.
4. Walk down the SIDES of the fairway to reach your ball and then APPROACH it from the center. NEVER play in a caravan, moving in a group from ball to ball.
5. When on the Green, line up your putt BEFORE it is your turn, and putt out immediately instead of marking, if you are not in someone else's line.