



Golf

Golf is a club and ball [sport](#) in which players use various [clubs](#) to hit [balls](#) into a series of holes on a [course](#) in as few strokes as possible. Golf is one of the few [ball games](#) that do not require a standardized playing area. The game is played on a course with an arranged progression of either nine or 18 holes. Each hole on the course must contain a [tee box](#) to start from, and a [putting green](#) containing the actual hole. There are other standard forms of terrain in between, such as the fairway, rough, and hazards, but each hole on a course is unique in its specific layout and arrangement.

Golf is played for the lowest number of strokes by an individual, known as [stroke play](#), or the lowest score on the most individual holes in a complete round by an individual or team, known as [match play](#). Stroke play is the most commonly seen format at all levels.

Rules and regulations

The rules of golf are internationally standardized and are jointly governed by The R&A, spun off in 2004 from [The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews](#) (founded 1754), and the [United States Golf Association](#) (USGA).^{[21][22]}

The underlying principle of the rules is fairness. As stated on the back cover of the official rule book:

Play the ball as it lies, play the course as you find it, and if you cannot do either, do what is fair.

There are strict regulations regarding the amateur status of golfers.^[23] Essentially, anybody who has ever received payment or compensation for giving instruction, or played golf for money, is not considered an amateur and may not participate in competitions limited solely to amateurs. However, amateur golfers may receive expenses that comply with strict guidelines and they may accept non-cash prizes within the limits established by the Rules of Amateur Status.

In addition to the officially printed rules, golfers also abide by a set of guidelines called [golf etiquette](#). Etiquette guidelines cover matters such as safety, fairness, pace of play, and a player's obligation to contribute to the care of the course. Though there are no penalties for breach of etiquette rules, players generally follow the rules of golf etiquette in an effort to improve everyone's playing experience.

Penalties

Penalties are incurred in certain situations. They are counted towards a player's score as if there were extra swing(s) at the ball. Strokes are added for rule infractions or for hitting one's ball into an unplayable situation.

A lost ball or a ball hit out of bounds result in a penalty of one stroke and distance (Rule 27-1). A one-stroke penalty is assessed if a player's equipment causes the ball to move or the removal of a loose impediment causes the ball to move (Rule 18-2). If a golfer makes a stroke at the wrong ball (Rule 19-2) or hits a fellow golfer's ball with a putt (Rule 19-5), the player incurs a two-stroke penalty. Most rule infractions lead to stroke penalties but also can lead to disqualification. Disqualification could be from cheating, signing for a lower score, or from rule infractions that lead to improper play.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golf>