

A Guide To Golf

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. It can largely be attributed to players like Tiger Woods – charismatic players who captured the attention of everyone, including those who have never picked up a golf club. Added to this is Hollywood's take with movies that have portrayed golfers as the heroes they are.

While the following has changed significantly, so has the industry. 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 its students, you'll see that it's most likely a trend that will continue for the foreseeable future.

The History of Golf

Arguably golf's interesting origin began five centuries in the past. 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 who became somewhat addicted to the sport. However the persons responsible for the invention of golf is open to debate. And debate will ensue if you breach the subject with the right persons.

It has been suggested that bored shepherders became quite exceptional at knocking round shaped stones into rabbit holes with their wooden shepherds staffs. Making a competitive game of the boredom seemed inevitable. After all women's lib was not yet even considered so that means the shepherds were men. Lets face another fact of history, men tend to be more of a competitive nature. Various 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 of 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 Honourable 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 any part of Great Britain 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 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 the 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 golf remains a popular pastime in all parts of the world.

A Good Golf Bag is a Beautiful Thing

Few things are more important to a golfer than a good golf bag. First off, golf bags come in many styles and a wide variety of colors. You can choose a bag for style, features or pick a color to match your mood.

Some have legs that fold out when they are placed on the ground and stand upright so the golfer doesn't have to bend down and pick it up. That's a nice feature in golf bags, especially if the golfer tends to walk the course, as many do. There is plenty of bending to be done when a golfer is trying to remove an obstacle from around his or her ball, or to get the ball out of the cup, so any way to avoid bending over is more than appreciated.

All golf bags have compartments where the golf clubs are to be placed. Each golfer has his or her own way of doing this and putting clubs where he or she wants them. Some golfers, though, are lazy and just stick their clubs in the compartments, grabbing whichever one they want when a particular club is needed. But, some golf bags have tubes to protect the club grips. These are nice to have. With the tubes, a golfer can get his or her clubs out easier. The clubs are never tangled up, and the grips last a lot longer.

Another important factor in choosing a golf bag is the number of pockets it has. Frankly, there's no such thing as too many pockets in a golf bag. First, one of the pockets will be used to hold the golf bag's hood. The hood is used to keep the clubs and bag from getting drenched when it rains. Another pocket will be used to keep extra towels (believe it or not, extra towels are important in the summer to keep the sweat off the brow and out of the eyes, along with keeping the hands relatively dry. Then, there is the pocket used for keeping the extra golf tees and possibly the divot tool. Finally, a pocket is needed for the golf balls themselves, and it doesn't hurt to have a pocket to carry another dozen balls in, just in case.

Some courses are so difficult it is easy to lose a lot of balls during 18-holes of play. This makes having an extra box of balls around a good thing, but there has to be somewhere in the golf bag to keep them, which means another pocket.

Imagine trying to play golf without a bag. The golfer would be constantly stooping over picking up clubs, tees, balls, towels and the divot tool. Then he or she would have to walk to the ball, drop all of the clubs and stuff, select a club, hit the ball, and start the process all over again. It would be a major pain in the neck, and would make it nearly impossible to finish playing a round of golf. So, golf bags are an essential part of the game of golf.

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.

Are Golf Shoes Really Necessary?

While some kind of footwear is required on most golf courses, are golf shoes really necessary? This is a question to be answered by each individual golfer as it is his or her feet we are talking about.

Some courses require soft spikes only so the course doesn't get chewed up with the walking around people have to do when playing, especially if the people are walking the entire course. And, most club houses will only allow soft spikes to be worn inside, to protect the carpet.

Let us be honest with one another, the vast majority of golf shoes are not attractive footwear. But, golf shoes are far from being the ugliest footwear in sports. That honor, dubious though it may be, belongs entirely to bowling shoes. Who, in their right mind, would want to wear red and green shoes, especially that type of shoes? At least golf shoes are designed in a more practical, and somewhat more attractive, manner. But, are they really needed in order for a person to play golf?

No, they are not. The footwear a golfer chooses to wear can be practically anything from moccasins to a good athletic shoe. A golfer's footwork is more important than his or her choice in footwear.

But, the shoe a golfer wears should be comfortable on his or her feet. There is nothing worse for a golfer than an uncomfortable shoe. If the toes are pinched, or the back rides up on the heel, the golfer will be miserable and will not be able to concentrate on playing golf, which is why he or she is on the golf course in the first place.

So, comfort comes first. After comfort, traction is important. This is because the golfer can't have their feet turning after they have struck the ball. If this happens, the ball will careen wildly, most likely winding up as a major league slice or hook. The ball, though, will not go where the golfer had planned to hit it.

Should a golfer choose to forego golf shoes for another type of footwear, he or she should think about the type of shoe he or she wants to wear on the links. They should then examine the tread pattern on the bottom of the shoe. If the bottom of the shoe is slick, with no pattern at all, it would be a good idea to leave these shoes behind as there will be little, if any traction, and none at all if the course is wet, either from rain or dew.

What is the best type of tread pattern? Again, this will be up to the individual golfer and his or her preferences. For some, the old tire tread pattern (used on the sole of a lot of boots and sandals) works well. This type of shoe sole will provide traction for the golfer. Some may prefer a circular pattern of sole, while others may like something entirely different.

The most important thing, though, is for the golfer to be comfortable and confident with the shoes being worn when playing. In fact, the less a golfer thinks about shoes when playing is a good thing.

Cleaning Your Golf Clubs

You and your golf clubs have been through a lot together: the four person benefit scramble, the company tournament and weekends of enjoyment. They become an integral part of your life so it makes sense to take good care of them. Golf club maintenance is easy and adds years of life to your set by simply keeping them clean.

All you will need is a bucket, some mild dish liquid (not the kind used for automatic dishwashers), an old toothbrush, and some soft towels. It helps to do the cleaning outside so you can rinse them with a water hose, but you may choose to clean them in a bathroom or utility room if the clubs are not too dirty.

First, pour a few drops of dish liquid in the bucket. Add warm water and briskly swish your hand back and forth in the bucket to create warm, sudsy water. Don't fill the bucket too full. You want the water to cover the heads of your golf clubs, but not much else.

Put your irons into the bucket of warm, sudsy water. Use a cloth to "bathe" them. It is that simple! Once you have given the clubs a simple wash down, get the toothbrush and scrub the heads to remove dirt from the grooves. Depending on how dirty your clubs are, this might take a little effort and some elbow grease.

Once you have washed your golf clubs and cleaned their grooves, you will need to rinse them. A sprayer works great so if you are outside, simply hose off the soap and dirt with the outdoor water hose. Indoors, use the shower. You can simply run them under a faucet inside, too. No matter how you choose to rinse the clubs, make sure you dry them well.

Use another clean cloth and dry the club. Make sure it dries completely to avoid spots and damage.

Clean the handles and any wood work on the golf clubs with a dampened cloth. It is safest not to ever submerge golf club wood work into water. The water might damage the coloring, protective coat or the wood itself.

While your clubs are out, clean out your bag. A quick wipe down of the bag's interior with a damp cloth is generally all the inside needs. Follow up with a wipe down using a dry cloth. Spot clean the outside of your bag after each golf outing as needed. Once the clubs have been individually washed and dried, return them to the clean bag.

If you think it is silly to wash and dry your golf clubs, look around next time you are at the course. Make note of how many other golfers are playing with clean clubs. They take care of them because the clubs are an instrumental tool of the sport, just like cleaning a gun after a hunting session or target practice.

When you take good care of your golf clubs after each outing, you'll be ready to hit the greens for your next tee time!

Customized and Personalized Golf

You can have any number of personally detailed golf accessories. Customized golf equipment, accessories or paraphernalia is a wonderful gift ideal for the golfer in your life. It is also a wonderful purchase for your own golf needs. Golf clubs alone have some original accessories that are easily found and made more special with personal touches.

The idea of personalizing golf equipment can begin with the gold bag that carries the precious cargo of your clubs. Monograms stitched into the leather or canvas is an unobtrusive way to show ownership and also to personalize. Using monogrammed golf towels or using golf balls with your name on them is a great way to personalize the golf

scene without being tacky or presumptuous. And you never know when a large bag of discount personalized golf tees could really come in handy.

Golf clubs with the owners name engraved in them is the beginning of a long list of wonderful personalized and customized golf equipment. Needing golf clubs that vary from the ordinary in height, length or strength is what customizing is all about. You will discover there is a whole retail world out there that thrives on customization. Golf clubs are indeed just the beginning.

Golf apparel is no exception to the personal side of golf. Comfortable and affordable clothes, shoes, hats and umbrellas are just a few of the enormous choices available for personalized golf. With discount and wholesale golf apparel shops offering every affordable style is made available to the golfing public there is no reason not to be original in your appearance on the golf course.

So many great gift ideas come to mind when you think about customizing and personalizing golf equipment. Head covers can boast the family crest or they can even be a knitted gift from your teenage daughters for your birthday. Either way they are equally cherished for their unique sentimental value.

Customizing your vacation to include a home rented in advance in Augusta, Georgia for a personal view of the Masters can be an amazing way to show your loyalty to the sport of golf. Being up close and personal to such an event is something planned well in advance and could be in some cases a once in a lifetime occurrence. Customized and personalized can go hand in hand and need not be so expensive. Creating your own tournament for a good cause is always a fun project for the entire family or helpful organization.

Customizing your golf accessories can range from the practical to the outrageous. Installing seat warmers or air conditioners in your golf car might seem a little extravagant to some people. If you are serious about your golf these accessories and customizations are deemed a necessity. A seat warmer or range finder may seem trivial in comparison to some extravagant examples. Golf cars that look like the SUV in your driveway may seem a little excessive. If you have the money to indulge in such luxuries than so be it. Who said a Rolls Royce golf car was over the top?

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 or she 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 of a shot 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 the 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.

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.

Gifts For The Female Golfer

Ladies golf is fast becoming the thing women do in their spare time. It is no wonder why it is such a popular sport. Whether you have a lady golfer in your life or you are one, there are many unique and customized lady golfer accessories from which to choose.

When it comes to clubs. Balls and tees the female flair for pretty things is not lost. Flower shaped golf tees may actually seem a little over the top to some but others may find that to be just what they had in mind. A feminine grip for golf clubs would in some cases be much smaller than the males so this is another area where the lady style would accommodate and flatter the female golfer. Perhaps golf balls that were pink might seem just the thing for a lady golfer, however using any color or type golf ball is also an option.

Apparel is probably the one place where most women golfers might stand out and not share a commonality with their male counterparts. When looking for a great gift for the lady golfer in your life look no further than the latest in golf apparel. You will find a number of shades and brand names with loose fitting comfortable front stretch or front pleated shorts available. There will also be many comfortable blouse styles certain to fit the taste of every lady golfer. Front stretch skorts are also a big hit. And don't forget that cropped pants or a stretch slack in the cooler weather is ideal golf apparel.

From thermal outerwear to open and breezy styles you will find just your style available for every type of weather. Certain name brands are exclusive to the lady golfer and worn proudly. Good solid golf shoes are also vastly important accessories to any golf game. Replacement spikes and spike cleaners are found in any pro shop and for any type of cleat or spike. You may wish to purchase a wrench kit to make spike replacement more simple and fast. And suede shoe bags are a fashion statement as well as a distinct means of keeping the golf course out of the trunk of your car.

Adding the feminine colors is not the only way to make golf accessories for women stand in a unique light. There is also a style unique to the lady golf accessories. Women's golf gloves, hats, and visors are also a great gift idea. Sunglasses that block UV rays and prevent unnecessary glare are a wonderful gift idea. Golf towels and head covers can be personalized in any number of ways. Golf bags and luggage accessories for women can also be personalized.

Golf jewelry can be found. Rhinestone letter charms and any number of golf related charms are always a great gift for the lady golfer. Gift certificates can be purchased in any increment and make excellent gifts for the golfer who has everything. Gifts can be purchased at any number of online or real time accessory shops in 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.

Golf Accessories – What’s Hot, What’s Not

As with any sport golf has diverse and useful personal accessories. Whether you are searching for a gift to give your favorite golfer or you are in need of an accessory to make your own golfing experience more effective and pleasant there are many accessories from which to choose. Every price range is available and millions of products can be found in several diverse venues.

Every aspect of the game of golf has it’s own unique set of accessories from which to choose. Just your golf clubs alone can require various accessories. There are cleaning kits for golf clubs. Golf clubs can be fitted with head covers to protect your investment in quality clubs. Head covers can vary greatly from funny animal shapes to serious covers monogrammed with a family crest. Golf club grips can also be diverse. There are your everyday universal grips and you can also find some very expensive custom fit grips for any golf clubs.

Golf tees and balls are accessories that leave nothing to the imagination. Think again, there are so many choices in tees and balls it is mind-boggling. There are inexpensive bags of discount generic golf tees available. And you can also find personalized golf tees in ever color imaginable. There are rubber tees and brush tees. Brush tees claim to give you increased accuracy and are also touted to last longer than normal wooden ones. Golf balls can be found in various colors and with any number of claims to their accuracy. There will always be times when golf accessories will be chosen strictly because of a personal preference as opposed to what the manufacturer claims it might do.

When considering accessories for the golfer in your life or for your own purchase you can choose from a wide variety of sunglasses, caps or visors. Depending on where you live or what climate in which you play golf you may need more than one of these particular accessories. Wrap around sunglasses as well as the UV protectant lenses can cut glare in many cases up to one hundred percent. With a clear view your golfing accuracy will be much improved. Umbrellas will also come in handy in sunshine or in rain.

What would any golfer do with out his favorite (and sometimes lucky) golf towel hanging on his bag? There are any number of logos and brand name golf towels sold. Golf towels serve not only a utilitarian purpose but they are also a way to personalize your game. Ball cleaners can be found in accessory shops along with a wide variety of maintenance products for every level of golfer out there.

Ball retrievers are yet another accessory that proves to remain a useful accessory for any golfer. Here again you will find generic ball retrievers that work efficiently and are affordable or you can give a personalized ball retriever in any style to the golfer on your Holiday gift list.

Golf Balls – The First Piece of Basic Equipment

No matter how good a golfer may be, he or she will not be any good at all without golf balls. Granted, it is a no-brainer that golfers need to have golf balls in order to play. But, the question is, which golf balls are the best.

This is a sticky situation and depends almost entirely the individual golfer and his or her tastes, what he or she expects out of the ball, and, quite frankly, how much money he or she wants to spend.

There are golfers out there who will play with nothing but one brand of ball. No matter what else happens, they will only and always use this particular brand. What these balls cost is irrelevant to them. It is this ball or no golf. Yes, this going to the extremes, but, let's face it, there are people in this world who prefer living life at the extreme edge of sanity.

Now, let's get down to some common sense when it comes to the golf ball. We shall start with the beginning golfer. The beginner needs to forget what he or she may have heard about any brand or type of golf ball, what it does and how far it goes. Beginning golfers are going to lose a lot of golf balls. They need to think more about price than quality. The beginning golfer needs to purchase "been around" balls, which are balls sold in bulk (around 50 to a bag), that have been found on golf courses and recycled, for lack of a better word.

OK, these used golf balls are more often than not name brand balls, but this does not matter. The beginning golfer, in learning how to hit the ball straight, keep it in the fairway, out of the woods and water, will go through dozens, if not hundreds of golf balls. Therefore, the logical thing for the beginning golfer to do is buy in bulk.

As the golfer gets better, the best idea would be to move up to a better grade of ball. This, though, does not mean to rush out to the nearest golfing supply house and buy the most expensive ball on the shelves. Again, think about the price of the ball and the level of your skill.

If a player has a tendency to slice the ball, or tends to top the ball (this is where the club head hits the top of the ball. While it gives the ball a lot of top spin, the ball does not travel far, and tends to be gashed by the club), stick with cheap balls. This does not mean stay with the bulk recycled balls, but inexpensive new ones.

In theory, players get better the more they play. As the skill level increases, the golfer can experiment with different brands of golf balls, checking to see which ones he or she may like the best. And, a lot of thought should be given to the type of course the golfer will be using these balls on.

Golf Clubs – The Perfect Fit

If you think any old golf clubs will do, you haven't been on the course trying to compensate for a club that's simply too long or too short. Besides making a shambles of your golf game, ill-fitting clubs can leave your body aching after the game. If you're spending all your time compensating, you probably aren't shooting your best or even enjoying the time on the course.

So does that mean that you're going to spend hundreds of extra dollars on a set of clubs with a custom fit? While custom clubs are one answer, most people can find what they need from a well-stocked golf store. But there are some things to keep in mind.

Length of the club is important, but it's not everything. The pros say that the size of your golf club's grip should be comfortable for your hands. That's why clubs for younger players and women often have a smaller grip.

If you should decide to go for a set of custom clubs, what is the process? It's nothing like being measured for a suit. The point is not only to make the club reach from the point of your outstretched hand to the ground, but also to make the most of your body – your strengths and your weaknesses. So don't go for your custom golf club fitting session expecting to spread your arms and stand still while someone uses a tape measure.

A good custom fit will probably take place both inside and outside. The best custom fit clubs will be tailored so that your swing is taken into account. Sound expensive? Possibly.

While some major golf club manufacturers will charge (dearly) for the actual "fitting," many offer up this service for free, with your commitment to buy clubs from that company. While custom clubs are more expensive than clubs purchased "off the shelf" from your local golf supplier or even from an outlet store or individual, the results will probably show themselves right away on the golf course.

Consider the shots that you may have been compensating for all your years of playing golf. If you're taller or shorter than the "typical" golfer, or even if you have some muscle strengths or weaknesses that make your game a bit more of a challenge, custom clubs can help you compensate.

But what if you want the clubs immediately? Do you have to go with "off the shelf" clubs? Actually, many manufacturers who provide custom golf clubs promise delivery within just a few days, a week or two at most.

Among the few negatives of custom golf clubs is the potential for offering them up as a surprise gift and the potential for resale. But at the same time, the golfer who is going to receive the custom clubs will likely gladly give up the "surprise" and most who go to this expense and trouble aren't going to offer the clubs for sale.

Only you can decide whether custom golf clubs are a good investment for you. If you're going to spend a bundle of money for an awesome set of clubs, you may very well take the extra step to get custom clubs.

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.

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