

Ready Golf Guide

Introduction

Ready golf is kind of like the etiquette of playing golf. It is a general practice that most golfers follow so that they are not playing slowly. Ready golf includes thinking ahead so you are ready to play when it is your turn. So here are some of the principles that many golfers use so that they keep play moving.

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 player 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.

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Example 1 - Ready Fairway and Green Side Golf: Figure 1 illustrates a situation where player A and B are on opposite sides of the hole, and player A is closer to the hole than player B. If the group in front of you is still on the green, there is no reason player A can't play before player B if player A knows he can't reach the green. Even if there is not a group on the green there is no reason player A shouldn't play before player B if he's ready before player B. There's also no reason player A and player B can't play simultaneously if they can't see or hear one another. This guideline also applies for shorter shots around the green.

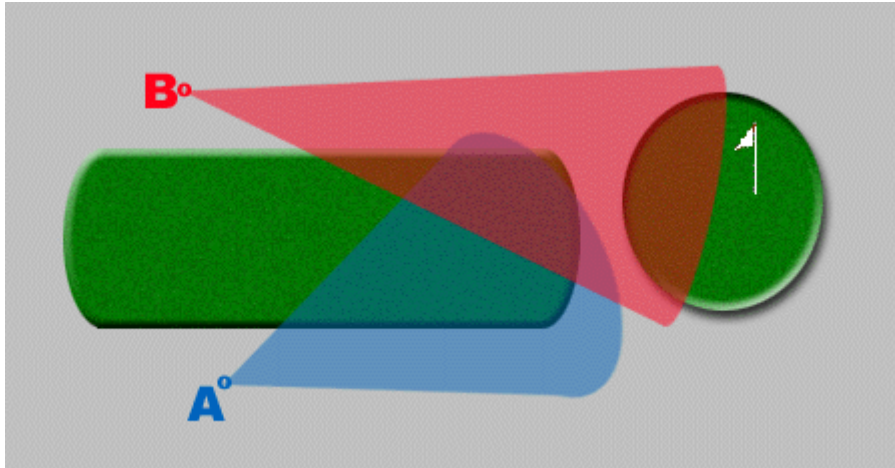


Figure 1

Furthermore, even if you don't play the shots simultaneously, whichever player plays second should time his pre-shot routine (including gauging the wind, selecting a club, and any practice swings) such that he's ready to swing as soon as possible. There's really no need to watch your fellow competitor's ball come to rest.

Example 2: - Ready Standing Golf: Figure 2 illustrates a situation where players C and D are much further away from the green than players A and B. If the group in front is still on the putting green, players A and B shouldn't wait for them to putt out and then wait for players C and D to play before they walk to their ball. Players A and B should proceed to their ball, and walk in a route that is out of the playing lines of C and D in case the green clears while they are walking. If the green is still occupied when players A and B get to their balls, they should spend this extra time assessing their shots. Once the green clears, A and B should take cover or at least turn around and watch C and D play their shots so they can avoid any wayward shots. Once C and D play, A and B should already be set to play their shots.

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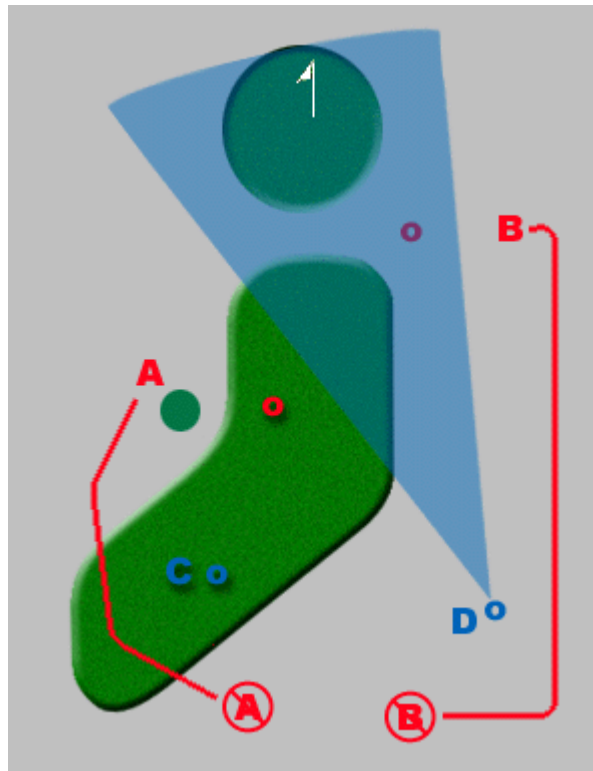


Figure 2

You should always try to be as close to your golf ball as possible whenever you have a wait so you can play as soon as you have the chance. Make sure you are not distracting your fellow competitors by talking, moving, or obstructing their view. If someone is distracting you or standing in your way, please let them know immediately. Pay attention to those behind you and protect yourself (hide behind a tree, cart, or your bag) while you wait. Use the time while you wait wisely. This is the perfect time to gauge the wind, improve your lie, clean your ball, select a club, and make any practice swings. Most of all, just be ready to play when it's your turn.

Helping To Find Lost Balls

It is important that everyone try to help find a lost ball in order to keep the match moving. But players should do it **AFTER** hitting their shots, not **BEFORE**. How often do you see four 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.

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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 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 putt out. Also, please don't stand around after you've finished the hole to write down the scores. You can do that at the next tee or when you wait for others in the next fairway.

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.

Example 3 - Ready Putting: Figure 3 illustrates a situation where player A got to the green first, player B just bladed a chip shot over the green, and player C is still walking to the green because he fell behind the others during a tragic lost ball incident. Player A should putt first in the interest of time. Player D should tend the flagstick and replace it for player B as soon as player A is finished. If player C's ball is in his line, player D should mark player C's ball prior to the putt.

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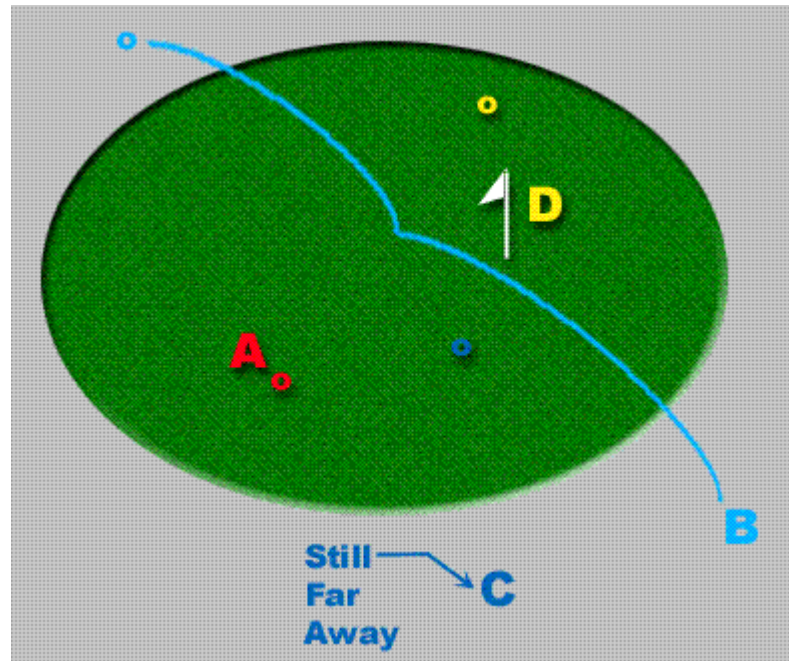


Figure 3

Ready putting starts when you're walking up to the green from your approach shot. Make sure you set your bag down between the green and the next tee box so that, after you finish putting, you minimize the time it takes to retrieve your bag and get to the next tee.

Once a group is on the putting green, the player closest to hole should take responsibility for tending or removing the flagstick. Make sure you set the flagstick out of the way, and wrap the flag around the stick before you set it down so it doesn't blow around and distract others.

If you're on the green before others in your group there's no reason you can't putt while others are raking sand traps, lining up longer putts, or just walking to the green for whatever reason. When you fall behind you forfeit your right to "go to school" on others if they are not ready to putt.

While you're on the putting green you should read your putts and rid your line of loose impediments while others are putting. You should time your pre-putt routine such that you're ready to putt as soon as others mark their ball or retrieve their ball from the cup. It's not courteous to make others watch you read the green when it's your turn to putt.

If you need to spend time to read your second putt, you should mark your ball and read the green while others are putting. If you don't need to read your second or third putts (or can read it with a quick glance), please keep putting until you hole out. It's generally faster to keep putting while it's your turn.

The second to last player to hole out should take responsibility for replacing the flagstick. As soon as they hole out they should go pick up the flag and be ready to return it as soon as the last competitor holes out.

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Ready Driving

In the previous scenario (Figure 3), if player A is playing ready golf, it's likely he will finish the hole prior to the others. If your group is behind, there is no reason why player A can't proceed to the next hole and tee off while others are still putting. Remember, when you are behind, you've lost your right to play with honors until you catch up to the group in front of you.

If your group does have to wait for the group in front of you on a tee box, the shortest hitter could hit as soon as those in front of you are out of his way.

If you're on a par 3 that you can't reach, there's really no need to wait for the group in front of you to hole out. In the interest of time you should tee off as soon as it's safe to do so.

Ready Golf Carts

If you play with a golf cart, you should be FULLY prepared for your next shot(s) whenever you leave the cart. This means you take EVERYTHING you will possibly need including a putter and a wedge if you are anywhere near the green. In the fairway, you should take the club you think you're going to hit, the next shortest club, and the next longest club, in case you change your mind. If you don't know what club you're going to hit, take your entire bag. You should also take your entire bag if your cart partner has a lost ball or is on the other side of the world. Don't forget to keep an extra ball in your pocket, as well as your range finder if you use one.

Try to minimize the number of transactions you make with your golf bag. You can save time by getting into the cart without putting your club(s) away from the previous shot if you know you will have to go back to your bag for the next shot anyway. If you hit the green on your approach shot, you can get your putter out the same time as you put your other clubs away so you won't have to go back to your bag once you get to the green.

Summary

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

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ When driving a cart drop your partner first, let your partner choose his or her club and then drive to your own ball to get READY to play.
- ✓ When a ball is lost hit your shot FIRST and then look for the lost ball.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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.