

PACE OF PLAY

The Problem: PACE OF PLAY – Are you part of the solution?
By Marilyn Reynolds – AGA

One of the biggest problems in golf is Pace of Play. It is a source of headaches for course owners, golf associations, and tournament officials. The issue of Pace of Play consumes much time and effort from the hiring of marshals to time par schedules. Are you doing everything you can to help in this concerted effort to make the game more enjoyable? Check this list:

1. **Be ready!** From the time it is your turn to play until the time your ball is on its way, should take no more than 40 seconds. This is the time officials allow when timing a player. Take no more than one practice stroke. Time your pre-shot routine. Is it comfortably within the time allowed?
2. **Be alert!** Know what is going on around you. Watch when other players are hitting the ball, particularly when on the teeing ground. If a shot is errant, mentally note the landmarks near where the ball landed so it is easy to find.
3. **Be helpful!** If a playing partner blasts out of a bunker and across the green, and you are standing nearby, rake that bunker so that player may proceed without delay. When another player is last to putt out, pick up her clubs and hand them to her as you leave the green.
4. **Be Direct!** Go directly to your golf ball. Just because we have golf carts does not mean you should not do some walking. Unless you are unable, walking will do you good and speed up play. As soon as a golf cart arrives at the player's ball that is farthest from the hole, the other player

in the cart should gather a few clubs and head to her own ball.

The Rules of Ready Golf (adapted from www.birchwoodgolf.net/)

"Ready Golf" means thinking ahead so that you are ready to play when it is your turn. "Ready Golf" applies everywhere - on tees, fairways and on the greens.

Teeing Off: The player with the honors should be ready to hit first. If the player with the honors is not ready, then someone else should hit first.

On the Fairway: "Ready Golf" means 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 club, and stand at their ball ready to go when it is their turn. Hint: walk down the sides of the fairway to reach your ball and determine your club selection while walking.

On the Green: "Ready Golf" means getting ready to putt before it is your turn. Players should line up their putts while other players are putting, so they are 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. For example: If you miss a putt by one or two feet then you should make the putt instead of marking the ball and waiting for another turn (unless you will be standing in someone else's line - then mark your ball and wait your turn).

Farthest from the Hole: There is no reason "Ready Golfers" can't play in the order of who is farthest from the hole. The person farthest from the hole should be ready to play first. When someone hits a shot, but is still farthest from the hole, the next player should hit to keep continuous play.

In summary: "Ready Golf" means being ready to play, not playing when you're ready.

- 1) Walk to your ball as soon as possible, so that you can choose your club and think about the shot in advance.
- 2) When a ball is lost, hit your shot first and then help look for the lost ball.
- 3) Walk down the sides of the fairway to reach your ball and then approach it from the center.
- 4) 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.

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