



Kentucky Golf Association Pace of Play Guidelines



Ready Golf / Being ready to play

Introduction

Ready golf 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. 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. This is not necessarily correct. Ready Golf means that the player with the honors should be **READY TO HIT FIRST**. If the player with the honors isn't ready, then someone else should hit first. Remember there is no penalty for playing out of turn in stroke play.

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?

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. 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.



Helping to Find Lost Balls

It is important that everyone try to help find a lost ball in order to keep the round 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 hole 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** 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. Additionally, 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 anything else. 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 major championship? 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. 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.

Ready putting starts when you're walking up to the green from your approach shot. Make sure you set your bag or any clubs you are carrying 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 or clubs and get to the next tee.

If you're on the green before others in your group, there's no reason you can't putt while others are raking bunkers or lining up longer putts. 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, rid your line of loose impediments, and fix any damage to the putting surface allowed under the rules while others are putting.

Ready Driving

If your group is behind, there is no reason why the first player who has holed out can't proceed to the next tee box while others are still putting, as long as there's three people in the group so that every score can be certified. 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 reminders to follow.

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 off at their shot 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.

Remember that the officials on-site are there to assist you, not penalize you. Between spotting for balls, helping with rulings and anything else, the goal is to help you and the rest of the field enjoy a first-class golf tournament. If a staff member can ever be of assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out and let us know how we can make your experience better.



Other Helpful Resources

A pace of play video series is available on the Golf House Kentucky website which provides a visual demonstration to many of the things discussed in this pamphlet. It can be found by visiting www.kygolf.org, scrolling over “Amateur Golf” and will be seen under “Membership.”

The USGA offers a comprehensive pace of play page on their website. This can be found at www.usga.org/pace-of-play-resource-center/tips-and-suggestions-for-improving-pace-of-play.html

Ask your PGA Professional. PGA Members are equipped with a wealth of knowledge about how to improve pace of play. Talk to your home course’s PGA Professional to receive assistance on how to implement other strategies that will improve pace.



2022 GHK Pace of Play Guidelines & Procedures

Rule 5.6b states in part, players must play without delay and in accordance with any pace of play guidelines the Committee may establish and thereafter prescribes penalties for slow play.

TIME PAR

A time par is set for each course – See official scorecard for each individual hole time par.

GROUP OUT OF POSITION

First Group: The first group is out of position if at any time during the round the group is behind the prescribed schedule as detailed on the Notice to Players and/or official scorecard.

Following Groups: A following group is **out of position** if it is

- A. taking more than the allotted time to play; **and**
- B. more than 14 minutes behind the preceding group

Resuming Play: A group out of position when play is discontinued is out of position when play is resumed.

NOTIFICATION/TIMING

(Statement: “Your group is out of position”)

When a group becomes out of position, all players in the group shall be notified by a designated tournament official they are out of position and subject to timing.

Teeing Area/General Area, the timing of a player’s stroke will begin when he has had reasonable opportunity to reach his ball, it is his turn to play, and he can play without interference or distraction. Time spent determining yardage counts as time taken for the stroke.

On the putting green, timing of a player’s stroke will begin after a player has been allowed a reasonable amount of time to lift, clean, and replace his ball, repair damage on his line of putt, and remove loose impediments and movable obstructions on his line of putt. Time spent looking at the line of putt from beyond the hole and/or behind the ball will count as part of the time taken for the next stroke.

A player is permitted 40 seconds to play a stroke. An extra 10 seconds for a total of 50 seconds will be allowed for the **first player** to play a stroke from the teeing ground, a second shot on a par-4 or par-5, a third stroke on a par-5, a stroke around the putting green or a stroke on the putting green.

A player who exceeds the applicable time to play a stroke will be informed by the Rules Rover as soon as practicable.

PACE OF PLAY PENALTIES

The following are the penalties, in sequence, for any player in a group being timed who takes more than the allotted time to play a stroke after timing of the player's stroke begins:

- 1st bad timing | **Warning**
- 2nd bad timing | **1 stroke penalty**
- 3rd bad timing | **Additional 1 stroke penalty**
- 4th bad timing | **Disqualification**

Note: If a group being timed regains its proper position, any previous "bad timings" will be carried over for the remainder of that round in the event that group requires additional monitoring.

Any appeal of a pace of play penalty must be referred to the designated Tournament Director of this event immediately upon completion of the round and their decision is final.

RULINGS OR OTHER INCIDENTS

If a ruling or some other legitimate delay occurs which causes the group in question to lose its position, that group is expected to regain its position within a reasonable time.

Pace of Play Success Strategies

The only time an official should talk to the players about their pace is when they become out of position.

1. Officials **should inform a group** they are out of position when they are leaving a teeing ground.
2. Officials **should notify a group** that is behind a slow group if the slow group has significantly picked up the pace. This should be done out of courtesy and not done in a manner that group would interpret as they are in jeopardy of being out of position.
3. Officials **should never tell players** to pick it up or anything similar, this does not work and only irritates the players.
4. Officials **should never tell a group** how many minutes they have to complete a hole unless a player specifically asks for this information.
5. When a group is out of position, the **official should monitor** the group and try to determine what the pace issue is with the group.

