

# **“Get Golf Ready” Handbook**

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**We wrote the “Get Golf Ready” Handbook to make golf more enjoyable for two different audiences. This handbook may be for a person who has THOUGHT about picking golf up as a hobby, but has been afraid to do so. This handbook could also be used by a person who has been away from the game for a long time and would like to come back. In either case, we have to face a fact...golf can be an intimidating sport. We are here to tell you that it does not have to be. This booklet was written to give a beginner (or even an avid golfer) a simple, basic understanding of what to do and NOT do on a golf course. We cover everything you need to know BEFORE YOU PULL INTO THE PARKING LOT, from making a tee time to hitting a bunker shot. This brief “how to” book covers Golf Etiquette, a simplified version of Golf Rules, a synopsis of golf instruction fundamentals we have accumulated after 35 years of playing and teaching the game, and some ideas on how to practice and warm up. We want our members at Lochland Country Club “to get comfortable” around golf and to learn the basics of golf etiquette. It is difficult for many people to feel comfortable in a golf setting, and we want to do our best to knock down those barriers that keep people from enjoying this great game.**

After reading this booklet, you will know enough to actually go to a golf course, play a round of golf, and feel comfortable while doing so. You may have some questions about this booklet (or the game in general), so please do not hesitate to ask any of the golf professionals here at Lochland Country Club...we are here to help make golf a better game for you and your family!

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### **Getting Comfortable at a Golf Course**

One of the reasons many people choose not to play golf is because they do not feel comfortable going to a golf course or private club. They are uncomfortable about where to go and what to do. They are afraid they will feel embarrassed in front of other more “educated” golfers (or even the staff working behind the counter). Unfortunately, many people feel this way, and this FEELING prevents them from experiencing the wonderful things this game has to offer. As a result, we will provide the reader with some basic golf rules and general “golf etiquette” tips that will make your first trip to the golf course less daunting. First, however, let’s talk about what kind of “stuff” you need to have before you go to the course...

### **EQUIPMENT NEEDED**

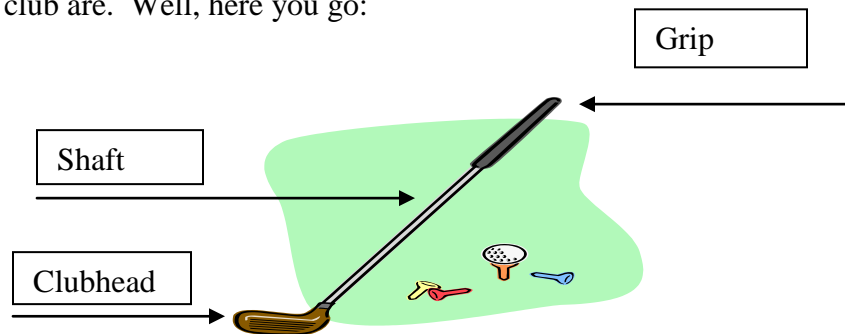
Before going to the golf course, you will need some basic equipment to get you started. There are MANY affordable options out there for the beginning golfer; it is not only unnecessary to spend a big wad of dough on a full set of the latest and greatest golf equipment, but it actually is detrimental to have too much equipment at the start. Here is what we recommend for a “starter set” to get you going:

Golf Bag with leg stand (\$50)  
11\*degree, 460 cc Driver with a Regular Flex Graphite Shaft (\$149)  
21\*degree Hybrid with a Regular Flex Graphite Shaft (\$99)  
Perimeter weighted 6 iron, 8 iron, Pitching Wedge, Sand Wedge (\$199)  
Putter (\$50)  
Running Shoes or Golf Shoes  
1 dozen used golf balls (\$15)  
Bag of golf tees

These prices are for new equipment...if you go on Ebay or to a local garage sale, you could get outfitted for much less. When first learning to play golf, you will not be able to make perfect contact with the golf ball very often, so you will hit most clubs the same distance. For this reason, you do not need a bag full of expensive golf clubs. Once you are able to get out and practice and play more, you will start to see the ball going different distances depending upon the club you are hitting. Once you have achieved this level of performance, you can start adding clubs to the bag. Starting out with too many clubs confuses the beginning golfer, so it is better to add clubs to the set as you go along.

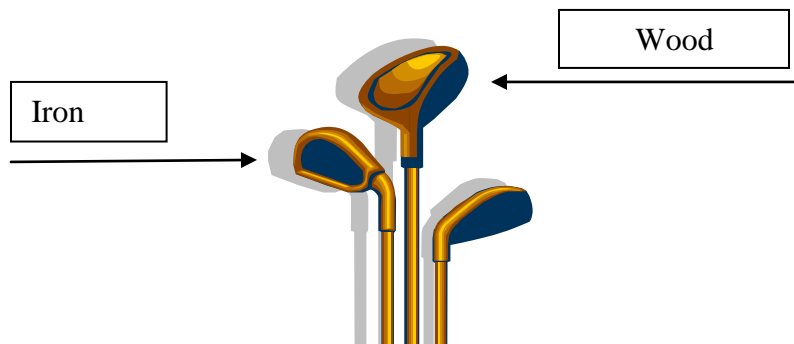
### **CLUB TERMINOLOGY**

Before starting to tell you what to do WITH a golf club, you need to know what the parts of the golf club are. Well, here you go:



Definitions:

1. **Grip** – The grip is what you “hold” on to. It is usually made of some type of composite rubber. The size of the grip only matters once you become fairly proficient at striking a golf ball, but for the most part, a standard grip will work unless you have unusually large or small hands.
2. **Shaft** – The shaft of the club connects the grip end to the clubhead. Shafts are generally made of either steel or graphite. Unless you are big, strong and fast, graphite is usually the preferred shaft material.
3. **Clubhead** – Clubs are now made with steel heads (both irons and “woods”).



“Woods” are longer than irons and have a bulbous head. They are made of steel now, but were originally made of wood. Irons are also made of steel, but they are shorter and have a more blade-like appearance. They were originally made of wood, then iron, and now, steel.

If you have any questions or need help finding the right golf equipment, do not hesitate to speak with one of Lochland’s golf professionals. We love to talk about golf equipment, (most golf pros are equipment junkies 😊)and we will get you started on the right path!

Now that you know a little about golf equipment, let us talk about how you should “act” as a golfer. Your actions on a golf course fall under a category called “golf etiquette”.

### **GOLF ETIQUETTE**

Like my mother-in-law says, “...it is always better to LOOK good than to FEEL good”. Keeping this in mind, even if you are a beginning golfer, nobody in your group will care if you keep up the pace and do a few “social” golf things correctly. Before we actually get you out on the golf course or out on the practice facilities, **here are a few golf etiquette “tips” that will help you get accepted by your golfing peers:**

**MAKE A TEE TIME** - Golf courses logistically run by what are called “tee times”. A tee time is like an appointment with the doctor, the dentist, or your barber...it is a set-aside time for you and your group to start your round. Due to the fact that hundreds of people may want to play the course on that day, the golf course blocks off tee times (usually in 8 to 9 minute intervals) to help play “flow” correctly.

**BE ON TIME** – To help this logistical flow, it is critical that if you have a tee time at 1:09PM, you show up early enough to tee off on the first hole by 1:09PM. It usually takes a golfer about 9 minutes to hit their ball, walk to the next shot, take a practice swing, hit, and get out of the way of the group behind him or her. For this reason, make sure you are not late. If you have a 1:09PM tee time and show up at 1:12PM, you have just made everyone behind you wait, and the “flow” has been negatively affected. It would be similar to showing up late for a barber appointment. Your barber knows how much time it takes to cut a person’s hair, and he/she schedules others accordingly. If you are late to your haircut by 5 minutes, you quite possibly have made everyone behind you 5 minutes late as well. The same goes for being too early. It is not considered good etiquette to arrive at the #1 tee box more than a few minutes early. This makes the individuals who are up next feel rushed. To be safe, it is always a good idea to be at the course 15 minutes before your scheduled tee time...just in case you have an emergency bathroom “requirement” or need to stop in the 19<sup>th</sup> Hole (the bar) to purchase some liquid encouragement☺. If you want to properly warm up so that you will perform to your best abilities, arrive at least 45 minutes prior to your tee time.

**PLAY AT A GOOD PACE** – No matter how good a golfer is, he or she should be able to play 9 holes of golf in 2 hours or less. here are some things you can do to help you play at a good pace without feeling rushed:

1. Play "ready" golf. Be ready to hit the ball when it is your turn.
2. Take only one practice swing. More than 1 does not do any good.
3. Watch your ball all the way until it stops rolling. Looking for lost balls chews up a lot of time.
4. Walk at a good pace between shots and from the green to the next tee. Do not run, but do not lollygag.
5. Go directly to your ball after hitting. Do not walk to another player's ball to chit chat or

to watch them hit.

6. Once you are up around the green, put your golf bag or park your cart between the green and the next tee. Never leave your bag or cart in front of the green.
7. Pick up your ball after 10 strokes. You may not post a score higher than 10 on a hole anyway.
8. Do not mark short putts under 2 feet. Step up, take aim, and bang 'em in!

***BE STILL AND QUIET WHILE OTHERS ARE GETTING READY TO HIT*** – Most golfers have what is called a “pre-shot routine”. This routine helps the golfer calm down and focus. It usually starts with the golfer lining up his or her shot from behind the ball. Once a person has stepped behind their ball, everyone in the group needs to remain as still and as quiet as possible until after the golfer swings. Try not to stand directly behind the golfer (directly in line with their ball and the target). This unnerves some golfers and is considered poor etiquette.

***BE READY TO HIT WHEN IT IS YOUR TURN*** – On the first tee box, your group will decide who tees off first. After the tee shot, the person **FARTHEST** from the hole will hit next. If 2 golfers in your group are roughly the same distance from the hole, whoever is ready shall play first. Proceed at a good walking pace to your ball, have an idea of what club you will use next, and start your pre-shot routine. If you do these things, you will be ready to hit when it is your turn. After the first hole is over, the person with the **LOWEST** score hits first on the 2<sup>nd</sup> tee box (called “having honors”), and the process starts over again. The key is to be ready when it is your turn. To play even faster, forgo “having honors”. Once you finish out putting, head over immediately to the next tee box and hit away.

***FIXING YOUR DIVOTS*** – A “divot” is a small chunk of grass and dirt that comes out of the ground after your clubhead strikes the ball. After taking a divot, retrieve the chunks of dirt that still have grass attached to them and place them back in the hole. Step on the divot with all of your weight. With proper irrigation, this divot will help grass grow back in that spot. If you are riding in a golf cart, take the sand and seed bottle from the cart and cover the divot you just replaced with the sand.

***KEEP TRACK OF YOUR BALL*** – Nothing is more frustrating than having to help the same person look for his/her ball time and time again. Watch your ball until it stops rolling and then proceed directly to the ball after everyone has hit.

***KEEP TRACK OF YOUR STROKES*** – Golf is the only game in the world where you are responsible for keeping your own score and for calling penalties on yourself. Golf has an “honor” to it that no other sport has. Make sure you count every swing you make at the ball, even if you do not hit it. As stated earlier, once you reach 10 strokes, pick your ball up and get ready for the next hole. Make sure you keep track correctly...getting a reputation as a person who “can’t count” will seriously limit the number of people

who will want to play golf with you!

***RAKING A BUNKER (Sand Trap)*** – If your golf ball goes into a bunker (a bunker is a large depression filled with sand), first find the nearest rake and pick it up. Leave your golf bag behind the bunker, take out your sand wedge, and enter the bunker from the side **FARTHEST AWAY FROM** the green. This is called the “low side” of the bunker. Drop the rake in the bunker away from your ball and get ready to play your shot. It is against the Rules of Golf to set your clubhead down in the sand behind the ball, so you must “hover” the clubhead over the sand before you start your swing. After hitting your ball out of the bunker, rake all of the foot and club prints you made as you back your way out of the bunker on the low side. Gently lay the rake (tines down!) outside the bunker on the low side where you originally entered the bunker.

***WHERE TO PUT YOUR GOLF BAG/GOLF CART*** - After hitting your ball on the green, you will need to place your golf bag in the long grass (called the “rough”) **BETWEEN** the green and the next tee box. This will help speed up play after you finish the hole. Never set your golf bag on the green. If you are in a golf cart, park the cart between the green and the next tee box at least 40 feet from the green. Do not drive the cart close to the green or bunkers.

***FIXING YOUR BALL MARK*** – Almost every shot that lands on a green leaves a little pitch mark (called a ball mark) where the ball hit. Every golfer should fix his/her ball mark, plus one more, on each green. Insert a golf tee on the outside of the indentation, and gently press the turf back towards the center of the mark, working your way around the mark. Take your putterhead and gently tamp down this area you just repaired. If you see other ball marks on the green that others have missed, please do your best to fix these as well. This is similar to picking up after yourself when you are in someone else’s home...it is just a good thing to do.

***MARKING YOUR BALL ON THE GREEN*** – After you have fixed your ball mark (and one other), you will need to “mark” your ball on the green so that it is not in the way of the other golfers. Place a small coin behind the ball, then pick up your ball. If the coin is in another golfer’s way, ask the golfer which way he/she would like you to move your coin. After determining which direction, set your putterhead on that side of the coin and move the coin the length of the putterhead. If this is not far enough out of the way of the other golfer, move it another putterhead length. After the other golfer putts, reverse this procedure to return your marker to its original position.

***WALKING IN SOMEONE’S “LINE”*** – Once you are on the green, it is important **NOT** to step on another golfer’s “line”. A golfer’s “line” is defined as an

imaginary line that extends from a person's golf ball through the hole on the expected path the ball will travel. Walking on another golfer's line could possibly affect the condition of the turf the other golfer will putt over.

***TENDING THE FLAGSTICK*** – After everyone is on the green, the person whose coin is closest to the flagstick should “tend” the flag. Approach the flag, being careful not to step in anyone's intended putting line, and grasp the flag around the top. Ask the person farthest from the hole if he/she would like the flag “tended” or removed. If the golfer asks you to “tend” the flag, you will stand still and hold the flag until the golfer strikes his/her putt. Make sure to hold onto the cloth portion of the flag so it does not flap in the wind. After their putter makes contact with their ball, you will pull the flagstick out of the hole. After their ball stops, ask if anyone else needs the flagstick “tended”. If not, gently lay the flagstick down far enough away from the hole so that nobody will strike the flag with their putt. The next-to-last person holing their putt will be responsible for retrieving the flagstick and replacing it in the hole.

***PLAYING ORDER ON THE GREEN*** – The person farthest away from the hole must putt first. If this is you, you will mark your ball after your first putt if you do not wish to continue putting. If you do wish to finish putting, make sure you do not step in anyone else's line. The person who is farthest from the hole will putt next. This is continued until everyone has holed their putts.

***LETTING FASTER GROUPS “PLAY THROUGH”*** – There is nothing more unnerving than having people waiting on you when you are playing. Conversely, it is also unnerving to have someone playing too slowly in front of you. The BEST thing to do is to let faster groups pass you ***if and only if there is an open hole in front of your group***. There is absolutely NO SHAME in letting a group pass you; however, if there is a group in front of you, it does not do any good to let the group behind you through. How do you let a group pass you? First, get the attention of the group behind you. Then, make a large, circular motion with your arm like a traffic cop signaling a car to move through an intersection. After they acknowledge your offer, the members of your group should move off to the side of the hole, preferably behind trees. Wait for the group behind you to hit and walk to their shots before coming out from the safety of cover. After the group plays their 2<sup>nd</sup> shots, make sure you give them plenty of space to get out of the way before you hit your next shot(s). Once again, if the course is busy and there is a group directly in front of you, do NOT let the group behind you pass.

***AFTER THE ROUND*** – After finishing putting on Hole #18, it is considered good etiquette to remove your hat and exchange handshakes with everyone

in your group. This is a symbol of sportsmanship and camaraderie that has lasted for hundreds of years and is a fitting way to end a round of “a gentlemen’s/ladies’ game”. After finishing the round, it is customary to go to the 19<sup>th</sup> hole for a cold beverage and to settle any bets that were placed before the round. As a point of etiquette, if you are the winner, you should offer to buy the first round.

**POSTING YOUR SCORES** – Every golfer should obtain a USGA Handicap. This is a means by which you can gauge your progress as a golfer, and it also allows for competition between golfers of different abilities. If you have a USGA handicap, you should post your score EVERY time you play golf, regardless of whether you played well or played poorly. If you do not currently have a USGA handicap, come speak to one of the Lochland golf professionals, and we will get you started. Please see the last section in this manual for more information regarding handicaps.

**KNOWING THE RULES** – It is almost impossible to know all of the Rules of Golf. In fact, very few PGA Tour Rules Officials have ever “aced” the series of examinations that are required to become a Rules Official. You can, however, know a few basic rules that will cover most of what you will encounter on the golf course. We will go over a few of them here, using a Q & A format to make it easier to learn the basics. The rules book itself is a little difficult to read, so this format will help simplify what the USGA makes as clear as mud. We will just be covering the basics, so if you have additional rules questions, do not hesitate to ask us in the Golf Shop about a particular ruling...we enjoy helping others learn about the game of golf!

**Q: *Do I have to count a swing if I don’t hit the ball?***

A: Yes...if your intention was to strike the ball and you miss it, you must count the stroke.

**Q: *What happens if I take a practice swing and accidentally hit the ball?***

A: This answer depends on whether or not your ball is on a tee box or if you have already teed off. If your ball is up on the tee and you accidentally knock it off with your practice swing (or if it falls off on its own), you DO NOT COUNT the swing and you can put the ball back on the tee without penalty. Why? Because in golf, the hole technically does not start until you PURPOSEFULLY hit the ball off the tee. If you have already teed off to start the hole and you accidentally hit your ball with a practice swing in the fairway, the rough, a bunker, or on the green, you must replace the ball back to its original position and COUNT 1 PENALTY STROKE. If you accidentally kick your ball or move it with your club as you take your stance, you must replace the ball back to its original position and COUNT 1 PENALTY STROKE.

**Q: *What happens if I lose my ball?***

A: The answer to this question depends upon whether you are playing competitive golf or casual golf.



**FOR COMPETITIVE GOLF:** If you hit your ball into a spot where you think it may be lost, announce to your playing partners that you are going to play a “Provisional Ball”. Make sure to play a different number than your original. If you cannot find your original ball after 5 minutes, then you will play the provisional ball, adding both the swing AND a 1 SHOT PENALTY. If you do NOT play a provisional ball and cannot find the original, you and your group still have 5 minutes to search for it. After that 5 minutes is up, you must count the original swing, add 1 PENALTY STROKE and go back to where you originally hit the ball. You will drop another ball and hit it, counting that swing as well. If you lose your tee shot, you may put the 2<sup>nd</sup> ball up on a tee again. **Example #1:** Vera hits her 2<sup>nd</sup> shot from the fairway on hole #14, and it goes into the deep rough on the right. Knowing that it is hard to find a ball on the right side of that hole, Vera announces to the group that she is going to play a “provisional ball” in case she cannot find her original. Vera tells the group that her first ball is a Titleist #1, and her provisional ball is a Titleist #4. She faces the hole and drops the Titleist #4 from where she hit the original ball, no closer to the hole. Vera hits the provisional ball, and her group starts to search for the original. After 5 minutes, the group could not find the original ball, so Vera will now play the provisional. She hit her 2<sup>nd</sup> shot off to the right, so she counts 1 PENALTY STROKE (stroke 3) plus the swing she made with the provisional ball (stroke 4). Vera is now getting ready to hit her 5<sup>th</sup> shot. **Example #2:** John tees off on hole #7 and hits it into the trees on the right. He and his group search for 5 minutes and cannot find it. John counts the original swing (stroke 1), goes back to the tee box and hits another ball off the tee (stroke 2) and adds a PENALTY STROKE (stroke 3). John is now getting ready to hit his 4<sup>th</sup> shot.

**FOR CASUAL GOLF:** If you THINK your ball may be lost or out-of-bounds, you should always play a provisional. If you do not hit a provisional ball and you lose your ball, do NOT go back and re-hit from the original spot. Simply have your group pick an area CLOSE IN PROXIMITY to where you think your shot SHOULD have been. This is a good thing to do if you are playing casually at your own club, *but you should ALWAYS follow this procedure when you are playing casually at a course that is not your own.* If you are playing vacation golf or are a guest of a friend at their club, NEVER GO BACK TO HIT ANOTHER BALL.

**Q:** *What happens if I hit my ball Out-of-Bounds?*

**A:** The boundaries for a golf course are usually marked by WHITE STAKES or a regular fence. If you hit your original ball past the white stakes (or fence), you count the original swing, add a PENALTY SHOT, and hit another ball from where you hit the original shot. If you hit the ball OB from a tee box, you may put the ball up on the tee again. If you hit the ball OB from the fairway, rough or bunker, you must DROP a ball from shoulder-height as close as you can to the original spot. Try not to drop the ball in your original divot, because you have to play it from there if you do! **Example:** Kathy is in the fairway and hits her 3<sup>rd</sup> shot past the white stakes to the right of hole #13. Kathy counts that

3<sup>rd</sup> swing, she ADDS A PENALTY SHOT (stroke 4), and drops another ball close to where she hit the original shot. She then hits the ball from this spot (stroke 5). Kathy is now ready to hit her 6<sup>th</sup> shot.

**Q:** *What happens if I hit my ball in the water?*

**A:** We are going to super-simplify this. There are many options here, but we are just going to cover 2 situations to make it easy for our newest golfers. If you would like to know ALL of the options, please come to the Golf Shop and observe the painting we have of Hole #18 at Lochland. The explanation on the painting describes all of the options. We will be happy to show you how each option applies, depending upon the situation.

If your ball enters the water where there are **RED STAKES**, you take the spot where the ball last crossed the RED STAKES (you will need to picture an imaginary line running between the red stakes) and drop another ball 2 CLUB-LENGTHS from this spot, no closer to the hole. Add 1 PENALTY STROKE. Example: Chip hits his second shot into the lake on hole #17 (stroke 2). Chip goes up to where the ball crossed the hazard line and he measures 2 clublengths to the side from where the ball went in the hazard (no closer to the hole). Chip drops his ball from shoulder-height, takes 1 PENALTY STROKE (stroke 3), then hits to the green from this position (stroke 4). Chip is now ready to hit his 5<sup>th</sup> shot.

If your ball enters the water where there are **YELLOW STAKES**, you take the spot where the ball last crossed the YELLOW STAKES and drop another ball AS FAR BACK FROM THE HAZARD AS YOU WANT, keeping the point where the ball last crossed the imaginary hazard line between you and the flagstick. Example: Marla hits her 3<sup>rd</sup> shot into the north neck of the lake on hole #18. Marla watches where the ball last crosses the hazard into the lake, and she drops a ball 20 yards behind that spot. This spot is in a direct line running from the point where the ball crossed the hazard to the flagstick. She drops a ball and counts 1 PENALTY STROKE (stroke 4). Then Marla hits her 5<sup>th</sup> shot over the lake.

AS A REMINDER, **this is an over-simplification of the rules** for hazards. There are other options available to the golfer; however, if one follows these two rules for RED and YELLOW-staked hazards respectively, **you will always be correct**. If you would like to know the other options, please come to the Golf Shop and one of the golf professionals will be glad to explain them to you!

**Q:** *Is there anything special I need to know about bunkers (sand traps)?*

**A:** It is important to know that you cannot set your clubhead down in the sand (called “grounding” the club). This is considered testing the surface, and is a 2 STROKE PENALTY. You must “hover” your clubhead above the sand before you start your backswing. The clubhead may only touch the sand DURING THE DOWNSWING. As stated earlier in the ETIQUETTE section, make sure you rake all of your footprints and clubprints in the sand before moving on to your

next shot.

**Q:** *What do I do if my golf ball is lying on a cartpath or up against something “man-made”?*

**A:** If your golf ball is touching anything “man-made” (other than an Out-of-Bounds post or fence), you get FREE RELIEF FROM THAT OBJECT WITH NO PENALTY. If you cannot move the object (like a cartpath or a cement bench), take your stance as close as you can to the object and make a swing where neither you nor your club touch the object. Keep your clubhead down on the ground, and put a wooden tee in the spot at the end of the clubhead. Measure out one club-length from this spot and stick ANOTHER tee in the ground at the end of the club. Remove the club, and now drop a ball from shoulder height BETWEEN THE TWO TEES (no closer to the hole). You should now be able to hit a shot and not touch the man-made object with either your body or your club.

If you can move the man-made object (like a garbage can or a wooden bench), you may move it away from your ball. If you accidentally touch the ball, just put the ball back where it was. There is no penalty if you move the ball while moving a man-made object.

**Q:** *What if there is a stick or leaf touching my ball...may I move them?*

**A:** Yes, you may move a twig or a leaf (called “loose impediments”) away from your ball, EXCEPT in a bunker or inside a hazard; however, YOU MUST BE CAREFUL THAT THE BALL DOES NOT MOVE. If the ball moves, you must take 1 PENALTY STROKE and replace the ball to where it was. You may ask, what is the difference between moving a twig and moving a bench? It is simple...if a human being made something that is next to your ball (except an Out-of-Bounds fence), you get free relief and no penalty if the ball moves when removing the object. If Mother Nature put something next to your ball, you may move the object (except in a hazard/bunker), but there will be a PENALTY if your ball moves in the process.

***Do NOT be intimidated by the Rules...like we said earlier, even the PGA Tour Rules Officials do not know ALL of the rules. If you have a firm grasp on the few rules mentioned above, you now know what to do in most golf situations.*** Goofy things sometimes happen when you are playing golf, and the best thing to do is to play a second ball. You will play BOTH balls all of the way through to the end of the hole, and then you will come in to the Golf Shop to ask one of the golf professionals for a “ruling”. The golf professional will tell you which ball you played correctly. Your score on this ball will be the one that counts. The point here is that there is NO WAY you can learn ALL of the rules. Do not be afraid to call on your golf professional to help clarify a rules situation. Once again, if you have additional rules questions, please do not hesitate to ask one of the Golf Professionals...we LOVE to answer rules questions and will be more than happy to help you understand more about this wonderful game!

Now that you know a little about how you should “act” on a golf course, it is now time to learn how to play the game.

### **LEARNING THE BASICS OF GOLF INSTRUCTION**

Before we get into actual swing mechanics, let us talk a little about swing methods and practice time. Every golf instructor has a “teaching philosophy” about golf instruction. Some are “method” teachers...they believe that there is one BEST way to swing a golf club, and that is the only “way” they teach. Some instructors are what I call “flavor-of-the-month” teachers...these guys teach whatever the latest “fad” is in instruction. In fact, many times you can pick up the latest Golf Digest or GOLF magazine, and this type of instructor will be spewing words verbatim from the latest craze hitting the tour RIGHT NOW. Our teaching philosophy is much different...we believe in teaching students the most efficient swing for their own body type and athletic ability, using fundamentals that have withstood the test of time and modern scientific scrutiny.

There are flaws in every single golf swing...there is no such thing as a “perfect” golf swing. In fact, every golf swing has an even number of errors. Think about it...if you make a mistake in your backswing, you HAVE to make a mistake in your downswing to correct it, otherwise, your ball will never fly toward the target. Our goal of instruction is to help you develop a golf swing that has the smallest number of errors possible. If followed to the letter, and with considerable “sweat equity”, these methods will enable the golfer to develop a consistent golf swing (with minimal errors) that will enable him or her to enjoy the wonderful game of golf for years to come.

It is entirely impossible to remember all the details taught in a few short lessons, so we have developed a “summary” of our teaching techniques. We hope that you will enjoy your learning sessions, and I encourage you to make a commitment to spending the time practicing that is requisite to improvement and eventual consistency.

This being said, each student will undoubtedly improve his or her golf game using these methods *if and only if* the student is willing and able to practice the following methods with consistency. It has been scientifically proven that to make ANY athletic motion feel **comfortable**, it takes approximately 10,000 repetitions over a 3 to 4 week period. Very few individuals have this type of time and commitment level; **however, it is still possible to improve even if you can only practice once or twice a week.** Practicing less than this amount will not produce any appreciable difference in performance levels. If you are going to be a social golfer and just want to feel comfortable in the “golf environment”, then performance may or may not be important to you. If you want to get really good at this great game... you will need to commit yourself to practicing several times a week. Although this may sound somewhat discouraging at first, at least it will help you set reasonable improvement goals and enable you to enjoy the game of golf that your body and your schedule will allow you to experience.

For the sake of simplicity, these instructions will be given in text for right handed golfers. If you are left-handed, please reverse all references in terms of hand, foot and ball placement or positioning.

### **STARTING TO PRACTICE**

Most golf courses, both public and private, have practice areas where golfers can hone their skills. Usually, the practice areas amount to a putting green and a driving range. On public golf courses, it usually does not cost anything to use the putting green, but you will have to pay for range balls on the driving range. Our advice is to start first on the putting green and then move over to the range after experimenting on the putting green. I know it is much more fun to “whack away” at golf balls on the range, but if you can learn how to control a putter first, it is easier to learn how to control a full golf swing with a driver.

Chipping, pitching, half-wedges and bunker play are also crucial parts of the game to learn at the beginning of your golf journey; however, most people want to jump right in and start with full swing instruction. We understand that it is more fun to hit the ball with a full swing, ***but the BEST way to learn golf is by starting out on the putting green and then gradually working yourself back through the “short” shots BEFORE getting to the full swing.*** As a result, this Get Golf Ready Handbook is written in the order that will help a new golfer achieve positive long-term results. This “order” will be the most efficient (and quickest) way to get you proficient at golf; HOWEVER, we do understand that some of you cannot wait to jump into the full swing. Heck, my wife knows what her Christmas presents are before Thanksgiving, so I completely understand wanting to jump right in and start whacking away at the ball. If you want to skip the putting and short game instruction and go straight to the full swing, GO AHEAD! Please know, HOWEVER, that the BEST way to learn golf is to start out close to the hole and then work your way backwards, culminating in taking full swings with the driver (the longest, most difficult club to hit in your bag).

With this being said, get out 5 or 6 of your golf balls, grab your putter, and head to the putting green. Place all of the golf balls in a circle around the hole at a distance of about 18” from the center of the cup.

### **PUTTING**

Before you start smacking the balls you put down around the cup, you need to know how to hold on to the putter, and you need to know how to “set up” to the ball (called taking a “stance”). First, let us cover holding onto the club, also known as “gripping the club”.

#### ***STEP 1 – The Grip***

Set the head of the putter (the heavy end) down flat on the ground, so that neither end of the putterhead is off the ground. This is called “soling”, or “grounding” the club.

#### **Left Hand**

With your left hand, place the target side of the putter grip flat against the palm of your left hand. Right at the middle of the grip, place your left thumb along the flat top edge of

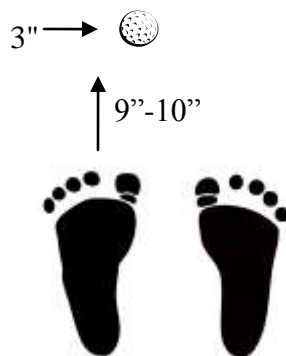
the grip. The grip should feel as if it is nestled primarily into the palm of the left hand (not in the fingers). Let your fingers gently wrap around the grip.

### **Right Hand**

Keeping your right hand to the right side of the grip, slide your right hand onto the grip, covering your left thumb with the heel pad of your right thumb. Run your right thumb down the flat top of the putter grip, just like you did with your left hand. Wrap your right hand fingers around the bottom of the grip. You should feel as if your hands are “married” together on the putter grip. There should not be any large gaps between your fingers or your hands. This type of grip helps both hands work in harmony so that you have a better chance of squaring the putterface to your target at impact. There are MANY ways to hold onto the putter...you are welcome to experiment with different putting grips, but this is the basic way to start.

### ***STEP 2 - Set Up (“taking your stance” or “addressing the ball”)***

In order to aim properly, it usually works best to aim the putterface BEFORE you take your grip. Some people like to take their putting grip first and then aim the club, but we feel it is much easier to aim the putterface first. With your right hand, set the putterhead down directly behind the ball. Most putters have aiming lines on them, so aim this line directly through the center of the ball at the middle of the hole (if the putt will break either right or left, you will need to aim either to the left or the right of the hole). Place your left hand on the grip. Bend over from your waist until your eyes are directly over the golf ball. Set your feet shoulder-width apart AND parallel to an imaginary “line” running from your ball to the target. Your weight should be evenly distributed between your feet. Now, look down at the ball. The ball should be about 3” inside your left ankle, and your feet should be about 2 putter-head widths (about 9” or 10”) away from the ball. We want the ball position in putting to be closer to your target-side foot because we want the putter to catch the ball on the upswing instead of the downswing. Golfers who place their ball directly in the center of their stance often strike the ball with a downward blow, which may cause the ball to hop and skip off line.



### ***STEP 3 - Swing the Putter***

Now that you are set up correctly to the ball and you have your hands correctly on the grip, it is time to strike a putt. Keeping your wrists firm, swing the putter straight back

from the ball using the larger muscles of the shoulders and arms, all as one unit. Since we are only putting from 18” away, it is only necessary to swing the putterhead back 3-4 inches. With those same muscles of the arms and shoulders, smoothly swing the putterhead through the ball straight forward and finish with the putterhead about 3-4 inches past where the ball was. In putting, distance is determined by how FAR the putterhead swings back and forth; we do not determine distance by how HARD we strike the ball. If we were putting from 6 feet instead of 2 feet, we may want to swing the putter back 6 inches from the ball and 6 inches past where the ball originally started. We do not swing the putterhead harder, we just simply swing the putterhead *farther*.

Your body should NOT MOVE AT ALL when making a putting stroke. Your head and body should remain STOCK STILL. Do not look up to see where the putt goes until you have counted at least 3 seconds. “Peeking”, or looking up to see where the ball goes, will cause you to come out of your posture and make it impossible to putt well.

#### ***STEP 4 - Practicing Putting/Reading a Green***

Putting is a fairly simple endeavor...there are not a whole lot of moving parts in the putting stroke. The body stays still and the only thing that moves is the one-piece motion of swinging the arms, shoulders and putter straight back from the ball then straight through the ball to the target. In addition, the ball generally goes where the putterface is aimed at impact with the ball. The goal of good putting is to get the putterface to be at a 90\* angle to your intended starting line of the putt (called “squaring the face”). If you are putting on a relatively flat surface, and your putts seem to leak off to the right or to the left, you probably did not square the clubface to the target line at impact. If your putts pull a little to the left, you probably closed the clubface through impact. If your putts push a little to the right, you probably left the clubface open through impact. Either way, make every attempt to get the putterface at a 90\* angle to your intended target line at impact.

Experiment and see how far the ball rolls when you swing the putterhead back and through different distances. Remember, we determine distance by how FAR the putterhead swings, and not by how HARD we hit the ball. We want relatively the same length of backswing and forward swing so that the putterhead moves at a constant rate of speed. Green speeds vary on the same course day-to-day. Some days, the greens run faster than others. Other days, they are slower. As a result, the same length swing on different days will roll the putt different distances. As you practice more and more, your body will start to get a “feel” for how far the ball will roll, given a certain distance you swing the putterhead.

In addition to seeing how far the ball rolls given a certain length of the putting stroke, it will be important for you to understand “break”. Break can be thought of as the total amount a putt will curve left or right, depending upon the slope and speed of the green. Very rarely does a golfer have an absolutely STRAIGHT putt. Usually, there is going to be some left-to-right or right-to-left movement. How much movement will there be? That, unfortunately, can only be found by practicing. As you putt more and more, your eyes and your body will start to “feel” break. One way you can get a head start on

learning how to read greens is to crouch down behind your ball and look at the topography of the ground between your ball and the hole. Now, imagine that this gentle slope of green is a complete sheet of glass. If you were to dump a pitcher of water out between your ball and the hole, which way would it run? Obviously, the ball will curve wherever the water would be running, because the ball will be influenced by gravity against the slope of the green, just like water being dumped from a pitcher. How much will it break? That is the tougher question, and one can only learn how much “break” to play by trial and error. As stated before, as you putt more and more, your eyes and your body will do a better job of telling you how much break to play. Do not alter your stroke for any putt... simply aim further left or right, and try to swing the putter fairly straight back and through on this line. As you get farther from the hole (thus necessitating a longer stroke), your putter will move slightly inside on your backswing and then slightly to the inside after striking the ball. This is certainly acceptable. In fact, it is nearly impossible to take the putter PURELY straight back and straight through on anything longer than a 3 foot putt. Your goal should always be to swing the putterhead at a constant rate of speed, FAIRLY straight back and FAIRLY straight through the ball with the same length of backward and forward swings.

There are 2 great putting drills that will help the beginning golfer become better almost immediately. The first drill is called the “Clock Drill”(this is a DIRECTIONAL drill). As we did before, start out with 5-6 golf balls all 18” away from the hole in a circle. Putt each ball until you make it. After you have made all 5 or 6 putts, move each ball back 12” and repeat. Continue moving the ball back from the hole until you are 5’ from the hole. After putting all 5-6 balls into the hole from 5’, move each ball 12” closer to the hole and repeat. Continue this until you finish putting all balls into the hole from 18” away.

The second drill is called the “Ladder Drill” (this is a DISTANCE drill). This drill has less to do with direction, and more to do with distance control. Start out with 20 golf balls in a pile on a relatively flat putting surface. Take 4 large steps and place a tee in the ground (approx. 12’ from your pile of golf balls). Take 1 large step and place another tee in the ground, directly in line with the first tee. Repeat this step until you have 6 tees all in the ground, one starting 12’ from your pile of golf balls and one every 3’ after. Go back to the golf balls, and try to putt two balls in a row between the first and second tees. This may take a little while, but you must get 2 in a row between tees #1 and #2. After you get 2 in a row, then try to get 2 in a row between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tees. After accomplishing this, get 2 in a row between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> tees. Continue until you have worked your way up the “ladder”. After getting 2 balls in a row between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> tees, try to get 2 balls in a row between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> tees, then the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tees, and so on until you have worked back down the “ladder”. After going up and down the ladder once, then skip rungs in the imaginary ladder. For example, get 2 balls between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tee. Then get 2 balls in a row between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> tee. Then get 2 balls between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tees. Move up and down the ladder at random. By choosing different “targets”, your body will develop a better feeling of touch. We do not care about aim in the Ladder Drill... we only care about the distance the ball travels according to how far you swing the putterhead.



After doing both the ladder drill and the circle drill, you will be able to see where you need the most practice. Do not get too complicated about technique...as long as you are swinging the putterhead relatively straight back and straight through on your target line using the big muscles of the arms and shoulders, you will do fine.

**The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about Putting:**

1. **The length of the swing determines distance, NOT the strength of the “hit”.**
2. **Swing the putter with the larger muscles of the arms and shoulders. Keep body and wrist movement at an absolute minimum.**
3. **Work on both directional and distance control (Circle and Ladder Drills).**

**CHIPPING, PITCHING and the ½ WEDGE...the Short Shots**

Now that we have taken care of putting, you need to learn how to hit all of those shots around the green. Let’s start out close to the green for “chipping”, then we will move a little farther back for “pitching”, then we will move 30 yards or farther back for the “half-wedge”. Before we do this, let’s learn some “short game” terminology:

1. **“Chipping”** - Short shots immediately around the green where the ball spends more time on the ground than in the air. Example: Your ball is 10 feet off the edge of the green, but the flagstick is 20 feet from the edge of the green. Total distance away = 30 feet. This shot has very little hand or wrist action. Chipping can be done with any club from a hybrid down to a sand wedge.
2. **“Pitching”** - Short shots around the green where the ball spends more time in the air and less on the ground. Example: your ball is 20’ off the edge of the green, but the flagstick is only 10’ from the edge of the green. Total distance away = 30 feet. This shot involves a little hand action and hinging/unhinging of the wrists. Pitching is usually done with a pitching wedge (45 to 53 degrees of loft), a sand wedge (54-56 degrees of loft), or a lob wedge (58 to 64 degrees of loft).
3. **“Half-Wedge”** - Typically considered any shot between 30 and 60 yards from the green. This distance is too short for a full golf swing with your wedge, but is too far for the “pitching” motion. This shot more closely resembles a full swing, but is a little shorter on the backswing and a little shorter on the follow-through. The half-wedge is usually struck with a pitching wedge, sand wedge or lob wedge.

***Q: How do I know when I should chip, pitch or use a half-wedge?***

**A:** That depends (sorry ☹).

The actual best answer to that question lies in a short game “mantra”. This mantra is:

***Putt when you can, chip if you can't putt, pitch if you can't chip and hit the half-wedge for everything else.***

In other words, you want to make the SHORTEST swing possible to execute the shot, and you want the ball to spend as little time in the air as possible. Why? Because shorter swings are easier to control. Each club, starting with the putter, has more loft on it (the actual angle of the clubface from vertical). The more loft on the club, the higher the ball will go; the higher the ball goes, the longer you have to make the swing to make the ball go the same distance. A good rule of thumb here is to select a club for chipping and pitching that will allow you to land the ball about 4'-5' on the green, allowing the ball to roll the rest of the way to the hole. The longer the ball stays on the ground, the less problems you will have. We will talk about this concept more in the Chipping section.

### **CHIPPING**

As stated earlier, we want to putt first, chip second. What do we mean by this? Obviously, when your ball is on the green, you can only putt. If you try to chip or pitch a ball that is on a green, the Greenskeeper will come over and separate your head from your body with a shovel. How about when your ball is NOT on the green? On almost every golf course, there is a 2' to 3' wide “collar” around each green called a FRINGE. The fringe is usually very short grass, but it is longer grass than that on the green. When your ball is on the fringe, you will normally get the BEST results by putting the ball. Putting is easier than chipping due to the fact that the putter has less loft than an iron, so it requires a smaller stroke.

***Q: How far off the green can you still putt?***

***A: As far as you want.***

Back in Scotland (the home of golf), the game of golf is played more along the ground than in the air. It is not uncommon for golfers there to putt when the ball is 20 to 30 yards off the green. In the United States, however, golf courses are built and maintained differently. Our courses here have longer, softer grasses leading up to the green, and it is more difficult to putt through this type of grass. The ball hops too much, and it is difficult to get a feel for how far the ball will roll given a certain length of stroke. That being said, however, some golfers have been able to develop a good touch doing this, and they can putt 10' to 30' from off the green. We recommend that a person putt whenever the ball is 4 feet or less off the green. Go ahead and experiment with this, but we believe you will find that putting when your ball is 4 feet or closer to the green is fairly easy in terms of judging distance control. Once your ball is more than 4 feet off the putting surface, you will want to “chip” the ball.

Before we get started with chipping technique, you need to learn how to hold onto the golf club properly. The grip for chipping, pitching and half/full swings is different from that of putting. Before you start firing chip shots across the green, you need to know how

to hold on to the club, and you need to know how to take the proper “stance”. First, let us cover gripping the club.

### ***STEP 1-Grip***

Starting with a 7 or an 8-iron, set the head of the club (the heavy end) down flat on the ground, so that neither end of the clubhead is off the ground. This is called “soling”, or “grounding” the club.

### **Left Hand**

Hold your left hand up in the air, with all of your fingers together and your thumb resting up against the base of the index finger. Your hand should look like this:



Note that there is no space between the thumb and the index finger.

Now, look down at the very top end of the grip (called the “butt”), you will see that it is round like the face of a clock. Imagine that there is a line starting at 1 O’Clock on the butt end of the grip, that runs all the way to the bottom of the grip where it meets the shaft. Place your LEFT thumb on this imaginary line, leaving about ½ of an inch of the butt end of the club sticking out of your hand. Make sure that your thumb does not separate from your index finger. Now, wrap your fingertips around the bottom of the grip of the club. If your hand is oriented properly, the bottom of the club should run from the base of your pinky finger up through the middle knuckle of your index finger, and the club should *feel as if it is resting in the fingertips, NOT in the palm*. See the line that runs between your left thumb and the base of your left index finger? An extension of this line should point toward your right shoulder.

### **Right Hand**

Now, imagine a line starting at 11 O’Clock on the butt end of the grip that runs all the way to the bottom of the grip where it meets the shaft. Cover up your left thumb with the right palm, placing your RIGHT thumb on this imaginary line running through 11 O’Clock (just like the left hand, make sure there is not a gap between the thumb and the

base of the right forefinger). Now, wrap the fingertips of your right hand around the bottom of the grip of the club. Remember the line between your thumb and your index finger? On your right hand, an extension of that line should point toward your right shoulder as well.

**The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about the Grip:**

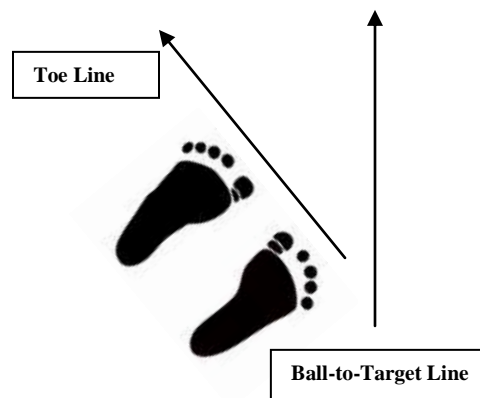
- 1. Your left thumb is pointing at 1 O’Clock and your right thumb is pointing at 11 O’Clock. Your right thumb pad covers your left thumb.**
- 2. The club feels like it is resting in the fingertips of both hands.**
- 3. The lines formed between your thumbs and the bases of your index fingers should both point toward your right shoulder.**

***STEP 2 – Advanced Grip Option***

The grip we just taught you is called the “10 Finger Grip”. This grip is best for beginners or people with small hands. If your hands are a little larger, you may want to try a slightly different grip, called the “interlocking” grip. Everything is the same in the “interlocking” grip, with the exception of the right pinkie finger. In the interlocking grip, you “interlock” the pinkie of the right hand with the index finger of the left hand. This grip brings the hands a little closer together and “marries” them together on the club. Most of the newer, younger players on the PGA Tour are now using the interlocking grip, so it may not be a bad idea to give it a try!

***STEP 3- Set Up (“taking your stance” or “addressing the ball”)***

Now that you know how to hold the club for a “chip shot”, you need to know how to stand next to the ball, called “taking your stance”. The chip shot stance is different from the putting stance. If you remember, in the putting stance, we wanted your feet to be about shoulder-width apart and parallel to an imaginary line running from your ball to your target. In chipping, we want your feet really close together (your heels should be about 6” apart), and pointed to the LEFT of that imaginary line running through your ball to your target. It will look a little like this:



You should set up to the ball with your knees lightly flexed, with your body weight resting primarily on your LEFT leg. You will want to place the ball approximately 17" away from, and just inside, your right ankle.



#### ***STEP 4 – The chipping “stroke”***

The chipping stroke itself is very uncomplicated...in fact, most people chip poorly because they try to do too much when they chip. Let's keep it short and sweet...you will only have to remember the following 3 things:

- 1) Ball off the inside of your back ankle.
- 2) With your feet close together, lean into your front leg (90% of your body weight should now be on your front leg).
- 3) Swing the GRIP of the club straight back, then straight through to your target, ***keeping the grip moving the entire time.***

Why are these 3 things important? First, you must have the ball in the BACK of your stance. Chipping strokes are SMALL strokes, and this will help you keep from hitting the ground before the ball. Poor chipping usually comes from hitting the ground first. Next, we want your body weight primarily on your front (target-side) leg. This helps you hit “down” a little bit on the ball, and it also helps you hit the ball first instead of the ground. Finally, we want the GRIP of the club to initiate the backswing and the forward swing in the chipping motion because this will guarantee that the clubhead will not slow down and catch up in the grass before impact. Most golfers focus too much on the clubhead, and when this happens, their hands do not move as much and the clubhead bottoms out into the ground before it gets to the ball. This is what a golfer means when he or she says they hit it “fat”, “chunked it”, “laid the sod”, or “stuck it in the cake”.

See a pattern here? All three of these “to do’s” have something to do with NOT hitting the ground before the ball. If you just remember ***1)BALL BACK, 2)WEIGHT FORWARD, and 3)KEEP THE GRIP MOVING***, you will be able to chip the ball with some practice. Just keep your swing short and your body movement at a minimum, and I guarantee you will have some success by keeping the chipping motion SIMPLE.

To start out, try chipping with a 7 iron or an 8 iron (as you get more proficient, you can experiment with other clubs). Notice how far the ball flies in the air and how far it rolls after landing on the ground, given a certain length of swing. Experiment with different lengths of swings to see how much the length of the swing affects how high the ball goes in the air and how far it rolls along the ground. If the ball is going too far, shorten your swing. If it is not going far enough, lengthen your swing. Just like in PUTTING, the length of the swing determines how far the ball will go. You will try to make the same PACE of swing every time...you will just alter the LENGTH of the swing to alter the distance the ball travels.

**The 3 most important things to remember about the CHIPPING motion:**

- 1. The ball should be BACK in your stance.**
- 2. Your weight should be FORWARD (90% on your right foot).**
- 3. Keep the grip MOVING towards the target.**

**PITCHING**

Now that you have figured out how to CHIP the ball, you will need to learn what to do when your ball is farther back off the green. In a CHIP shot, the ball spends about 80% of its time rolling on the ground. When you are farther from the green (or the pin is closer to the edge), you will need to PITCH the ball. When we PITCH the ball, the ball will travel farther in the air than it will on the ground. We need to make only 2 slight adjustments to our CHIPPING method to get a PITCHING stroke:

- 1) Choose a higher-lofted wedge, like a Sand Wedge or a Lob Wedge
- 2) Slightly hinge (cock) your wrists a little on your backswing

By selecting a higher-lofted wedge (instead of your 7 iron or 8 iron), the ball will automatically fly a little *higher* and it will roll a little *less*. Slightly cocking your wrists as you swing the clubhead back increases the potential energy that will be released down into the ball on the forward swing. This increase in energy will also help the ball fly a little higher. Even though the swing in the PITCHING motion is a *little* bit longer than in the CHIPPING motion, it is still a short swing. As with the CHIPPING motion, the length of the swing determines how far the ball will go. You will try to make the same PACE of swing every time...you will simply alter the LENGTH of the swing to alter the distance the pitch travels.

How far away from the green can you effectively PITCH the ball? The answer is between 20-30 yards, depending upon your pitching ability. Once you get 30 yards or more away from the green, the swing gets too long to produce good results from a standard pitching stance. This brings us to the “half-wedge” shot.

**THE HALF-WEDGE**

The half-wedge is perhaps the toughest shot in golf. Why? Because you are too far from the hole to use a pitching motion to carry the ball onto the green, and you are too close for a full swing to work. Many golfers hit this shot poorly because they take a full

backswing, then they hit the brakes to slow the club down before impact. This is VERY hard to time correctly, and makes striking the ball difficult.

Okay...let's start some Half-Wedge instruction. The Half-Wedge is a finesse shot that is just as it sounds...it is basically a shot with a "half" swing. The motion is longer than a pitch swing, but it is shorter than a full swing. In addition, the golfer sets up to the ball differently than with the pitch shot. Now, let us talk about the set-up for the Half-Wedge shot:

### ***STEP 1 – Grip***

You will grip the club the same as in the CHIP SHOT.

### ***STEP 2 – Set Up (“taking your stance” or “addressing the ball”)***

With your feet 2” less than shoulder-width apart and parallel to your target line, place the ball directly in the middle of your stance. You should be using a sand wedge. A pitching wedge works, but a sand wedge is better. Keeping your back fairly straight, bend slightly forward at the hips, slightly bend your knees and stick out your bottom. You should look just like a person getting ready to bump a volleyball. Sole the club directly behind the ball, keeping the face of the club pointing at your target. Take your grip on the club.

### ***STEP 3 – The half-wedge “swing”***

- 1) Feel like you swing the GRIP, HIPS and CHEST back together as one unit until your LEFT arm is parallel to the ground.
- 2) Slightly “cock” your wrists as your left arm approaches parallel to the ground. This completes your backswing.
- 3) Gently push your weight off your back foot and turn your CHEST, HIPS and the GRIP of the club back down and through the ball together.
- 4) Your club should travel through the ball and will make a shallow divot just after striking the ball.
- 5) Keep turning your chest, hips and the grip toward the target until your RIGHT arm is parallel to the ground.
- 6) At the completion of your half-wedge swing, your right heel should be slightly off the ground (this means you shifted your weight towards the target correctly).

How fast should you swing the club for the Half-Wedge? About 75% of your full swing pace. It is not a fast swing, but it is faster than half-speed. Your goal is to swing the same pace on all Half-Wedge shots. If you wish to hit the ball a little farther, make your backswing and your follow-through a little bit longer. If you want to hit it a little shorter, make both your backswing and your follow-through a little shorter. The key here is to keep the same swing pace...about 75% of your full swing speed. Simply alter the length of your backswing and follow-through EQUALLY to alter the length of the shot.

The Half-Wedge is a difficult shot to master...it takes significantly more practice than any other shot in golf; however, it is perhaps the MOST important shot you can have in your bag. As a beginner in golf, you will have a significant number of 30-80 yard shots during a round of golf. If your body has a decent clue of how to execute the Half-Wedge, you can save a significant amount of shots during a round by just getting the ball on the green on your first try.

We have a wonderful place to practice the Half-Wedge at Lochland Country Club. We have built a Wedge Facility out between holes #1 and #10. As a member of Lochland, you are welcome to use the Wedge Facility at any time. In fact, we will lend you a golf cart at no charge so you can go out and work on your game in peace. The Wedge Facility is a WONDERFUL place to spend some time away from the wandering eyes of others ...it is secluded and is a great place to get away for an hour or so. The only stipulation regarding the Wedge Facility is that you cannot use range balls. If you do not have your own practice balls, you are welcome to borrow our shag bag of practice balls from the Golf Shop.

### **GETTING READY FOR THE FULL SWING**

Most, but not all, golf courses have a Driving Range where golfers can practice their full swings. If your course has a Driving Range, chances are likely that the course charges a fee to hit Range Balls. Set your clubs on the rack outside the clubhouse, and go in to the Golf Shop. Look for a large counter area with a cash register, and tell the attendant you would like to hit some Range Balls. The attendant will either have bags or baskets of range balls behind the counter, or he/she will sell you tokens that go to a large ball dispenser outside the Golf Shop. At Lochland Country Club, we keep our range balls in a large white bin down by the range. You may help yourself to baskets of balls, and then write your name down on the Range Sheet indicating how many baskets you need to be charged for. In any scenario, it is important that you use these Range Balls on the driving range only and not on the putting/chipping greens. If you wish to practice on the putting or chipping greens, you should use a bag of your own used golf balls or borrow the Club's shag bag from the Golf Shop attendant.

After procuring a bag or two of Range Balls, go outside, retrieve your golf bag, and proceed to the Driving Range tee. The Driving Range tee is usually marked with ropes or painted lines, and the idea here is to make sure that you hit balls between the ropes or the painted lines. Hitting Range Balls displaces a lot of turf, and the grounds staff must move the ropes/lines on a daily basis to guarantee that the range will regenerate the grass that has been displaced. It is considered poor etiquette to hit outside the ropes. Set your bag of clubs BEHIND the range ropes and place your range balls between the ropes. After you are finished hitting range balls, take any remaining range balls and the bags/baskets back to the Golf Shop or to the Range Bin. Here at Lochland, we would greatly appreciate it if you would take the baskets (and any unused range balls) back to the white range bin.

Now that you are finally on the Driving Range, it is time that we start Full Swing Instruction. Before you hit range balls, you will need to know how to hold the golf club



and you will need to know how to stand up to the ball (“taking your stance” or “addressing the ball”). If you have already read the Chipping/Pitching sections above, you have everything you need to know about the grip. If you have not read the Chipping/Pitching sections, you will need to pay close attention to the grip information below. “*But Pro... learning about the grip is BORING!*” You cannot believe how many times I have heard this statement in clinics or in personal instruction sessions! Almost every student wants to sprint down to the range and start beating balls without any regard for the proper fundamentals of how to actually hold on to the club. Most find it boring, tedious and to some point, irrelevant. This could not be farthest from the truth. Without a proper grip, the wrists cannot hinge properly; without the wrists hinging properly, the club cannot be swung “on plane”; without the club being “on plane”, the golfer has **ABSOLUTELY NO CHANCE OF BUILDING A REPEATING, EFFICIENT SWING**. Needless to say, you will not be able to find one player on the PGA or the LPGA tour with a bad grip. Do we have your attention yet? No? Let me ask you this...if you were having brain surgery, would you want your surgeon to hold the scalpel in a clumsy, inefficient manner that did not allow his hands to work in a consistent way? That’s right...golf is not brain surgery; however, the clubhead is traveling at speeds in excess of 100 m.p.h., and every degree the clubface is either open or closed at impact means the ball will travel 10-20 yds. off-line. Call me crazy, but that sounds like precision to me...kind of like brain surgery. So, listen up...this may be the most important part of your full swing instruction (once again, if you have read our Chipping Section above, you may skip the GRIP portion of this section):

### ***STEP 1-Grip***

Starting with a 7 or an 8-iron, set the head of the club (the heavy end) down flat on the ground, so that neither end of the clubhead is off the ground. This is called “soling” or “grounding” the club.

### **Left Hand**

Hold your left hand up in the air, with all of your fingers together and your thumb resting up against the base of the index finger. There should not be any space between the left thumb and the left index finger. Now, look down at the very top end of the grip (called the “butt”), you will see that it is round like the face of a clock. Imagine that there is a line starting at 1 O’Clock on the butt end of the grip, that runs all the way to the bottom of the grip where it meets the shaft. Place your LEFT thumb on this imaginary line, leaving about ½ of an inch of the butt end of the club sticking out of your hand. Make sure that your thumb does not separate from your index finger. Now, wrap your fingertips around the bottom of the grip of the club. If your hand is oriented properly, the bottom of the club should run from the base of your pinky finger up through the middle knuckle of your index finger, and the club should *feel as if it is resting in the fingertips, not the palm*. See the line that runs between your left thumb and the base of your left index finger? An extension of this line should point toward your right shoulder.

### **Right Hand**

Now, imagine a line starting at 11 O’Clock on the butt end of the grip that runs all the way to the bottom of the grip where it meets the shaft. Cover up your left thumb with the

right palm, placing your RIGHT thumb on this imaginary line running through 11 O’Clock (just like the left hand, make sure there is not a gap between the thumb and the base of the right forefinger. Now, wrap the fingertips of your right hand around the bottom of the grip of the club. Remember that line between your thumb and your index finger? On your right hand, an extension of that line should point toward your right shoulder as well.

**The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about the Grip:**

- 1. Your left thumb is pointing at 1 O’Clock and your right thumb is pointing at 11 O’Clock.**
- 2. The club feels like it is resting in the fingertips of both hands.**
- 3. The lines formed between your thumbs and the bases of your index fingers should both point toward your right shoulder.**

***STEP 2 – Set Up (“taking your stance” or “addressing the ball”)***

In combination with a poor grip, many swing problems happen as a result of an incorrect stance or posture. Your swing will adjust itself to an improper posture, and swing flaws WILL result. Having a proper stance and posture will enable the golfer to swing the club on the correct route (also called “plane”).

- 1) With feet together, place your hands at your side and stand up tall. Look straight ahead with your CHIN UP and BACK STRAIGHT.
- 2) Bend forward slightly at the hips, keeping your chin up and back straight. Standing vertically, you are at a 90\* angle to the ground. After you tilt forward from the hips, your upper body should be at an angle approximately 70\* to the ground.
- 3) Spread your feet no wider than shoulder width apart. With short irons (8,9,PW,SW), the stance may be narrowed slightly.
- 4) Simultaneously, SLIGHTLY bend your knees and stick your bottom out. You should feel a slight arch in your lower back. Your posterior end MUST stick out slightly so that your body weight is balanced over the MIDDLE OF YOUR FEET. You are now in an “athletic” position and will look somewhat like a person getting ready to bump a volleyball.

If you have performed steps 1 through 4 correctly, your arms should now be hanging naturally straight down from your shoulder sockets. Notice that your hands are now approximately 4”-6” in front of your thighs.

***STEP 3 – Setting the club down (“soling” or “grounding” the club)***

Now repeat steps 1 through 4 with a club in your hand and the head of the club resting on the ground. If you have performed steps 1 through 4 correctly, your body weight should remain over the middle of your feet, your chin should still be in the air, and your hands should be 4”-6” in front of your thighs.

**The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about the stance:**

- 1. You must keep your back fairly straight with your bottom sticking out.**
- 2. Your chin must be up (not be buried into your chest).**
- 3. Your body weight must be evenly distributed over the MIDDLE of your feet (not towards your heels, not towards your toes).**

***STEP 4 – Where to place the ball (“ball position”)***

Ball position is where the ball rests in relationship to your left or right foot, i.e., is the ball closer to your left foot, right in the middle of your stance, or is it closer to your right foot? There are two schools of thought on ball position...the “Variable Ball Position” and the “One Ball Position”. Due to inherent philosophical flaws with the “One Ball Position” method, I only teach the “Variable Ball Position” method (if you are extremely bored to tears someday and have nothing better to do, I would be happy to explain the flaws with the “One Ball Position” method). Pay very close attention to your ball position when you are practicing...improper ball positioning can lead to serious swing flaws.

**VARIABLE BALL POSITIONS**

**Club you are using**

Short Irons (LW,SW,PW, 9, 8 iron)  
Middle Irons (7,6, and 5 irons)  
Long Irons (3,4 iron) and Woods

**Ball Position**

Center of your stance  
1” left of center  
Just inside left heel

There is some leeway here...ball positioning is not the same for everyone; you will have to experiment with different ball positions to see what works best for you. The ball positions I listed above are good places to start. You may find that moving the ball one-half to a full inch either way may make a big difference in how you strike the ball; however, there is one absolute: **NEVER** position the ball to the right of center for a standard full swing shot. You may position your ball to the right of center if you are chipping or pitching, but **NEVER** for a full swing.

The distance between the ball and your feet is also a component of “ball position”. This component changes with every club in the bag, because every club in the bag has a different length. Beginning with the sand wedge, each iron in the set is approximately ½” longer than the one previous. Once we get into the woods, the difference is even greater. Because of this, the distance between your feet and the ball changes from shot to shot. How is one to know how far away from the ball to stand? That is a difficult question to answer, but the following “system” works pretty well: With the club you are going to use, sole the clubhead directly behind the ball while aiming the clubface at your intended target. Take your full-swing grip and settle into your stance. Now, keeping your LEFT hand on the club, let your right hand loose and let it hang straight down from your right shoulder. If you are standing TOO CLOSE to the ball, your right hand will be dangling ABOVE the top of the grip. If you are standing TOO FAR from the ball, your right hand will be dangling BELOW the bottom of the grip. If you are standing the CORRECT DISTANCE from the ball, your right hand will dangle just TO THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE GRIP. If you were to re-grip the club with your right hand, you would simply slide your right hand onto the side of the grip. This concept is slightly difficult to see in your

mind's eye, so set a ball down on the ground and set up overly close too, then overly far from, the ball. By exaggerating how close you are to the ball, you will see what we mean by your right hand being ABOVE, BELOW, or TO THE SIDE OF the grip.

### ***STEP 5 – Taking aim at your target (“alignment”)***

In order to hit the ball on the correct path, it is imperative that you aim correctly at your target. Remember, mistakes come in even pairs. If you make a mistake in alignment, you **MUST** make a mistake in your swing to compensate for your poor aim; otherwise, the ball will never reach its target. We want you to use the following method to take aim at your target. This method is used by a vast majority of golfers on the PGA and LPGA tours for a good reason...IT WORKS!

- 1) Stand approximately 10 feet behind your ball. Due to the fact that one of your eyes is dominant and your eyes are set about 2 degrees apart on your head (unless your face is perfectly flat!), your dominant eye will skew your aim unless you are **AT LEAST 10 FEET BEHIND YOUR BALL**. Standing 3 or 4 feet behind your ball is ineffective.
- 2) Visualize a straight line through the back of your ball to the final target (called the ***Primary Target***).
- 3) Pick out an object (a broken tee, a chunk of dirt, or a dead piece of grass) that is 2 to 3 feet out in front of your ball and directly in line with your Primary Target. This target closer to your ball is called a ***Secondary Target***.
- 4) Approach your ball and place the clubhead behind the ball, aiming the clubface directly at the ***Secondary Target***. Imagine a straight line going through your ball, through the Secondary Target and through your ***Primary Target***. This is called your ***Ball-to-Target Line***.
- 5) Align your feet to an imaginary line that is ***parallel to and LEFT of*** your ball-to-target line. Your feet, knees, hips and shoulders should be parallel to this line. It will appear as if your feet, knees, hips and shoulders are pointed approximately 10-15 yards **LEFT** of your primary target. ***NEVER, EVER point your feet, hips or shoulders AT your target...***if you do, you will be lined up too far to the right, and you will develop a swing flaw to compensate for the incorrect aim.

### **The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about ALIGNMENT:**

1. **You must stand AT LEAST 10’ BEHIND YOUR BALL before selecting your Primary and Secondary Targets.**
2. **Aim your clubface directly at the Secondary Target. If you are aimed correctly at your Secondary Target, you will be aimed correctly at your Primary Target.**
3. **You must set your feet on an imaginary line that is PARALLEL TO and POINTING LEFT OF your ball-to-target line.**

## **THE FULL GOLF SWING**

Drumroll, please. Here is what you have been waiting for...that magical, mystical tidbit of information that will allow you to hit EVERY shot straight, high and towards your target, right? **Wrong**. The best thing you could ever do before continuing reading would be to re-read the previous pages on grip, stance, posture, ball position and alignment. After that, re-read it again, and again, and again. I know we are beating a dead horse here, but if you make a mistake in just one of those areas (grip, stance, posture, ball position or alignment), you **MUST** make a mistake in the swing to compensate for it. If you do not make a counteracting mistake, your ball will **NOT** go toward your intended target. Remember, the goal of instruction (and practice) is to provide consistency...and the only way to do that is to significantly reduce the **AMOUNT** of even-numbered mistakes in your swing. You cannot eliminate **ALL** mistakes; however, you can eliminate a majority of them by focusing on the proper fundamentals of grip, stance, posture, ball position, and alignment.

Enough preaching...let's get to it. The golf swing, that is. As stated earlier, there is no "perfect swing"; however, there is a "best" swing for your age, your body type, and your athletic ability. What we will do for you here is to assimilate the parts of the swing that **have been proven to be the most effective for the most golfers**. In order to do this effectively, we will divide the swing up into three parts: 1) The Backswing, 2) The Downswing, and 3) The Follow-Through.

### **THE BACKSWING**

The backswing, should be a free-flowing motion that allows us to "load" up and fire, similar to cocking a hammer on a gun. Just like any stick-and-ball sport (baseball, tennis, cricket, etc.), the first "half" of the swing (called the **BACKSWING**) is achieved by getting almost all of our body weight back behind the ball and onto the back leg. During the second half of the swing (the **DOWNSWING**), the golfer's body weight must "push off" the back leg and begin travelling to the front leg. Another way to think of the golf swing is by using the word "pivot". The entire golf swing is a 2-pivot point motion. We must turn our body to the right and **PIVOT** over our right leg (thus getting our body weight over the back leg), and then we must turn our body to the left and **PIVOT** over our left leg in the follow-through. This is **ONLY** accomplished if we properly move the club and our body weight correctly to the right at the start.

#### ***STEP 1 – The "takeaway"***

Keeping the hands and wrists "quiet", swing the club with your arms, chest and shoulders straight back from the ball for about 6". After the first 6", the club begins to **GENTLY** swing around the body and up towards the sky.

#### ***STEP 2 - "Hinging" the wrists***

After the hands pass the right foot, they will begin to hinge upward (called "cocking") as the club continues to swing inside the Ball-to-Target line. The backswing is a combination of "up and around" the body.

### ***STEP 3 – Shifting weight to the back leg***

As the club continues to swing backward, you will feel your body weight begin to move to your back leg. Your knee should retain its original flex. When the hands reach the top of the backswing, they will be about “ear-height” and the left arm should be almost straight (but not locked). The hands and wrists should be finished “cocking” by now, forming almost a perfect right angle between the clubshaft and the left arm. At the top of the backswing, 95% of your body weight should be over the inside of your back foot, and your back should be facing the target. The clubshaft should be almost (but not quite) parallel to the ground and pointing parallel and left of the ball-to-target line.

### **The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about the BACKSWING:**

- 1. The hands and wrists stay “quiet” as you push the club back from the ball with your arms, chest and shoulders.**
- 2. The hands and wrists start to cock as the club swings UP and AROUND the body.**
- 3. Your body “pivots” to the right with 95% of your body weight moving to your RIGHT leg at the top of your backswing.**

### **THE DOWNSWING**

Starting the downswing with the correct body part is perhaps the leading cause of physical mistakes in the golf swing. I know that it is counter-intuitive, however, but ***THE DOWNSWING MUST BE INITIATED BY PUSHING YOUR WEIGHT OFF THE BACK FOOT TOWARD YOUR FRONT FOOT.*** I know it sounds crazy, but the downswing actually starts with the feet, NOT THE HANDS!

### ***STEP 1 – Shifting weight forward (towards target)***

A good way to think of this “pushing” motion is to think of “bumping” your left hip towards the target. Feel like you are pushing your weight off the inside of your back foot **AS YOUR LEFT HIP MOVES TOWARD THE TARGET.** The left hip should move about 2” toward the target, then it will start turning to the left as your body weight begins to “shift” to your left leg.

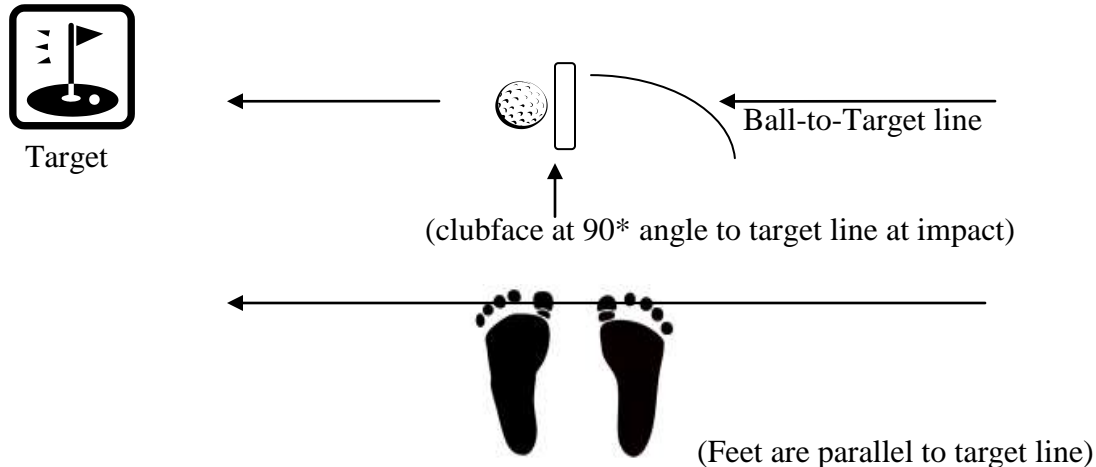
### ***STEP 2 – Swing the Grip back to the ball***

After your body weight begins to move to the left, it is now OK to let the hands come down. Keeping your wrists cocked, feel like the back of your LEFT hand is **PULLING THE BUTT-END OF THE CLUB INTO THE BACK OF THE BALL.** Once again, this sounds counter-intuitive, but you **MUST SWING THE GRIP OF THE CLUB DOWN, NOT THE CLUBHEAD.** If you attempt to swing the clubhead at the ball, your wrists will release the hinge they had at the top of the backswing too early, and you will hit the ground before you hit the ball. **REMEMBER THIS...**if your clubhead hits the ground **BEFORE** it hits the ball, it means that you un-cocked your wrists **TOO EARLY** in the downswing.

### ***STEP 3 – Square the clubface to the target***

As you start to pull the grip of the club down towards the ball, the clubhead obviously follows. What you want to feel here is that the back of the left hand and the clubface

need to ROTATE TOWARDS THE TARGET. At impact (when the clubface meets the ball), the back of the left hand AND the clubface need to FACE the target at a 90\* angle to your body and the target line (see diagram below).



#### ***STEP 4 – Taking a “divot”***

After impacting the ball, the clubhead needs to keep moving THROUGH the ball and DOWN into the dirt. I know it sounds counter-intuitive (again ☺), but you must hit DOWN through the ball in order for it to go UP in the air. Golf is the ONLY sport in the world where you hit DOWN to make the ball go UP. The clubhead will displace a small chunk of dirt and grass (called a divot) as the clubhead keeps traveling to the left and around the body. Your hips, arms and torso (and body weight) will continue rotating towards (and left of) the target.

#### **The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about the DOWNSWING:**

1. The downswing starts with the FEET FIRST!!! Gently push off the inside of the right foot by “bumping” your left hip towards the target.
2. AFTER your body weight starts to “pivot” left, PULL the GRIP END of the club down towards the ball (the club head will MAGICALLY follow ☺).
3. The clubface must swing down THROUGH the ball TO THE TURF.

#### **THE FOLLOW-THROUGH**

The Follow-Through (or the “finish”) to your swing seems to be unimportant, because the ball has already flown away. HOWEVER, it is CRITICAL TO FINISH YOUR SWING PROPERLY! As we stated earlier, if you make one mistake before or during the swing, you will have to make another mistake after that to “make up” for the original mistake. In the case of the Follow-Through, this becomes self-evident. If you follow through into what is known as a “good finish”, it means that you did something CORRECT to get there!

#### ***STEP 1 - Finishing the downswing (“the follow-through”)***

The club head, your arms and your hands need to continue to swing UP and AROUND the LEFT side of your body. By now, your body weight has transferred completely to

the outside of the left foot, with 95% of your bodyweight now on the left leg. **THERE SHOULD BE ABSOLUTELY NO WEIGHT LEFT ON YOUR BACK FOOT.** In fact, your back foot should be ALL THE WAY UP ON THE BIG TOE at a 90\* angle to the ground. At the finish of your swing, if your back foot is not perpendicular to the ground, **you did not do a good enough job of “pushing” off your back foot to start the downswing.** More likely than not, you probably started your downswing incorrectly by swinging your hands down first. **IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT THE DOWNSWING SEQUENCE STARTS WITH A “PUSH” OFF THE BACK FOOT WITH THE LEFT HIP “BUMPING” TOWARDS THE TARGET.**

### ***STEP 2 – The “Smiley Face Finish”***

We emphasize the importance of the finish position to our junior golfers by actually tacking a smiley face on the bottom of their back heel. We ask the kids to swing the club and show the person standing directly behind them their “Mr. SMILEY FACE FINISH”. This “pose” promotes a COMPLETE transfer of weight from the right leg, through the ball, to the front leg. Power in golf comes from swinging the club with the large muscles of the body, and this cannot be done without transferring weight through the ball. At the finish, you should feel like a yard flamingo with ALL of your body weight on your left, or target, foot. Your hands and the grip will continue swinging up and around your body and will finish again at ear-height at the completion of the swing.

### **The 3 “Most Important” things to remember about the FOLLOW-THROUGH:**

- 1. FEEL like your body weight TRANSFERS COMPLETELY to the left leg BEFORE the club strikes the ball.**
- 2. Your right (back foot) should be perpendicular to the ground (see the illustration below) at the finish of the swing.**
- 3. Be able to show anyone standing behind you your MR. SMILEY FACE FINISH!!!**





## **BUNKER PLAY**

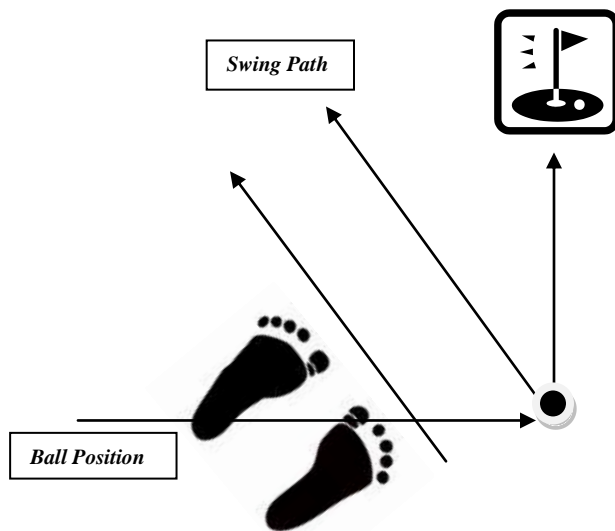
There is one phrase in golf that strikes absolute fear in the hearts of a majority of golfers: “Oh-oh, your ball just went in the bunker.” It is a shame that these few words cause so much terror...because hitting out of a bunker is really not too difficult. By making a few adjustments our regular full swing, we can learn to hit out of bunkers fairly easily.

### ***STEP 1-Grip***

The grip is THE MOST IMPORTANT PART of the bunker shot. If you hold on to the club properly, the bunker shot is much easier to execute. You will grip the club the same as on a regular full swing, however, **you must rotate the club OPEN (to the right) 45 degrees BEFORE taking your grip.** When you lower the club down behind the ball (remember from the RULES section that you must “hover” it over the sand), it should look like the clubface is POINTED WAY OFF TO THE RIGHT OF YOUR TARGET.

### ***STEP 2 – The Stance (including AIM)***

Because we “opened” up the clubface prior to taking our grip, we now have to compensate for the clubface pointing to the right. As a result, we will aim our body 30-40 degrees LEFT of the target. For ball placement, you will want to have the ball fairly forward in your stance, just off the heel of your left (target) foot. In the bunker shot, we want to hit the sand BEFORE we hit the ball, so we move our ball position forward (towards the target) in our stance (see image below).



### ***STEP 3 – The Bunker Swing***

The 2<sup>nd</sup> most important thing to do in the bunker shot is TO MAKE A SWING THAT IS THE SAME SPEED AS YOUR FULL SWING. Most people fail in the bunker because they slow their swings down through impact. When this happens, the club does not have enough momentum to drive through the sand. The sand stops the golfer’s follow-through, and the ball does not get out of the bunker. To remedy this, aim one to two

inches BEHIND the ball and make a FULL swing with a FULL finish, striking the sand BEFORE the ball. You need a good weight shift (just like in a regular swing), and you need to come to a full finish. If you make a full swing and hit 1-2 inches behind the ball, the sand will “splash” the ball out onto the green. **The key is to swing FULL SPEED.**

#### ***STEP 4 – Advanced Bunker Play***

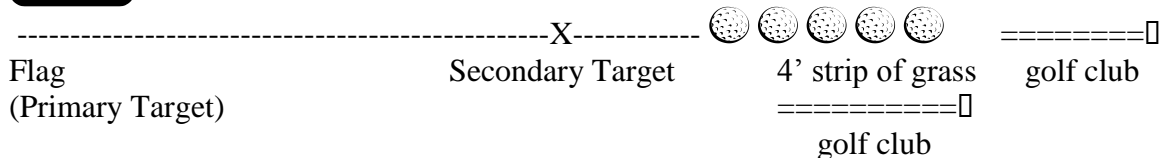
If you are getting the ball out of the bunker 95% of the time on your first swing, you are ready to proceed to a more “advanced” move in the bunker. With this move, you want to KEEP THE BACK OF YOUR LEFT HAND FACING THE SKY PAST IMPACT. In other words, you want to FEEL AS IF YOU ARE SLAMMING THE **BACK** OF THE CLUBHEAD INTO THE SAND. Normally, the back of your left hand faces toward the target at impact; however, in the bunker, we want the back of the left hand to face the sky. This allows the leading edge of the clubface to slide underneath the ball without digging in the sand.

#### **PROPER RANGE PRACTICE**

Okay...you now know how to stroke a putt, chip, pitch, hit a half-wedge, make a full golf swing, and hit a bunker shot. Now we have to put what we have learned into practice. Under the “Alignment” section of this tutorial (p.27), we emphasized the fact that lining up incorrectly will create a chain reaction of other mistakes. **THE WAY YOU PRACTICE ALSO CAN CREATE MISTAKES.** Most amateurs hit range balls in a way that actually HURTS their games. You see, most amateurs drop their range balls on the practice tee, grab a 7 iron (or in the worst case, a driver), put a ball up on the “juiciest” patch of grass and fire a shot at the 150 marker. Next, they take their 7 iron, scrape a ball over to the next good spot of grass and fire at the same target. This process continues for 2 buckets of balls. Let us say this golfer does this three or four times a week for the whole summer. By September, the golfer is completely frustrated at his or her lack of consistency. They may even say to their golfing buddies: “...gee I don’t understand it! I have been practicing a BUNCH this summer and I haven’t gotten any better...in fact, I’m worse than I was in May!” Sound familiar?

Well, what happened? Here is EXACTLY what happened: There are 35 balls in each bucket. Our sample golfer hit 2 buckets of balls for 3.5 times a week for 12 weeks. Because the golfer did not lay ANY alignment devices down, and he or she used the same target (the 150 yard marker), **OUR GOLFER JUST “PRACTICED” 2,940 DIFFERENT SWINGS.** You see (in spite of what you think about yourself), each golfer has some amount of athletic ability in his or her body. This athleticism, if the golfer has aimed incorrectly, will AUTOMATICALLY find a way to re-route the golf club during the swing in an attempt to hit the ball toward the target. If a golfer accidentally aims 15 yards to the left, he or she will automatically swing to the right to get the ball on track. If the golfer accidentally aims 15 yards to the right, he or she will automatically pull across the ball in order to get it to go left. In both of these scenarios, the golfer’s body DOES THIS SUBCONSCIOUSLY ON ITS OWN, without any intention involved. It is natural, and EVERY golfer does this to some extent. The more athleticism a golfer has, the more pronounced the body’s correction will be.

The ENTIRE purpose of practice is to build a repeating swing. That is what we are all after. If you find yourself practicing like our sample golfer above, there is ***NO WAY YOU WILL EVER BE ABLE TO BUILD A REPEATING SWING.*** Well, how do we go about it, then? Look at the picture below:



### ***STEP 1***

Pick a good strip of grass that is approximately 4 feet long. At the end of that strip, lay a golf club down that points directly at your PRIMARY TARGET. Make sure to stand about 10 feet behind the club to make sure that the club is pointing correctly at the target.

### ***STEP 2***

Place another club 18” to the left of the 4 foot strip of grass. This club should be parallel to the 1<sup>st</sup> club you laid down and will be pointing approximately 10 yards LEFT of your PRIMARY TARGET. You will be lining your feet parallel to this club, so MAKE SURE THAT THE TWO CLUBS ON THE GROUND ARE PERFECTLY PARALLEL.

### ***STEP 3***

Pick a spot 3 to 4 feet out in front of the 4 foot strip of grass that is directly IN LINE WITH YOUR PRIMARY TARGET and place a ball or a tee on this spot. This is your SECONDARY TARGET. You will aim your clubface perpendicular to an imaginary line running from this secondary target to your ball.

### ***STEP 4***

Align your feet line parallel to the club closest to your feet. As a reminder, this club is parallel to an imaginary line running from your ball to your secondary target.

### ***STEP 5***

Complete your setup and make sure you are IN PERFECT BALANCE before hitting every practice shot.

### ***STEP 6***

If you transferred your weight (pivoted) correctly AND you hit down and through the ball, you will have taken a chunk of dirt and grass (remember the “divot” from earlier?) out of the ground AFTER you struck the ball. Grab another golf ball and place the ball at the very BACK portion of the divot you just took. Step back 10’ behind the ball and start the whole process over again, for every single shot. ***It is important to not “rapid fire”***

***practice shots...take your time and go through the entire aiming process on EVERY SWING.***

### ***STEP 7***

You will want to keep hitting balls along this same strip. This is why we wanted you to pick out a hitting area that had a good 3' to 4' of turf in a straight line. This accomplishes 2 things: 1) It further encourages you to keep hitting DOWN on the ball, taking a divot every time and 2) By hitting in a "strip" going straight back from where you started, you are GUARANTEEING that your aim has not changed. Remember the earlier anecdote about hitting 2,940 different swings? This is ABSOLUTELY true. If you hit your practice balls in a strip at the same target, you are practicing the same swing. If you are a "scrapper" like I mentioned before, you will NEVER practice the same swing, and you will NEVER get any better. Simple as that.

### ***STEP 8***

What happens when I run out of good grass on my "strip"? Start again...from the beginning. You must pick another strip of grass 3'-4' long, pick out a new PRIMARY TARGET and a new SECONDARY TARGET, and you MUST MOVE THE CLUBS ON THE GROUND TO YOUR NEW "STATION". Do NOT be lazy. This little "break" will actually refresh your mind and body, and will give you a good rest before hitting more balls. It is important to NOT hit balls until your hands bleed. You need to take several breaks if you are to get the maximum out of practicing, and by re-setting your hitting station, you will give your body a better chance of staying in a learning mode.

What clubs should you be hitting? I strongly recommend that the first 25-30 balls you hit should be with a sand wedge. The SW is the heaviest club in the bag and will help you loosen up faster than the other clubs. For the majority of your ball-striking sessions, I recommend using a 6 iron. The 6 iron has just the right amount of loft for practice. It has enough loft so that hitting the ball is not too difficult, but it does not have too much loft. If a club has too much loft (8 iron on down), the ball will not sidespin as much on a mishit. If you are making a mistake with a 6 iron, you will readily see it in the form of the ball curving right or left of your target. If you use an 8 or 9 iron, you will have better hits, but these may be a little deceiving due to the lack of sidespin imparted by a less than perfect strike.

After hitting a couple of baskets of 6 irons, hit about 10 balls with a fairway wood and then finish with 10-15 drivers. DO NOT SPEND MUCH TIME HITTING WOODS ON THE RANGE!!! The longer a club is, and the less loft it has on the face, the more difficult it is to hit, regardless of your ability. I understand that it is FUN to hit the driver, but like with all things in life, you can get TOO MUCH of a good thing. Your body will begin to make adjustments to itself if you continually hit long irons or woods BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO HIT THEM AS WELL AS the shorter clubs. More swings with a difficult club means more errors, which means more compensations. DO NOT GET CAUGHT UP IN THE "SEXINESS" OF HITTING THE BALL FAR. If you

focus more on taking a good divot and hitting a straight shot with a mid-iron, you will get better, FASTER.

### **WARMING UP BEFORE YOUR ROUND**

The BEST way you can give yourself an opportunity to score well is to acclimate your body to the conditions of the golf course and to get your timing down.

#### **Acclimate Yourself to the Course**

We have 365 different golf courses to play at Lochland every year. Why do I say that? ***Because there are no 2 days in a row on ANY golf course where the course plays the same.*** Moisture levels, humidity, temperature, wind and turf conditions vary not only on a daily basis, but on an hourly basis as well. The most obvious place this appears is on the greens. Grasses grow at different rates according to weather conditions, and they react differently to cutting in differing turf conditions. Keeping the mower heights the same, there can be two different results on back-to-back days. Throw top-dressing into the mix, and significant differences will result. ***The best way to improve your score for the day is to go to the Practice Green FIRST*** and hit some long putts. Drop 3 balls down and pick a hole about 20-30 feet away. Try to stop each of the three balls within an imaginary circle around the hole that is 3 feet in diameter. We call this "Putting to a Pizza" in Junior Golf, where we actually make large imaginary "pizzas" around the hole. Move next to a hole 40 feet away and do the same. Finally, hit a dozen 5 foot putts, making sure that any putt missing the hole stops within 18" past the hole.

By getting yourself "tuned in" to the green speeds the golf course and weather conditions give you THAT DAY, you will give yourself the best chance to NOT 3-putt the first hole. Starting out your round with a 3-putt can put a golfer in a negative mood that is difficult to overcome.

#### **Set your timing**

Each person has their own individual "cadence". Some people walk fast, talk fast and eat fast. Others do just the opposite. If you have a fast cadence, you are probably "faster" on some days more so than on others. Nerves, nutrition, sleeping habits, etc. can all have an effect on your personal cadence for that day. To help you get in tune with your cadence, head to the practice range with your Sand Wedge, 7-iron and Driver after hitting your last practice putt. Start with your sand wedge and hit the ball with half-swings and get used to feeling the weight of the swinging head. Notice your timing. Do you hit solid shots with a slower or faster pace? Take your time and find out a pace that is comfortable for you that results in solid shots. After 20 shots, hit some full shots with the Sand Wedge. This will further stretch your muscles and prepare you for the longer clubs. After the sand wedge, do the exact same with your 7 iron, and then the driver. By starting with the shortest (and heaviest) club in your bag, you will be able to "stretch out" and find your body's "cadence" for that day.

***The absolute BEST way of giving yourself the BEST opportunity to shoot your BEST scores is by arriving at the golf course 45 minutes before your scheduled tee time and going through the above exercises. I PROMISE...if you follow this method, you will greatly REDUCE the number of double bogeys (or worse) on the first hole!***

### **NOW...JUST DO IT!!!**

You now have EVERYTHING you need to know to actually go out and play golf! Just like the Nike folks say... JUST DO IT. The first time you will have a few butterflies in your stomach about not making a fool of yourself...do not worry about this...just have fun. In fact, as long as you follow the etiquette suggestions above, you will be fine and nobody will even notice you. Many people are AFRAID TO PLAY GOLF BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID SOMEONE WILL THINK BADLY OF THEM FOR MAKING A MISTAKE. This is simply NOT TRUE. Remember High School Prom when you had that big red pimple on the side of your nose? You went into the bathroom every 15 minutes to see if it got any smaller or less red, and you worried what others would think about you. Guess what...nobody noticed. Nobody noticed that pimple on the side of your nose because THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT THE PIMPLES ON THEIR OWN NOSES. Golf is exactly the same. Just as long as you follow basic etiquette rules and you play 9 holes in 2 hours or less, nobody will think ill of you or your golfing abilities. Everyone gets wrapped up in their OWN game on the course, and they will not notice how well (or poorly!) you may be playing. Plan your shots before you get to your ball, keep your practice swings down to one (or none), hit your ball and then go find it. If you play at a brisk pace, nobody will care if you shoot 72 or 152, and YOU WILL FIT IN JUST FINE WITH THE OTHER GOLFERS.

### **WHAT IS A HANDICAP?**

One of the beautiful things about golf is that people with different abilities can compete in the same event by using what is called a “handicap”. Similar to other sports (like bowling or skeet shooting), individuals who are not as good as others need a little “help” with their scores to put them on a similar level as good players. A handicap is the amount of strokes that will be DEDUCTED from your score to equate you with other golfers of differing abilities. For example, it would not be fair for Doug (a beginner) to play in a competitive match against Annika (an expert, or “scratch” golfer). Doug would shoot about 130 and Annika would shoot about 72. In order for them to compete in a fair match, we need to “take away” shots from Doug’s score in a direct relationship to the difference between his ability and Annika’s ability. The United States Golf Association has a system for doing this...it is called The USGA Handicap System.

The USGA Handicap System uses computer-generated algorithms to assign what is called a “Handicap Index”. This Handicap Index (some simply call it a Handicap) is a number that an individual deducts from his or her score in order to compete against another player of different ability on that day on the same course. The Handicap Index is universally thought of as a representation of an individual’s playing ability. When one seasoned golfer asks another “What type of golfer are you?” The other usually responds with a whole number like “5” or “25”. This number is that individual’s “handicap”, and both golfers will subtract their respective handicaps from their original scores (called their GROSS scores) and compare the two numbers when they are finished. These scores (their GROSS score minus their Handicap) are called NET scores. **Example:** David has a 7 handicap and originally shoots an 82. Bill has a 15 handicap and shoots a 92. David’s Gross Score is 85 and his Net Score is  $85-7 = 78$ . Bill’s Gross Score is 92 and his Net

Score is  $92 - 15 = 77$ . Therefore, Bill wins the match by 1 shot, even though he actually shot 7 strokes higher than David.

### **HANDICAP TERMINOLOGY**

Definitions:

1. **Handicap** – a number that compares a player’s scoring ability to the scoring ability of others on a particular golf course.
2. **Gross Score** – the original score a golfer received on a hole or for the round.
3. **Net Score** – the player’s original score (GROSS score) minus the player’s handicap
4. **Par** – the score a scratch (0 handicap) golfer should get on a hole. Holes may have a PAR of 3, 4, or 5.
5. **Birdie** – one stroke better than PAR on a hole. If a golfer gets a 3 on a PAR 4, it is called a “birdie”.
6. **Bogey** – one stroke worse than PAR on a hole. If a golfer gets a 5 on a PAR 4, it is called a “bogey”.
7. **Double Bogey** – two strokes worse than PAR on a hole. If a golfer gets a 6 on a PAR 4, it is called a “double bogey”. Double bogey is followed by triple bogey, quadruple bogey, etc.
8. **Eagle** – two strokes better than PAR on a hole. If a golfer gets a 2 on a PAR 4, it is called an “eagle”
9. **Double Eagle (or Albatross)** – three strokes better than PAR on a hole. If a golfer gets a 2 on a PAR 5, it is called either a “double eagle” or an “albatross”.

Getting a handicap is not required for casual golfers, but if you want to play in competitions, you will need to have an actual USGA Handicap Index. Even if you do not plan on playing in competitions, it is a good idea to get a Handicap so that you may gauge your progress. As you practice and play, you will get better, and your handicap will be a relative indicator of this process.

How do you get a handicap? That is actually very simple. You may call the Golf Shop and ask any of the golf professionals to get you started in the USGA handicapping system. The golf professional will enter your information into the computer, and you will be assigned an identification number (called a GHIN number). You will use this GHIN number every time you log in to the handicap computer to post your scores. You will enter both 9 hole and 18 hole scores that you achieve on the course. As you get better (or worse ☹), the system’s algorithms will calculate a new handicap for you twice a month. We highly recommend getting a USGA Handicap Index, because it is not very expensive (usually around \$30 per year), and it is a great way of charting your progress as a golfer. As you play more and more, fluctuations in your handicap will give you an idea whether your practice is on the right track or whether you need to see a golf professional for some lessons.

# ***FOR WOMEN ONLY***

***I don't play golf because it scares the heck out of me...***

## ***WHERE DO I START???***

Even though golf is a great social game, there are many things about GOLF that are intimidating...so intimidating, in fact, that many women (and men) are so scared of it they will not even try to learn. This Q and A sheet will help answer some basic questions that many women have about golf. ***We will also include a “modified” Rules of Golf for Women so you will not feel stressed out about making a mistake regarding the Rules.***

The rules we talk about will be guidelines to keep everything fair, but if you are interested in more serious competition, the golf professionals will be more than happy to help acclimate you to tournament golf rules if you wish. You may have had many of these questions yourself, so sit back, relax, and let's GET "GOLF READY"!

***Q: I have never played golf before and I do not have clubs. Do I have to have a set of clubs to start?***

***A:*** NO! Sure, it helps to have your own clubs, but most courses (including Lochland) keep a spare set of clubs around for that purpose. If you call out ahead of time and ask if the course has any rental clubs for a beginner to try, most customer-friendly courses will have something you can use.

***Q: It is Saturday afternoon, my husband and kids are away, and I would like to play golf. What do I do first?***

***A:*** Call Lochland Golf Shop, tell the person who answers the phone your name, and tell them that you would like to play golf around "X" o'clock. The person answering the phone will then tell you that there is a "TEE TIME" around the time you asked for. This is the time you actually will start by hitting a ball off what is called the #1 Tee Box. He or she will give you a couple of options, like 3:09, 3:27, etc. Make sure you select the one that gives you enough time to change clothes, drive out to the golf course, and warm up (if you want to warm up first). Tell the Shop Attendant if you will have anyone with you, and whether or not they are a family member, a guest, or another Lochland member. Finally, tell the Shop Attendant if you will be walking or if you would like to ride in a golf cart.

***Q: What do I do if I want to bring a guest?***

***A:*** When you are setting up your tee time, tell the Golf Shop staff person that you will be bringing a guest or guests to your tee time. Tell the Golf Shop staff person the names of your guests and who will be paying for the guests. ***Please Note: There is an “unwritten rule” in a country club setting when it comes to guests. Members should ALMOST ALWAYS pay for guests... it is a sign of good etiquette.*** Unless you are being “wined and dined” by a salesperson, you should pick up the tab. Young adults bringing your parents to the golf course, please also



note: Your parents have paid for you most of your life...it is now YOUR time to pay them back!

**Q: *What should I wear to the golf course?***

A: This is a difficult question with no easy answers. Women's golf styles have changed dramatically over the years...just look at the LPGA. Many of the women on the Ladies' professional tour wear things that you would not let your daughter wear out of the house. The best advice is to wear a collared shirt and a nice pair of mid-thigh shorts or skirt. Try to stay away from very tight or revealing clothing. Aeropostale-type T-shirts, tank tops or spaghetti string -type tops should not be worn on a golf course. ***Please Note: It is very unsettling to tell a woman that she is not dressed appropriately...please help avoid a difficult situation by wearing a nice polo and at least mid-thigh shorts or skirt.***

**Q: *Once I drive in to the parking lot, what do I do next?***

A: If you are bringing your own golf clubs, bring the bag to the south side of the Golf Shop, and set them in the grass. Go in to the Golf Shop, tell the person behind the counter who you are, and that you are there to play golf at the 3:09 tee time. If you would like to take a golf cart, ask the Shop Attendant if you could rent a cart. He/she will give you a key, and direct you to select a cart on the north side of the Golf Shop. Drive the cart around to the south side of the Golf Shop and the Golf Shop attendant will help you put the bag on the golf cart.

**Q: *Do I have to warm up?***

A: You do NOT have to warm up, but it sure helps. If you want to have the BEST chance of playing well, you should hit a few putts to get a feel for how fast the greens are running that day. After you hit a few putts, you should hit 20-30 balls on the range with your Sand Wedge or Pitching Wedge and a few shots with your driver to stretch out your back and shoulders.

**Q: *Okay, I am ready to play...how do I start?***

A: With 2 or 3 minutes left before your tee time, drive your cart up to the big yellow balls on the #1 tee box. These are called "Tee Markers", and they are where you are supposed to hit your first shot from on every hole. Different colored tee markers are for golfers of different abilities, but we recommend playing from the yellow tees for women. For the first shot on every hole, you are allowed to put your ball up on a tee between the tee markers, but after you hit the first shot on each hole, you have to hit the ball off the ground until you finish the hole. Wait until the group out in front of you is safely out of the way, then put your tee in the ground between the yellow tee markers, take aim, then swing away!

**Q: *If I am playing with another person or people, who goes first AFTER we hit our first shot?***

A: After hitting the tee shots, each person should go to their ball to keep a good pace

of play. If one player hits the ball to the left, and the other hits the ball to the right, do not “follow” each other to your balls. This wastes time and makes play too slow. Don’t worry...you will both have plenty of time to socialize during your round! Once you get to your ball, the person farthest from the hole ALWAYS plays first. Make sure that no one is standing closer to the hole than this person, for obvious safety reasons. ***NEVER walk in front of anyone who is getting ready to hit...you could spend what would have been a wonderful afternoon in the Emergency Room!***

***Q: I have all of these clubs in my bag, and I do not know what to hit, where. Any suggestions?***

A: To start a hole, most individuals use the longest club in their bag, because the longer a club is, the farther it will go. For a beginner, you could start with a Driver (denoted on the bottom of the club), a 3-Wood, or 5-Wood. Once your ball is out in the fairway, a beginner should use a 7 iron or a hybrid club (something between an iron and a wood). Once you get within 80 yards of the green, use a wedge or a 9-iron. Once you are on the green, you will then use your putter. Each golfer hits each club a different distance than other golfers, so as you play more, you will need to note how far each club hits the ball when you hit it reasonably well. It is a good idea to start keeping a record of how far you hit different clubs after a decent shot. Keep a small notepad in your golf bag, and if you have a good shot, write down what club you hit and how far it went. For the most part, each successive club in your bag will hit the ball about 10 yards farther than the club with the next higher number. For example, a 7 iron hits the ball about 10 yards farther than an 8 iron. Therefore, a 7 iron would hit the ball about 20 yards farther than a 9-iron. You will simply have to use trial and error to discover how far your ball goes with each club in your bag. Try not to get frustrated...it takes a long time to get a good handle on what club to hit where. Just try to enjoy the learning process!

***Q: How do I know how far I am from the hole?***

A: Most golf courses have yardage markers that show the distance (in yards) from the yardage marker to the center of the green on that hole. On all Par 4s and Par 5s at Lochland, we have small yardage stones set in the ground in the middle of the fairway at 200, 150 and 100 yards. Many of the fairway sprinkler heads also have a yardage number on them. These distances are also to the center of the green. ***If you hit a particularly good shot, locate the nearest yardage marker and write down what distance you are and what club you hit.*** This will help you learn what club to hit and where (see question above). You can keep this in your golf bag and reference it for future shots.

***Q: What do I do if I hit my ball into a bunker?***

A: Place your bag behind the bunker, pull out your shortest wedge, and go locate the bunker rake. Walk into the bunker from behind (never from the green side) and drop the rake into the sand about 5 feet away from the ball. You may not

touch your club to the sand until you start your downswing, so you must HOVER the club above the sand while you take your stance. With a full swing, hit the ball out of the bunker, then rake all of the footprints out of the sand as you walk back toward your golf bag. There is a penalty of two shots for touching the sand before you start your downswing, so be careful!

**Q:** *Can I pick up my ball if I am frustrated?*

**A:** ABSOLUTELY!!! *Golf is a GAME, and games were meant to be fun!* Sometimes the BEST thing to do when you are struggling is to pick your ball up and proceed directly to the green. Throw the ball out on the green and try to putt it in the hole. If you are not playing in a tournament, IT IS NO BIG DEAL if you do not finish a hole! If you are playing in Ladies' Thursday Evening League or at any other non-tournament time at Lochland, you may pick your ball up if you are feeling frustrated. Write down the score you *most likely would have achieved if it is 10 or under*. If it is over 10, just write down a 10, because that is the highest score the GHIN handicap system will allow you to take. *We would much rather you pick up and get ready for the next hole than have you get frustrated and quit the game.* We all have good days and bad days, and sometimes it is best to just stop, gather your wits, and move on to the next hole!

**Q:** *How fast should I play a hole? A 9-hole round? An 18-hole round?*

**A:** Regardless of your ability, it should take you approximately 13 ½ minutes to play a hole, under 2 hours to play 9 holes and under 4 hours to play 18 holes. See the Etiquette section (p.4) of this handbook for suggestions on how to play faster without feeling “rushed”.

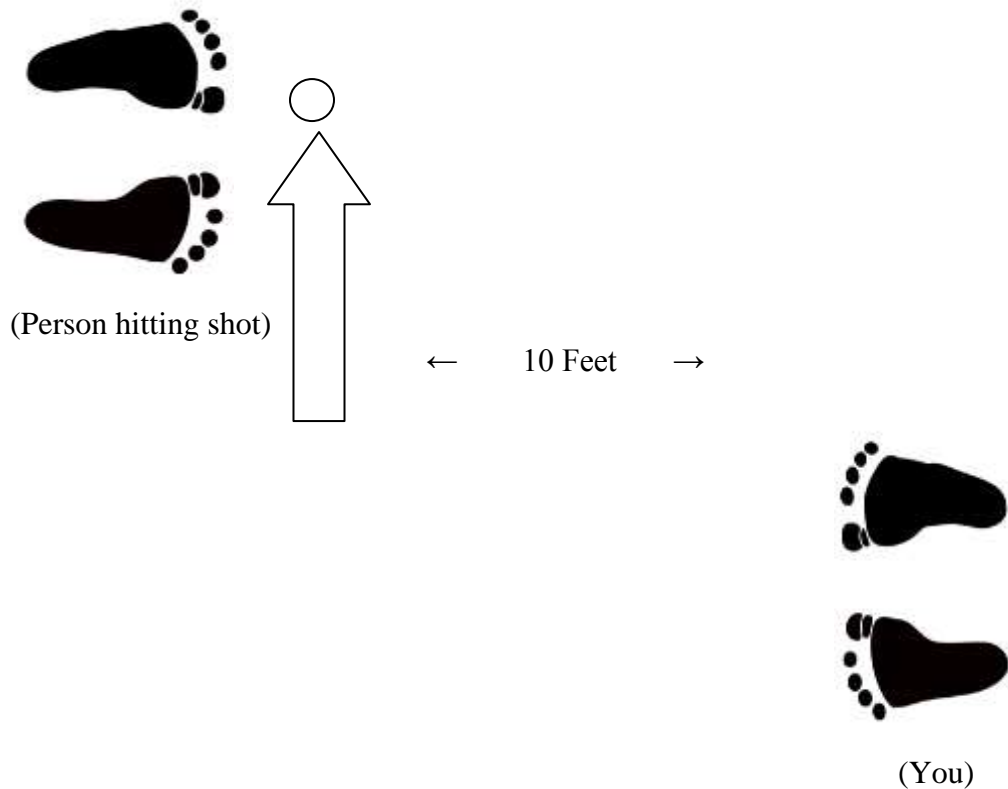
**Q:** *What do I do if there is someone playing behind me who is waiting on me?*

**A:** There is nothing more miserable than playing golf in front of someone pushing you, so please do not hesitate to let anyone playing faster than you to go through. It is not embarrassing...it is actually proper golf course etiquette. The correct way to do this is to move your group over to the rough near some trees. Motion to the group behind you (like a traffic cop) with your arm that you would like them to pass. After they acknowledge your offer, go stand behind a tree in the rough. **\*IMPORTANT: Do NOT look out from behind the tree until you know the group behind you has hit. Many golfers have been seriously injured by peeking out from behind a tree to see if everyone in the group behind has hit!** After the individual(s) go through your group, make sure that they are far enough away before you hit your next shot. If there is not an open hole in front of you, do not let the group behind you through. Logistically, this gums up the works. Only let groups through you if there is not a group immediately in front of you.

**Q:** *Where do I stand when someone else is hitting?*

**A:** The BEST place to stand when someone else is hitting is to stand facing them as they are addressing the ball, about 10 feet away and a little behind (toward

the tee box) them. NEVER stand closer to the green than the person who is addressing their ball. See diagram below:



**Q:** *When I am on the green, what do I do?*

**A:** The first thing you do when your group is on the green is to mark your ball with a small coin. Just like when you are in the fairway or rough, the person farthest from the hole goes first. After putting your ball up to the hole, tap it into the hole if you can. If the putt is too far to safely tap in, you will need to mark the ball with a small coin again, and the next person will putt. If your coin is in someone else's putting line, place your putterhead next to the coin and move the coin one or two putterhead lengths to the side. It is a penalty to putt your ball into someone else's ball, so that is why it is important for everyone to mark their ball when they get on the green. In the process of marking or putting your ball, you will need to be careful not to step on the line of someone else's putt.

**Q:** *I feel like everyone is watching me...are they?*

**A:** Remember the day of Prom when you got that big red pimple on your nose? You were afraid that people would notice and STARE AT YOUR PIMPLE. Nobody did. Why? Because they were worrying about the pimple on their own nose. It is the same with golf...do not worry what others "think" of you, because they probably are NOT THINKING ABOUT YOU... they are so worried about their own games that nothing else matters to them!

**Q: What is a Gross Score? What is a Net Score?**

**A:** A GROSS SCORE is the actual number of strokes it took you to get the ball in the hole. A NET SCORE is the GROSS SCORE you make on a hole AFTER handicap strokes have been deducted. When you are playing in Ladies' Thursday Evening League, the Golf Professionals will put little "dots" on your scorecard. You will then subtract the number of dots from the actual score you shot for each hole. **Example:** Sue plays hole #1 in 8 strokes. She has 2 dots in the small box on the scorecard for hole #1. Sue's GROSS SCORE would be 8, and her NET SCORE would be 8-2= 6.

## **Ladies' "Simplified" Golf Rules**

*To keep our newer golfers from getting frustrated from the litany of golf rules, we will be using a modification of the Rules of Golf for Ladies' Thursday Evening League only. Regular USGA Rules will apply to all other ladies' golf events at Lochland Country Club.*

1. Once you have teed off on a hole, you may not touch your ball until it is on the putting green. Once on the green, place a coin behind the ball before touching the ball to clean it or move it.
2. If you swing at the ball and miss, you still have to count the swing as a stroke.
3. If you hit the ball in the water, drop a ball next to the water and add only 1 penalty stroke. If you are teeing off on hole #3 or #8, you may drop the ball on the side of the lake closest to the green.
4. If you lose a ball or hit it out-of-bounds, hit another shot from where you think the original shot would have been and add 1 penalty stroke. You must count both swings plus the penalty shot.
5. If you hit the ball in the bunker, do not touch the sand with your club until you swing down at the ball.
6. After you have reached 10 attempts at hitting the ball, pick it up and prepare for the next hole. If you are on the green, go ahead and putt for some practice. You will record a 10 for this hole on the scorecard.
7. Write down the actual score all players get (unless it is over 10) in each box on the Scorecard. This is your Gross Score. If you score more than a 10, just write down a 10. Subtract the dots indicated on the card, and write down the one **LOWEST** score **of the group** down on the top half of the scorecard. This is called the Net Score.
8. Please return your scorecard to the Golf Shop after play.