



Harrison High School – Girls Golf Program Junior Golfer Development Structure

(Note: These are guidelines and every junior golfer is different. This should be modified to fit each golfer based upon desires, abilities, available time, family factors, etc.)



Stage 1: Foundation & Fun (5th–6th Grade)

Goal: Build fundamentals, athleticism, and love for the game.

Weekly Structure

- 2–3 practice sessions (45–60 min each)
- 1 casual 9-hole round (when possible)
- 1 lesson every 4-6 weeks

Priorities

1. Swing Fundamentals

- Grip, posture, alignment drilled constantly
- Balanced finish every swing
- Solid contact over distance
- Introduce basic wedge distances (30, 50, 70 yards)

2. Short Game First

- 50 percent of practice time inside 50 yards
- Putting games: ladder drills, around-the-world, 3-foot circle challenge
- Learn basic bunker technique

3. Athletic Development

- Play multiple sports if possible
- Gymnastics, soccer, basketball are gold for coordination
- Begin light bodyweight strength training

4. Competition Exposure

- Local junior leagues
- 9-hole tournaments with low pressure
- Teach scoring, pace of play, etiquette

Benchmarks by End of 6th Grade

- Break 50 for 9 holes consistently
- Reliable 100-yard wedge distance
- Can self-correct alignment and ball position
- Loves practicing

Alternate (and highly recommended approach to playing on a golf course)

- Play each hole beginning 50 yards from the green. Keep score. Once golfer can break 40 from this distance, move the starting distance back to 75 yards. Continue this progression by adding 25 yards to the starting distance whenever the golfer can break 40 from the existing distance.



Stage 2: Skill Building & Competitive Foundation (7th–8th Grade)

Goal: Turn mechanics into repeatable performance.

Weekly Structure

- 3–4 practice sessions (60–90 min)
- 1–2 rounds per week (9 or 18 holes)
- Lesson every 2–3 weeks
- Optional: Begin light structured strength training 2x/week

Priorities

1. Ball Striking Development

- Begin shaping shots
- Distance gapping for all clubs
- Track stats: fairways, greens, putts

2. Short Game Mastery

- Up-and-down practice competitions
- Learn trajectory control
- Distance control putting from 20–40 feet

3. Mental Skills

- Pre-shot routine
- Post-shot acceptance routine
- Journaling after tournaments

4. Tournament Schedule

- Play 6–10 tournaments per year
- Gradually increase level of competition

Benchmarks by End of 8th Grade

- Break 45 for 9 holes
- Break 90 for 18
- Consistent driver contact
- Understand course management
- Competes without emotional swings



Stage 3: Performance Phase (Freshman–Sophomore Years in High School)

Goal: Become a scoring threat.

Weekly Structure (In Season)

- Practice or play 5–6 days per week
- Strength training 2–3 days
- Short game 30–40 minutes daily

Off-Season

- Technical refinement phase
- Speed training phase
- Play competitive summer events

Performance Goals

- Break 85 regularly
- Begin breaking 80
- GIR percentage above 40 percent
- Average fewer than 32 putts

Stage 4: Upperclassman Excellence (Junior–Senior Years in High School)

Goal: Lead, score, and if desired, prepare for college golf.

Advanced Focus

- Shot dispersion tracking
- Tournament scheduling strategy
- College recruiting (if applicable)
- Mental toughness training

Performance Targets

- Break 80 consistently
- Compete for conference titles
- Average 78–82 (competitive HS level)



Additional Structure Ideas and Suggestions

Annual Rhythm Blueprint - Every Year Should Include:

Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical rebuild• Strength and mobility• Indoor putting mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preseason competitive ramp up• Speed development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highest tournament volume• Peak scoring season	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High school season focus• Maintain, do not rebuild

Hidden Multipliers

1. Find a Great Instructor Early - Consistency beats hopping around. An instructor who excels with beginning golfers is key early. At a later date, changing to an instructor who is focused on more advanced golfers is possible. Just don't switch instructors every year.
2. Build an Athletic Body - Strength = speed = distance = shorter clubs into greens.
3. Keep It Fun - Burnout is the silent thief of junior golf. A break away from golf is highly recommended a couple times each year. The length of the break will depend upon the golfer but can range from a week to several week break.
4. Track Stats Early - Data builds awareness.
5. Family Support Structure - Car rides home matter. Post-round conversations shape confidence. Keep it positive and fun.

Equipment

- Clubs – A golfer who starts in playing in middle school will likely need at least 2 sets of clubs before they graduate high school. A junior set (weight and length appropriate) is fine for most beginning golfers. Early in high school, an adult ladies set of clubs will be necessary.
 - Driver – for most young ladies, a driver with 12 degrees of loft is recommended.
 - Hybrids (instead of 3, 4, & 5 irons) are recommended for most junior golfers.
 - Lob wedges are not recommended for most junior golfers.
 - Sand wedges are necessary.
 - Shafts – for both woods and irons will likely need to be graphite instead of steel for most junior golfers
- Range finder - is not necessary when first beginning but will be of huge value as they approach high school and will be required for high school varsity golfers.
- Golf shoes - are not necessary when first beginning as any athletic shoe will be fine. Proper golf shoes will be necessary as they approach high school.

Practice activities

- The Harrison High School Girls Golf Team website has a lot of practice ideas, fitness programs, and other information available for your use. HarrisonGirlsGolf.com