

# Golf Etiquette and Basic Rules

## Getting Ready:

- Check handouts for local rules.
- Local rules apply only to the specific course you are playing.
- Make sure to place an identifying mark on your ball and inform the other players the type and number ball you are playing.
- When using score cards, exchange scorecards with another in the foursome.
- Turn off cell phones and avoid distractions while others are in position to hit.

## Avoid Slow play:

Helpful tips on keeping up with the pace of play and the group in front of you:

- Walk at a reasonable speed between shots.
- Begin planning your next shot as you approach the ball by studying the strength and direction of the wind.
- When you reach your ball, check the lie, select your club, visualize your swing, and shot, and then play your shot.
- You should take no more than 40 seconds to play your ball after you are able to play without interference or distraction.
- Be aware of your surroundings and your ball's flight direction to easily find your ball when going into a hazard or out of bounds.
- If you think your ball is out of bounds, you may hit another and announce to your group that you are hitting a provisional. If you find the 1<sup>st</sup> ball, play it; otherwise play your 2<sup>nd</sup> ball with a 1-stroke penalty.
- If you aren't ready to play when it is your turn, encourage one of your fellow players to play.

## Maintaining the course:

- Replace your divots and/or simply fill in the divot with the mixture supplied by the course.
- Bring a rake into the bunker with you -- remembering that you should always enter the bunker from the low side at a point nearest to the ball.
- Whenever possible, avoid walking on the steep face of a bunker.

- After hitting your shot, rake the area you played from, as well as all your footprints and any others within reach.
- Rakes should be left either in or nearby the bunker.
- Important to repair any pitch marks or indentations caused by the ball hitting the green.
- Using a tee, knife, key, or repair tool, repair the mark by working the edges towards the center, without lifting the center of the mark. Don't tear the grass. Finish by smoothing the area with a club or your foot. Try to get the area smooth enough to putt over.

### **On the green, remember:**

- If your ball is not furthest from the cup: mark your ball.
- If your ball is on a player's line, volunteer to mark and move the ball. Remember to replace your ball to its original position.
- Do not stand where you might distract a fellow player and don't move.
- Don't make any noise when your fellow player is preparing to putt.
- Don't step on your fellow players putting lines -- the imaginary line that connects the ball to the hole.
- If you are asked to tend the flagstick, make sure you aren't standing on anyone's line.
- Hold the flagstick at arm's length so the flag doesn't flutter in the breeze, and make sure your shadow doesn't fall across the hole or line. The flagstick should be replaced right after the player has hit the ball.
- If you lay down the flagstick, lay it off the green to prevent doing any damage to the green.
- After everyone has puttied out, immediately leave the green and move to the next tee.

### **Miscellaneous:**

- If you hit a tee shot into the woods and suspect that it might be either lost or out-of-bounds, the Rules of Golf allow you to play provisional ball.
- When you lift your ball under a rule and it needs to be replaced on a spot, you must mark the spot before lifting it. The ball must be replaced in the same location both vertically and horizontally. Leave your marker in place until after you replace your ball. When taking relief, it is not necessary to mark the spot of the ball. It is best to identify your relief area before lifting your ball. You may substitute a ball when taking relief.
- If you are unsure of a rule, the rules allow you to play two balls but this must be announced before either ball is played. You must also declare which ball you would like to score with if the rules allow. In an event, you must ask for a ruling prior to signing a score card.