



Golf Terms

IF YOU THINK IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO UNDERSTAND GOLF LINGO OR TERMINOLOGY THEN TRY TO DECIPHER THIS REPORT:

"I knew he was in trouble when he waggled endlessly at the back tiger tee. He then hit a duck hook just short of the water hazard. Next, he hit a chili-dip into the drink. Then, after dropping, he just barely carried the water still short of the green. His next was a wormburner onto the apron. I thought for sure he would get a snowman when his next shot, with a niblick, was skulled thin and barely made it onto the Bermuda. However, then this hacker, despite obvious yips, holed out into the tin cup with a long, breaking snake for a triple bogey on the par 4 just before the turn!"

Convinced of the importance of Golf terms now? Then read on...

ACE: A hole in one! (Note: nothing to do with tennis or playing cards).

ADDRESSING THE BALL: To take your stance and get ready to hit the ball. (Note: nothing to do with "swearing" at the ball or mailing the ball by post!).

AIRSWING or AIRBALL: Striking at the ball intentionally and missing it. Sorry, it must be counted as a shot. (see also Whiff!).

ALBATROSS: A score of two on a par five. (A Good thing!)

AMATEUR: A golfer who is not paid for his or her golf frustrations!

APPROACH: Normally a short or medium shot played to the putting green. Also called the "approach shot."

APRON: The closely mowed area surrounding the green also called the fringe or collar.

ARTIFICIAL OBJECTS: Bottles, packets, cans, foreign objects, etc., that can be moved without a penalty stroke.

ATTEND THE FLAG: To hold and then remove the flag while another player putts. A common courtesy performed when playing a round.

AWAY: The player farthest from the hole is the first to play, as in "Who's away?"

BACK: The "back" tee position that makes the hole the longest. Also, the last nine holes of an eighteen-hole course as in the "back nine".

BALL: The little white (or yellow or orange) round sphere that you try to hit.

BALL WASHER: A device used to wash golf balls.

BANANA BALL OR SLICE: A shot resembling the shape of a banana.

BERMUDA: A type of coarse durable grass seen mostly on southern U.S. courses.

BEST BALL: The best score on a hole by two or more partners in a best-ball match.

BINGO, BANGO, BONGO: A betting game where points are won for the first ball on the green (bingo), closet to the hole (bango) and first in the cup (bongo).

BIRDIE: Scoring one under par. (*A good thing!*)

BOGEY: Scoring one over par. (*Depending on handicap...a good thing?*)

BREAK: The curve due to the slope in a green. Also, in a golf shot, a player may say, "I got a *good break*" meaning a favourable sharp bounce of the ball.

BUGGY: Slang for golf cart.

BUMP and RUN: A shot where the ball intentionally lands far short of the pin and rolls up to the hole.

BUNKER: Normally, a sand filled hazard placed on a fairway or near a green. Some golfers after hitting a tree with a shot refer to trees as "*bunkers in the sky!*"

BUSINESS GOLF: Golf played with colleagues, prospective clients and employees with the aim to foster a deeper relationship for mutual financial benefit. (Note: for a more detailed definition participate in a MGT Open *Business Course on the Course*).

CADDIE: A person who carries clubs for a golfer and who gives advice with club selection and course strategy.

CARRY: The distance a golf ball must traverse from impact to the point where it first hits the ground. *Carry* is especially important when judging the distance to the green over a hazard (water or bunker).

CART: See *buggy*.

CART FEE: The rental fee a player pays for using a golf cart during a golf round.

CASUAL WATER: Temporary water not marked as a hazard. Relief may be obtained by dropping the ball.

CHILI-DIP: A shot where a player hits behind the ball not moving it very far. Also called *fat, flub, chunk and numerous expletives!*

CHIP: A shot normally played from a short distance to the green. Also called a "chip shot".

CLEANING YOUR BALLS: Your balls can be cleaned whenever they are picked up legally
(*Note: No comment!*).

CLOSEST-TO-THE-PIN: A contest, usually on par 3's, where an award is given to the winner.

CLUBS: A maximum of 14, of any variation, may be carried in a competition.

COMPRESSION: The degree of resilience of a golf ball. It is recommended that a beginner play with an 80 or 90 compression ball.

COURSE: Slang for golf course. An area of land designed for playing golf, occupying anywhere from 50 to 300 acres, and having fixed boundaries.

COURSE: A Course may also refer to a Business Course of studies.

“COURSE on the COURSE”: The motto for the MGT Open.

COURSE RATING: The comparison of playing one course as opposed to another in terms of difficulty, used in USGA handicapping. (*The course rating for the MGT Open is superlative!*)

CUP: The 10.8 cm hole in the putting green and also called the “*tin cup.*”

DIVOT: A piece of turf removed with a golf shot. It is proper etiquette to always replace the divot, and to step the turf back in place. Many courses provide sand to promote re-growth.

DOGLEG: A left or right bend in the fairway.

DOUBLE BOGEY: Two over par. (*Regardless of handicap...not a good thing!*)

DOUBLE EAGLE: (*See Albatross.*)

DRINK: Slang for water hazard.

DRIVER: The longest club in the bag, usually a 1, or a 1 ½ *wood.*

DROP: The act performed when a player has an unplayable lie or when the original ball is lost.

DROPPING THE BALL: Hold the ball at shoulder height and arm's length to drop it correctly. The ball can be redropped if it still infringes the rules. If it still infringes the rules after being dropped a third time, then it must be placed on the spot it landed on the third drop.

DUCK HOOK: For a right-handed golfer, a shot that starts straight at the hole and then curves dramatically to the left of the target.

EAGLE: Two under par. (*A very good thing!*).

ETIQUETTE: Accepted rules of behaviour that are especially crucial in “Business Golf”.

EXECUTIVE COURSE: A shorter-than-regulation golf course predominantly featuring par-4 and par-3 holes.

FAIRWAY: The area from tee to green, usually defined by being closely mown. (*Note: Normally, there is nothing "fair" about it?*).

FAT: (*See chilli-dip*).

FLAGSTICK: Supports the flag on the green.

FORE: Yell this loud and clear if it appears your ball may hit another player.

FOUR-BALL: A competition played in pairs, where the best score counts against the best score of the opponents.

FOURSOMES: A competition where two partners hit alternate shots. (*Note: we are talking about golf and not alternative lifestyles here!*)

FRIED EGG: A lie in a sand bunker where the ball is submerged deep in the sand.

GIMME: A short putt very close to the hole that your playing partners award you. You don't have to putt your ball. You'll hear, "*That's a gimme!*" during a casual and friendly round, but it is **not** within the rules of golf.

GRAIN: This term is important when determining your putting strategy on the green. It is the direction in which the blades of grass point on the green, which contributes to the speed and direction of your putt.

GREEN: The carefully mown area of a fairway surrounding the hole. Only use a putter on this surface.

GREEN FEE: A fee charged a golfer to play on a golf course. Prices do vary; a public course is usually less expensive than a private club or golf resort.

GRIP: The way the hands interlock when holding the club. It is also used to describe the leather or rubber handle on the end of a club. (*Note: it also refers to the idiom "get a grip" which is necessary when frustrated*).

GROSS SCORE: The total number of shots taken for a round. (*Note: Any score over 100 is considered by many to be very "gross"!*).

GROUND UNDER REPAIR: Often mentioned in the Rules of golf. It is an area on the golf course undergoing maintenance or repair. If your ball lands in this area, you are allowed to remove your ball without penalty. Also simply called "GUR".

GROUNDING THE CLUB: The placement of the club behind the ball at address. It is not allowed in a hazard.

HACK(ER): Slang term given to a player of questionable ability.

HANDICAP: A handicap is allocated to a player according to their past performance ability allowing all players a chance to win. Therefore, the lower the handicap, the better the player's ability. In club play, the highest men's handicap is 27, and for women 45. (*see, Scratch*).

HAZARD: A bunker or area on the course marked by the club as a hazard is designed to make the course more difficult as it penalizes poor play.

HOLE: Where you want your golf ball to end up eventually! A small cylinder cut into the ground and measuring 4 1/4 inches in diameter and at least 4 inches deep, located on the green of a golf course. (*see, Cup*)

HOLING OUT: Getting the ball into the hole. (*Finally!*)

HOLE-IN-ONE: Hitting the ball into the hole from the tee with one shot. This is every golfer's dream but it usually only happens on par threes but has occurred on par fours. (*see, Ace*).

HONOUR: The player with the best score on the previous hole has the honour and is normally the first to tee off.

HOOK: A golf shot that curves strongly from right to left. For the right-handed golfer this shot usually lands left of their target (the direction would be opposite for the left-handed golfer). In the past this term was often likened to draw. However, a draw is a controlled right to left shot with a moderate curve.

HOSEL: The hollow portion of the club head where the shaft is attached and also referred to as the neck.

IDENTIFYING THE BALL: Each player has the responsibility to know the brand and number of the ball and identically marked balls should not be used in the same group. Some players mark their balls with special marks so that their ball can be clearly identified on the course. (*No comment!*).

IRONS: Clubs other than woods or the putter. Irons have different lofts and lengths with the 9 iron hitting it shorter and higher than a 6 iron.

LAYOUT: Refers to the design of the golf course.

LIE (1): The position of the ball on the course. You'll often hear a player say, "*I have a good/bad lie*". It is also used when a player has played a certain number of strokes on that hole as in "*She is lying three and still has a chance to par the 17th.*"

LIE (2): When players do not reveal all their strokes. If they get away with it they might say "*I had a good lie*". If they suspect being caught you might hear this excuse "*What was I lying before finally hitting it on the green?.*"

LIGHTNING: All play is allowed to stop legally when storms and lightning occur.

LINKS: A golf course situated on a seaside terrain. Also slang for golf course.

LIP: The rim around the hole. (*Note: Also swearing under the breath at the ball after missing a short putt as in the idiom "giving lip"*).

LOCAL RULES: Committees have the right to specify local rules to suit their course. These can change from week to week and should be read before commencing any round.

LONGEST DRIVE: A contest where an award is given to the individual who has the longest drive on a pre-determined hole.

LOST BALL: Any ball that cannot be found within five minutes of the search commencing must be declared lost.

LPGA: The Ladies Professional Golf Association.

MAJORS AND MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIPS: The Professional tournaments considered the most important within the golf community. For the Women's Tour: Dinah Shore Classic, the LPGA Championship, the du Maurier Classic, and the U.S. Women's Open. For the Men's Tour: The Masters, the U.S. Open, the British Open, and the PGA Championship. (*Note: Golf purists refer to the British Open as "The Open."*)

MARKER: An item used to mark the position of your golf ball. Used on the green to indicate the position of the ball. This may be a coin or a small object. Also, a term referring to a person who keeps score during stroke competition.

MATCH PLAY: A competition by holes between two parties/players. One player defeats the other one by winning more holes than there are holes left to play.

MEDAL PLAY: A competition where the player wins with the lowest number of strokes. (*Note: also known as stroke play*).

MULLIGANS: A chance to replay a poor shot normally granted in a friendly game on the first tee only. They are not officially permitted. (*NOTE: In Business Golf in "real life" you do not get offered Mulligans so be sure you know your basics before accepting or hosting a Business Golf game or event!*).

NET SCORE: The total number of shots taken after the handicap is deducted from the gross score.

NIBLICK: An old term for a nine iron, Scottish in origin.

NINETY-DEGREE RULE: Driving the golf cart on the designated path and then turning 90 degrees to face the ball (*which is hopefully on the fairway?*).

OUT OF BOUNDS: The area outside the course usually indicated by stakes or fences.

OB: Short for Out of Bounds.

OVERHANGING BALL: A ball which comes to rest sitting on the lip of the hole. Only ten seconds are allowed before another stroke must be played to get it into the hole. (*Note: This term should not be confused with "hangover" which one can get on the 19th hole!*).

PAR: The standard score in strokes assigned to each hole on the golf course. The par for each hole is given on the scorecard. You'll have a great round if you score "the par" on any course.

PARTNER: Playing partner on your team.

PENALTY SROKE: One or two shots added to the gross score for infringement of the rules.

PGA: The Professional Golfers' Association of America.

PGA TOUR: Based in Ponte Verdra Beach, FL. This group governs the PGA TOUR, Senior PGA TOUR and the Nike Tour. The Tour conducts almost 150 tournaments a year.

PIN: Slang for flagstick. (*Note: does not look like a bowling pin!*)

PIN-HIGH: Reference to a ball on the green that is even with the pin but off to one side.

PITCH: An approach shot to the green. The player does not use a full swing during a pitch shot. This shot is shorter than a normal swing, but longer than a chip shot.

PLAY THROUGH: When a group or player will pass a group of slower golfers playing on the hole ahead. In terms of proper etiquette, it is recommended you ask permission before moving ahead.

PLUGGED BALL: A ball imbedded in its own pitch mark in the ground. It may be dropped without penalty no closer to the hole.

PRACTICE: What every golfer should do before they play their game.

PREFERRED LIES (1): The local rules may allow you to improve your lie because of the condition of the course. You are usually allowed to clean the ball and move it no more than one club length from the original position.

PREFERRED LIES (2): A favourable lie occurs when one avoids being caught in cheating on their score.

PROFESSIONAL: A player usually called a Pro, who receives payment for teaching or playing in tournaments.

PROFESSIONAL GOLFER: Usually earns his living from golf and maybe licensed to give lessons for money.

PROVISIONAL BALL: A second (or more balls) hit from the same spot when the first ball(s) may be lost or out of bounds.

PUNCH: A shot intentionally played low to avoid wind, tree limbs and other obstacles. (*Note: do not believe you can fool your partners into believing your fat chilli-dip was a punch*).

PUTT: A stroke played on the green, usually with a putter.

PUTTER: The club specifically designed for putting. It has very little loft and is usually shorter than other clubs.

RANGE: A common slang word used to describe the course practice area.

READY GOLF: Players attempt to keep up with the foursome in front of them.

RECOVERY: Referring to a player's shot. A shot played back into a good position from a hazard, rough, or a generally unfavourable position.

RELIEF: Referring to the Rules of Golf. Permission to lift and drop the ball without penalty. (*Note: also a deep sigh when the ball skips out of a sand or water hazard as in "a sigh of relief"!*).

ROUGH: The area on the golf course where the grass is longer and thicker than the fairway.

ROYAL AND ANCIENT: One of the two governing bodies in Golf along with the United States Golf Association.

SCORE: The number of strokes taken on each hole.

SCRAMBLE: A tournament and/or format of golf play. All golfers hit the ball, starting at the tee. The best ball is picked after each shot and the process starts all over again until the ball is putted out. This format is good for beginners, as it alleviates the pressure of playing with better players.

SCRATCH: Used when referring to a player's handicap. A scratch golfer is a player who has a 0 handicap. (*Not something you do when you have an itch*).

SEARCHING FOR A BALL: Players are allowed five minutes to search for a ball before declaring it lost. Groups behind should be called through if they are ready to play.

SEMI-PRIVATE COURSE: A course that has members but is still open to the public.

SHANK: A shot struck by the club's hosel that travels dead right (for a right-handed player). Considered the worst golf shot to perform, other than a "*Whiff*."

SKULLED SHOT: A shot where the club contacts only the top of the ball.

SLICE: A shot that curves violently to the right. This is the most common ball flight for a beginner.

SLOW PLAY: You are required to keep up with the group in front of you at all times. Slow play can be penalized.

SNAKE PUTT: A putt holed out from a long distance.

SNOWMAN: Euphemism for a score of "8". (*Note the obvious resemblance*).

STAKES: Identified by different colours. Check the local rules to identify what the colours mean. (*Note: if a wager or bet is high, the stakes can also be high!*).

STAKED TREES: Usually a free drop is allowed from staked trees to avoid damage to them.

STANCE: Placing your feet firmly and getting ready to play the ball.

STROKE: The forward movement of the club to hit the ball is counted as a stroke. If there is an intention to hit the ball and the player misses, that is also counted as a stroke. (*see Whiff*).

SWING: The movement of the club along an arc, away from the ball and then following through.

TAP IN: A final very short putt into the cup.

TEE: A peg on which to place the ball and also the raised area set aside at the beginning of the hole to indicate the starting point.

TEE MARKERS: The coloured markers placed on the teeing area to indicate the starting line.

TEED OFF: Getting visibly frustrated after a terrible shot! (*Note: to be avoided at all costs in Business Golf!*)

THREESOME: Three players playing a round together. Also, a match in which two players play the same ball and alternate strokes and play against a single player.

TIGER TEE: Slang for the back tee. (*Note: term preceded Tiger Woods!*)

TOP: To hit the ball above its centre. This shot will dive downward and roll or hop on the ground rather than rise.

TURN: The halfway point on an 18-hole course. After playing nine holes, a player is at the "turn."

TWOSOME: Two golfers playing together.

UNFIT FOR PLAY: If the ball is badly cut or damaged then it can be replaced as long as you consult with your marker. (*Note: the term can also refer to an individual who displays inappropriate etiquette!*)

USGA: United States Golf Association. With the Royal and Ancient Society of St. Andrews, one of the two ruling bodies of Golf.

WAGGLE: A pre-shot movement in which a player moves the club back and forth before striking to relieve tension.

WATER HAZARD: An area of permanent water on the course which is marked with stakes or sometimes oil lines.

WEDGE: A specially designed iron used close to the green for high short shots or to get the ball out of a sand trap.

WHIFF: To swing and miss the golf ball completely and it must be counted as a stroke. (*Note: do not attempt to say that this was an intended practice swing...everyone knows the difference!*).

WORMBURNER: A poor shot in which the ball races along the ground and does not get airborne.

YIPS: A chronic condition of missing short putts due to nerves.

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