

Golden Tee Fan's Top Tips for Beginners and Amateurs



Balls and Clubs

- Everyone with a handicap of +22 or worse should stick with the Hawk clubs and the Hurtle balls for all 5 courses in 2011 since they offer the best ratings for distance, control and consistency. The exception may be the Flares for Laurel Park and Alpine Run since they feature specific holes that give giant advantages if you have a 7-wood or 9-wood.

Using the track ball

- Get the most velocity on the trackball by hammering smoothly across the top of the ball. Try to blast straight across the ball instead of down into the ball. You can be more accurate by starting with your hand on the console, but you can't generate big distance just pushing forward quickly. Watch the pros to learn even more.
- The pullback angle determines your accuracy on the shot, but it can also be influenced by your forward shot angle. In general, pull back to where you want the ball to end up, and shoot forward to where you want the ball to start its trajectory.
- You don't have to pull back on every shot. You'll be more accurate if you just push the ball forward to your target, and there's no shame in that!
- Test the accuracy of your trackball before you begin playing. On the first tee, pull up the Options and go to Equipment Setup. Go to the Buy Balls screen. Now, position the cursor in the middle, dead gap between the first and second panes surrounding the golf ball details. If you're hovering over one of the three panes, you'll see it highlighted, but when you move the cursor to the narrow line in between the panes, nothing will be highlighted. Now, move the cursor to the top of this dead area, and slowly pull the trackball straight back. If the cursor trails off to the right or the left, you'll know the trackball has a pull. Do the same thing from the bottom, rolling the ball straight forward slowly, and you'll usually see the pull in the opposite direction going forward.
- Better yet, if you are on a new machine, swipe your card for 3 free holes to get a feel for the machine!

- Realize that the machine only reads your initial pullback of the trackball, and not any adjustments you try to make after it unless you reset your approach. If your pullback feels wrong, hit the spin button to reset and try again. Take advantage of this for “spinny” shots too – never do a spinny too much to the side, as this can cause your club to drop before you push forward. Since the machine already knows your angle, spin the ball more towards B at this point!
- Hitting a “spinny” shot (where you keep the ball rolling and hit your shot while the ball is still rolling) out to 1 really doesn’t differ than if the trackball were still. However, because of the bearings behind the anatomy of the trackball, you’ll see a significant difference in distance and accuracy on shots out to 3. Be careful hitting non-spinny shots out to 3, because if you don’t hit it smoothly, you might not get the correct reading and you’ll be yelling at the machine!
- Regarding length of curved shots, keep in mind that for any shot cut back and hit forward more than 50% towards center, your distance will drop. For shots cut back more than 50% towards A/C and 1/3, you’ll see distance added! Straight 180 shots (B2, A3, C1) generate the most straight distance, and every degree off this line decreases distance. Furthermore, there are angles beyond A, C, 1 and 3 called an “overcut” that generate even more distance, so be sure to cut the ball as much to the side as you can for maximum distance.
- Practice a slower pullback to get a more accurate reading. Yanking the ball backwards quickly can cause the ball to jump and the sensors might not read it properly. Even worse, you could accidentally change clubs and not notice.

Driving

- Rule of thumb when using Golden Tees: A high tee goes one bigger club farther and one shorter club higher, while a low tee goes one shorter club farther and one bigger club lower. Backspin and roll are only 5-10% effective with a high tee, and backspin and roll are amplified 20-25% with a low tee.
- Maximize distance off the tee with A1 and C3 drives with roll if there’s not a tailwind. With a tailwind, use a high tee to let the wind carry the ball for huge distance (B2 shots with a high tee are also very long with a tail wind).
- You’ll achieve 10-15% more distance by pulling back for a straight shot than if you just shoot the ball forward to 2 with the same velocity.
- Skip the ball off the water with the greatest success by using a low-lofted club with an extreme cut angle, and hit it hard with backspin or roll. It helps a lot if the wind is assisting too – headwinds or winds going against your angled shot can kill a skip.

Approach shots

- Don't be afraid to use a Golden Tee to tee it higher for more distance or lower for less distance if you find yourself in-between clubs on a short par 3.
- You can "schwerve" (B1 or B3 type shots) approach shots also to take off a bit of distance if needed. Remember that low-lofted clubs will return past center, medium-lofted clubs return to center, and high-lofted clubs return short of center, so adjust your pullback accordingly.
- Try not to leave yourself with a distance gap between clubs for your approach shot by being smart and doing the math off the tee.
- When possible, try to line yourself up with a straight headwind or tailwind for your approach shot by driving the ball to the best location.
- Use the longer club and a 2/3 pullback and thumbs shot as another way to fill the gap if you are in between clubs.
- Respect changes in elevation by clubbing up or down and compensating less for the wind on uphill shots and more on downhill shots.
- Favor clubbing up over trying to hit a lesser club with more force.
- Execute a "chush" shot by placing your thumbs on the ball and flicking the ball forward at the slowest possible speed that will register. Determine which club to use by using the "5x" rule, meaning take your distance and multiply by 5 to determine the club to use. A 9-iron (100-yard club) works great from 20 yards as a baseline, and then drop 1 or 2 clubs below the 5x rule as distance increases further from this baseline.

Backspin and roll

- Don't overuse backspin. If the pin is in the back of the green, the only situation you should use backspin is if there's down slope and a tailwind. Let the ball roll to the pin so you have a short putt.
- If you have a wedge into a green with an upslope and a headwind, don't use roll – it will actually adversely affect the ball and cause it to backspin more than if no roll were applied.
- Keep in mind that backspin adds a slight bit of height to your shot and roll reduces the height of your shot just a bit – if you're trying to go over or under a tree or other obstacle, roll or backspin could make the difference between safety and hazard in some cases.

- Use backspin on A1 and C3 drives to help the ball cut back further in the desired direction. You'll lose distance as opposed to roll, but it could be the difference between fairway and rough.

Hitting out of rough lies

- Lies such as heavy rough and sand aren't too tough to get out of, but worse lies such as mud and snow really cut your distance and height. Especially if you have a short wedge shot from here, don't be too cute with a short pullback, because it takes more effort to get the ball up and out of these lies.
- Do not play cut shots out of rough lies! You'll only achieve 70-80% of the distance and curve you'd see from a fairway lie. However, if you're trying to reach the green and have enough club, you can club up 2-3 times and play the cut shot with more accurate distance.

Rain and Wind

- Rain does not affect your distance in the air, so carry will be the same. But, after the ball lands, there's not much in the way of roll. Try to carry close to the flag in these conditions and use backspin or roll to compensate for only 5-10 yards either way.
- File away in your brain the fact that an 11 mph wind blows a shot from a PW one full rotation, and for a LW, it's 7 mph.
- Remember that a cross-wind hurts distance too, so club up once for a heavy cross-wind.

Chipping

- If you're faced with a short chip shot from a rough lie to a narrow green sloping down towards water, try rotating left once and playing a $\frac{3}{4}$ A2-type shot with backspin. It might take some practice to nail the distance, but this shot helps you hold the green, where a straight chip would otherwise dribble down to the water.
- If you aren't using bump-and-run chips yet, start practicing NOW. Good players can hole out chips at a pretty high rate. If you have confidence in these shots, you can also be more aggressive attacking tough pins. Pick just enough club to carry the green, pull back to your ankles or knees in a direction that accounts a bit for the slope of the green, push forward softly but smoothly in the same direction, and start rolling them in!

Putting

- Prevent rollovers by pulling back to C (or A) and hitting smoothly forward. Do this on every putt of down 5 or more. You can also reduce the chance for a missed putt rolling into the water if you miss on the high side of the hole.
- There's a cutoff around 65 feet where putts longer than this have a "turbo" boost. This is important to know because you'll play less break on these longer putts than the ones in the "normal" range. For example, a 70-foot putt with a left 5 break should be played more like a left 2 break.
- Play uphill putts as if there were more break than a level putt, and play downhill putts as if there were less break.
- Don't be afraid to "lag putt" on extreme downhill putts where missing could mean water. It's much better to tap the ball forward and accept your 2-putt than being aggressive and missing, which would cost you at LEAST 2 strokes!
- Rotate once to the right and once to the left on longer putts, especially those uphill, to gather more information on the break. A "straight" uphill putt might actually have a bit of break to it after assessing the putt from different angles, and this is crucial information to know.

Best Times for Prize Play

- Midnight – 3PM Eastern is the toughest time for prize play – this is when the pros are out and not many casual players are in the tournaments. 3PM – 6PM is a much better time to play. The best time is after 6PM, especially on Fridays – all kinds of people are out playing, and even the best players are drinking and not posting their best scores!

Give-away Codes

- Here are all the codes to hook up your golfer with holiday gear! Enter each of the following codes up to 4 times to collect all the available gear for the holiday outfit!

St. Patrick's Day – 07FEED0317

Christmas – 0333333333

Winter Holiday Gear – 1412252010

Halloween – 04B0000000

New Year's Day – 0520102010

New Year's 2011 – 12ACED2011

Valentine's Day – 06BABEBABE

Thanksgiving – 13FEEDF00D

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