



HOW TO ORGANISE A SUCCESSFUL GOLF DAY

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE



IDEAS TO HELP YOU ORGANISE A GOLF DAY FOR
FUN, WORK OR TO RAISE MONEY



Welcome.

This guide has been produced in conjunction with Forest Hills Golf Club, Mile End Road, Coleford, Gloucestershire, GL16 7QN. Please do not reproduce or quote from it without permission of the author. Ideas have been tried on the course and in the clubhouse here and suggestions are current practice. The guide outlines how we would run a successful golf day.

Forest Hills Golf Club is situated in the beautiful Forest of Dean area of Gloucestershire in the UK. With a superb course and large clubhouse, the Club is the perfect setting for Golf Days of all types and many Charity Days are run on an annual basis.

Access to the Forest of Dean is easy via the M4, M5, Wales, Bristol and the South West as well as the Midlands and North and is only 2 1/2 hours from London. Once there, in the middle of Forest and Countryside the feeling is one of tranquillity and quiet.

The perfect location for a Golf Getaway!

The course hosts PGA West-Region events including the popular 'Forest Classic' and hosts Pro-Ams as well as Senior Tour and County competitions.

Golfers love the course, everyone loves the food and organisers love the friendly, helpful staff. To ask about our Golf Day packages, call the office on 01594 810620.

Look forward to hearing from you soon,

The Team at Forest Hills



Choosing your course

Getting people to attend your Golf day and the enjoyment of the day itself is hugely influenced by the choice of Course.

Although the reputation of the Course is important, it doesn't have to be the best known or most prestigious, and discovering a great course that is not well known creates a talking point (after the event) which is good for your Golf Day the following year! It does need to be quite easy to find but not necessarily on the doorstep – golfers will travel quite a way to play.

If the course is extremely prestigious then not only will the cost be higher, but there will be more rules and less flexibility. You might also reduce your golfing field if there are strict rules about handicap certificates. You won't be able to personalise your day quite as much, as others will be holding their days there as well.

If the Course is not good then even a cheap golf day won't make up for the bad experiences of your golfers. If you are inviting people who don't play very often, you need a course everyone will enjoy, and a degree of flexibility about the ability of people on their course. You may need buggies available.

The clubhouse should be big enough to fit in all your golfers when you present prizes and be able to provide food and drink as part of your golf day package. If the food tastes good then that is excellent and it is important that the clubhouse, staff and members are happy to host Golf Days so everyone feels welcome.

When golfers are coming in, you can create a good atmosphere if you can see the last hole and golfers in the clubhouse can watch the following players coming in. Ask at your course if there is a good place to do this.

It may also be appropriate to have a scoreboard, which can be filled in as soon as golfers come in from their round, and creating a 'leader in the clubhouse'. Again, your chosen course may have one of these you can use.





Types of Competitions

The type of competition depends on the quality and range of the golfers in your party.

Stableford gives everyone a good chance, and even the more erratic golfers can have a decent round.

If you have good players, a **Medal** competition may be more appropriate and different formats, such as better-ball and greensomes may also favour more mixed ability fields.

Foursomes and **Texas scrambles** are good fun, but infrequent golfers might prefer playing the whole round and feel it is a waste of a green fee to play such a competition.

Matchplay: provides excitement but unequal teams may not play a full round.

Handicaps

A problem with golf handicaps and the handicap system is that infrequent golfers have high handicaps and an erratic game.

Therefore they are more capable of finishing with a very high score, something that regular players find hard to achieve!

A three quarters handicap will even this out slightly and having an extra prize for the best gross score gives the better golfers something to play for.





Competitions detail:

Medal:

Everyone counts every shot, adds them up after the game, deducts their handicap and the lowest wins.

Suitable for: Good golfers and regular players. Not suitable for: Infrequent players – they will slow the field and feel disheartened if they have a very bad hole.

Stableford:

The golfer gets 'points' on every hole dependant on how close to par they score. Handicaps are included, scoring can get complicated but the system is very popular and lots of players will be able to help.

Suitable for all levels, especially erratic players as once they have got 0 points on a hole they can pick up and move on, which will speed the game.

High handicappers can post huge scores though whereas low handicappers would find it much harder, so a $\frac{3}{4}$ handicap would even this up.

Matchplay:

Scored hole by hole, the player who wins the hole gets a point and if it is equal they get half a point. Handicaps are taken into consideration hole by hole.

Could be very one-sided and over by the 11th. Once a player has won, there is no reason to keep playing.

Four ball better ball:

A team game. Each player plays his ball and the team member with the better score counts. This can also be a match play game.

Foursomes:

Each player plays alternate shots, score either medal or stableford system.





Greensomes:

All players tee off and then the best drive is chosen. Subsequently players play alternate shots.

Texas Scramble:

All players Tee off and then the ball in the best position is chosen. That ball is marked and all players in a team (usually 3) drop their ball and play from that spot.

A variation is to make sure the team uses a certain number of drives from each player. 1 team goes out for each tee time. Handicaps can get complicated to work out initially but each stroke counts and handicap deducted at the end of the round.

Extras:

You can add interest for all competitors by having mini-competitions running alongside the main one. The most popular are 'Nearest the Pin' and 'Longest Drive'.

At a good golf club like Forest Hills you can ask the club if you can use markers (which mark the position of the nearest or longest ball and have a space to write the name of the golfer who hit the shot).

You could also consider:

Shotgun start:

This is where all players start together – a group start on each one of the holes and keep playing until they have finished 18 holes.

This has the advantage of starting and finishing together, which stops the early players drifting away before the end of the event. You can't have more than 18 (or sometimes 20) teams.

The disadvantage is that the course needs to be clear before you start, so you will need to be the first onto the course, or choose a very quiet day.





A second tee start:

You could also start half the field from the first tee and half from the 10th, and that also will speed up a large field of Golfers.

If everyone is off the first tee, and you have a large group, you will need to inform people of their start time before they arrive, as people are reluctant to wait a long time before starting. If they might have to spend a lot of time in the clubhouse waiting for the later players to finish, you need something to keep everyone entertained while they are waiting.

Finally

Make sure players arrive in good time before they start, so they can make sure they have the correct equipment, pencils (and chocolate) before they set off. Give the postcode of your course for people's satnavs, and the telephone number in case they get lost and a description of local directions from the nearest town.

A lot of groups organise a coach or minibus – that way you can be sure all the players will arrive!





Recruiting players.

If you are setting up a golf day for a company, and people are getting time off, you won't have much of a problem recruiting players. If you are setting up a charity day and people are paying to play, a bit more effort is needed.

Competition between company departments or rival sites may well bring more people into the day.

Assuming you don't personally know 70+ people who will join your day, you will need to tap into groups of golfers.

Companies, Pubs and Sports Club often have golf groups you could approach.

Decide if you want to sell places individually or as a team. If you sell team spaces, friends can play together and it is easy to organise tee times by team. Teams of 2 or 4 are fine. Golfers have a lot of choice when it comes to playing Golf Days, so may need some persuading to play in yours.

Players for Charity Days

If you have co-organisers or some friends, get together and write down everyone you know who might either play golf themselves or know people who do. You don't need to know people very well – acquaintances may be happy to play and raise money for your cause. Then divide them up and approach them, and try to recruit a certain number of teams each.

If you can create some kind of inter-departmental, or inter-friends rivalry going, that might bring more people into your day.

It is a good idea to ask for player's handicaps when they sign up as it will give you an indication of how good your pool of players are!





Non Golfers

If some of your organising team are non golfers, or you are having a gala dinner, to which non-golfers may come as well, consider if there is anything to do for non- golfers. Make sure they are allowed in the bar (there may be a dress code) and possibly organise a couple of buggies to drive around and give out information about the current leaders or anything else that is going on with the group. Non-golfers should be careful going onto the course without a golfer – it can be dangerous!

Helpers could also be running a mini-competition on a hole or watching and calling in with latest scores.

Someone will need to collect up the cards after the round and calculate the winning score. If you have a scoreboard, it will need updating when people get in and if you are running a raffle, selling tickets is a clubhouse task.

Prizes

If your company are not providing prizes themselves, remember to allocate an amount per player for prizes. You could ask local companies for prizes instead, although you know your winners will appreciate a Golf prize. If you buy prizes at the Pro Shop at your chosen Golf Course, they may donate something as a prize or something you can raffle. You will also be able to buy clothing which fits the winner if you buy it on the day of the event.

You will need prizes for:

The winner or winning team plus (optionally) The individual with the lowest gross score Runners up, The team finishing last Plus whatever extra competitions you have run: nearest the pin, longest drive etc

You could also add some 'fun' prizes, best dressed, daftest or most appropriate name for a team – whatever you can think of to involve people at the end of the event.





Food

Golf takes all day, and is tiring, so many golf days involve a proper meal afterwards with quick prizegiving and off home. It may be easier to feed people as they come in, or in small groups rather than the whole group at once.

If you have a Gala Dinner afterwards, ensure bar snacks are available while people are waiting.

Include the price of your meal in with the ticket and leave enough time for players to sort out their equipment and get showered and dressed having come off the course.

Don't forget to order meals for non-players and get a price for those from the club separately. Also make sure you know who the vegetarians are, the kitchen will need to know in advance, similarly people with food allergies or who need a special meal.

Let golfers and non golfers know of any dress code in the clubhouse.





Raising Money

If your day is all about raising money, then there are a number of ways to do this.

First of all include an amount in the initial player fee. £5 from the initial green fee will bring in £400 from a field of 80 (20 teams).

You can also run mini competitions on the Course, you could 'sell' Mulligans on the first tee. (A Mulligan is another go if you completely mess up a drive) or 'sell' double or quits for a getting onto the green on a par 3 – where you buy another go for £5 and if you get onto the green you receive £10 back.

Sponsorship is popular. Firms might give money in exchange for you displaying their banner or advertising board in a prominent place, around the 18th Green for instance or the 1st tee. They might enter a team or donate a prize for either the competition or a raffle. Some firms will donate a prize or money for a hole in 1 on the course in exchange for the publicity and if a large prize is offered, you can get it insured – so a Car company could donate a Car, and they pay the insurance cost so if it is won they will receive the money!

You can also have a photographer on the 1st Tee and sell the photos afterwards. In the clubhouse if you sell raffle tickets before players go out, they can collect their prize (if they're lucky) when they come back in.

A Silent Auction also adds interest for people who have to wait around in the clubhouse. Auction lots are listed, with a reserve price if appropriate, and people bid by writing down an amount and putting it in an envelope. They leave their details and the highest bid wins.

A Dinner Game is also fun. Collect an entry fee for each person and all players stand up. Ask a question and give a choice of 2 answers. People choose their answer and indicate which by putting their hands on their hips, or head (or nose..) People with the correct answer stay standing and those with the wrong answers sit down. Last person standing wins a prize.

If people are eating as they come in, you could have a quiz which gets filled in while they are there and then handed in with an entry fee. Guess which flags go with which country or logos is one suggestion. Questions personal to your golf club, company or groups of friends can't be looked up in the internet!



How your golf course can help:

Advice:

If you are unsure about any aspects of running your golf day, ask the Golf Club for advice – the staff there will run Golf Days on a regular basis. They can also source personalised items, eg Golf balls, umbrellas and hats with your logo on.

Recommendations:

They may recommend a type of competition, prizes and have equipment for your 'nearest the pin' and 'longest drive' competitions.

Equipment:

They may also have equipment, a 'leaderboard' for instance that you can use. They will suggest a menu and timetable for events.

Prize Donation:

For Charity Days you might also find that your chosen Golf Club will donate a raffle prize, or include Prizes with the green fees.

Advertising:

Golf Clubs may also advertise Charity Days to their own members, who might put in a team (make sure your date doesn't clash with a Club fixture).

Personalisation:

Golf Club Staff can also set out your personalised flags (if you have them) and put out the equipment for on-course competitions, plus any sponsorship banners.

Administration:

Club Staff could also take in the cards when golfers have finished and calculate the winners. Golf Clubs may charge extra for some services.

