M any courses are remodeling tees to improve them to the best condition possible, but they need to be practical and functional.

In the early days of golf, golfers simply tee’d up on greens. Golfers soon realized a separate tee, distant from the previous need to be practical and functional.

Tee boxes in the early days were small and put each player on a smaller tee with options. Multiple tee complexes evolved and elongated to provide shorter playing conditions, take the opportunity to find additional back-tee length where possible and adjust middle- and front-tee length to adapt the course better to the majority of members. Generally, these yardages should be about 7,400 or longer; 6,700; 6,100; 5,500 and 4,500 yards.

Rooised 4,500- to 6,000-square-foot tees. Black tees: 15 feet by 15 to 20 feet. White tees: 30 feet by 85 feet, 35 feet by 75 feet, 40 feet by 65 feet or 45 feet by 60 feet. Red tees: 20 feet by 20 feet. We hesitate to undersize red tees because many women are sensitive to the size of tees and the number of women golfers is increasing. Experience shows forward tees don’t need to be larger on par-3 holes because they don’t cause as much damage.

**Efficiencies**

Rectangular and simple curvilinear tees can minimize tee size because they maximize useable area. Rectangular tees are useable side to side. The front and back areas of round tees are too narrow for tee markers, and round tees add 5 percent to the space needed. Free-form tees are attractive, but add even more space. The old runway tees reduce starts and stops and mowing time, but are less attractive to golfers.

Some dimensions are more maintenance efficient than others. Fifteen feet is the minimum tee-marker spacing, so one can achieve two tee settings side to side with 30-foot tees. Tee markers must move a yard daily for 30 days to recover. Using the minimum tee-marker space on weekdays (about 20 days) and full width on weekends (about 10 days) lets a 30-foot-wide tee be only 22 yards from front to back, whereas a 25-foot-wide tee must be 51 to 96 feet long – an increase of 12 percent to 15 percent in tee construction and maintenance costs.

Designing tee widths to match tee mowers (about 5-feet wide with overlap) minimizes mowing passes. If a 15-foot-wide championship tee can be mowed in three passes, why provide 17 feet? Because tees are often cross mowed, tee lengths in the next largest five-foot multiples than required might decrease mowing passes. Using an even number of passes might bring one back out in the same place he started, saving travel time.

Using the precise measurements outlined above might save construction and maintenance costs when rebuilding tees.