



Creating A Short Course

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We are interested in a simple, inexpensive way to make our golf course more attractive to youth and beginners. We can't afford new tees or major course renovations. Any ideas?

Within every golf course exists a short course that is better aligned with driving distances of youth golfers and those new to the game. Creating a short course could also be ideal for shorter hitters and may even bring them back to the game if they have left because they don't hit the ball far enough to play from the forward tees.



Creating a short course is easy, and it doesn't require construction of new tees or reconfiguring fairway contours.

Rather, it can be achieved simply by installing in-ground tee markers, or plaques (as pictured), in level areas of fairways. It costs very little to do this and the only maintenance required is edging, just as would be done for irrigation heads. Yardages will vary by golf facility and while there is no perfect yardage for a short course, anywhere from 2,500 to 3,500 yards should work well for most 18-hole golf facilities. To ensure that all the holes are shortened equally relative to their original distance, one useful approach is position the short-course tees based on a percentage, say 55 or 60 percent, of the current forward tee yardages.

Once created, the abbreviated yardages can be included on scorecards and the short course is eligible to receive a course rating from your state golf association. At this point, the golf facility should be less intimidating to youth and beginners and more enticing to shorter hitters. It should also increase golfer enjoyment and speed pace of play for these groups.

As an added benefit, the short course can also serve as a par-3 course for better players. Doing so allows golf facilities to host par-3 tournaments and special events that may draw more interest from the golfing community.

For more information, and to review a case study on the benefits of establishing a short course at your golf facility, please see [Adding Value—It Comes In All Sizes](#).