



Repairing your ball marks, and any others nearby, can make a very positive impact on putting green conditions.

FIVE THINGS EVERY NEW GOLFER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CARING FOR THE COURSE

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For new golfers, there is a lot to learn about everything from the Rules of Golf to basic etiquette when out on the course. While it can take some time to get a handle on everything you need to know, learning how to care for the course during your round is quick and easy. If you can master these five simple tips, you'll be making a positive impact on course conditions each time you play golf.

1. Congratulations, you just hit a perfect shot onto the green and a birdie opportunity awaits! But before you start lining up that putt, remember that your perfect shot also left a ball mark. If this mark is left unrepaired, or is repaired improperly, it can scar the putting surface for weeks – yes, weeks. Take the time to [learn how to repair a ball mark](#) properly. Carry a repair tool and always take pleasure in repairing the ball marks you are fortunate to make.

2. You've hit a great drive that finds the center of the fairway. As you get closer to your ball, the promise of an easy approach shot fades as you see it sitting in an unrepaired divot. This unfortunate situation illustrates why it is so important to properly repair divots. [Repairing divots](#) is a simple way of caring for the course that can have immediate and long-term benefits for playability. Not only can unrepaired divots leave surfaces bumpy, they also provide an opportunity for weeds to invade. Divots with soil still attached can be replaced and will likely survive. Those that break apart should be filled with divot mix to just below the height of the surrounding turf, then press the mix down with your foot.

3. Golfers should always be mindful of the maintenance staff working on the course. It is a tough job and without their efforts the playing surfaces we enjoy so much simply would not exist. [Sharing the course with the maintenance staff](#) requires some awareness on the part of the golfer. Give them room to complete their work and never assume they know you are there or will be able to hear you. We should also never hit at a green if the flag is pulled or while staff are working there. Be courteous and patient, and always make sure the staff are aware if you are hitting in their direction.

4. Carts make golf accessible for many who might not otherwise participate in this terrific game. However, it is important to know that carts can also damage the course if they are not properly used. There are some [basic things to remember](#) to minimize the impacts of cart traffic. Avoid abrupt starts, stops and turns that can damage the grass. Steer clear of waterlogged or puddled surfaces, or extremely dry grass that is showing signs of tire tracks. Be sure to respect traffic control measures like signs and ropes, and adhere to any specific cart policies at the course you are playing.

5. Sand bunkers were never meant to be a day at the beach, but there is no reason to make them any more difficult. [Raking our foot prints](#) and any other disturbances we create in the sand is basic golf course etiquette. Failing to do so can create a very difficult shot for someone that plays the course after you. Also, we should always enter and exit bunkers on the low side to protect the grass on steep bunker faces and banks.

Even very new golfers can quickly become experts at caring for the course by following these tips. Taking a little time to learn these basic skills will help you improve the condition of the course for yourself and others, and you will also be setting a great example. Who knows, some people that have been playing the game far longer might learn a thing or two by watching you.