



FORWARD TEES LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

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All courses have a set of forward tees, although they may differ in name, marker color, size and yardage. The variability in forward tees can be significant between different courses and so can their level of use. As discussed in the USGA article “Rethinking Forward Tees,” decision-makers at many courses are focusing on forward tees and how to promote their use because they can improve pace of play and create more enjoyable rounds for golfers with slower swing speeds when they are properly located. So, what exactly does “properly located” mean?

Forward tees should be placed so golfers with slower swing speeds have the opportunity to reach greens in regulation and can hit a variety of clubs on their approach shots. After all, what good is a forward tee if the players using it still can’t reach greens in regulation? Shouldn’t a beginner or long-time player whose swing speed has declined be able to reach greens in regulation just like players with faster swing speeds?

To help simplify the process of calculating an appropriate yardage for the forward tees at your course, the USGA Green Section developed a forward tee calculator to quickly identify holes where additional forward

Female Golfers - red Tee							Male Golfers - white Tee						
Handicap - 25			Swing Speed - 60 MPH				Handicap - 14			Swing Speed - 81-90 MPH			
e	ar	s	Yards	Over Rec.	Est. Approach	Est. Approach Shot Club	e	ar	s	Yards	Over Rec.	Est. Approach	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4		320	✖ 60	150	Fwy Wood+	1	4		362	✓ --	152	Hybrid/Long Iron
2	5		422	✖ 42	162	Fwy Wood+	2	5		470	✓ --	70	Wedge
3	4		296	✖ 36	156	Fwy Wood+	3	4		324	✓ --	114	Short Iron
4	3		116	✓ --	116	Fwy Wood	4	3		139	✓ --	139	Mid Iron
5	4		245	✓ --	105	Fwy Wood	5	4		296	✓ --	86	Wedge
6	3		120	✓ --	120	Fwy Wood+	6	3		150	✓ --	150	Hybrid/Long Iron
7	4		307	✖ 47	167	Fwy Wood+	7	4		342	✓ --	132	Mid Iron
8	5		358	✓ --	98	Mid Iron	8	5		453	✓ --	53	Wedge
9	3		125	✓ --	125	Fwy Wood+	9	3		155	✓ --	155	Hybrid/Long Iron
10	4		291	✖ 31	151	Fwy Wood+	10	4		344	✓ --	134	Mid Iron
11	5		426	✖ 46	166	Fwy Wood+	11	5		498	✓ --	98	Wedge
12	4		305	✖ 45	165	Fwy Wood+	12	4		355	✓ --	145	Hybrid/Long Iron
13	4		246	✓ --	106	Fwy Wood	13	4		320	✓ --	110	Short Iron
14	4		265	✖ 5	125	Fwy Wood+	14	4		306	✓ --	96	Wedge
15	3		137	✓ --	137	Fwy Wood+	15	3		138	✓ --	138	Mid Iron
16	4		283	✖ 23	143	Fwy Wood+	16	4		362	✓ --	152	Hybrid/Long Iron
17	4		290	✖ 30	150	Fwy Wood+	17	4		357	✓ --	147	Hybrid/Long Iron
18	5		435	✖ 55	175	Fwy Wood+	18	5		488	✓ --	88	Wedge
OUT 35 2,309 ✖							OUT 35 2,691 ✓						
IN 37 2,678 ✖							IN 37 3,168 ✓						
TOT 72 4,987 ✖							TOT 72 5,859 ✓						

The USGA Green Section's Forward Tee Calculator quickly identifies whether your tees provide an appropriate challenge for golfers with slower swing speeds.

To help simplify the process of calculating an appropriate yardage for the forward tees at your course, the USGA Green Section developed a forward tee calculator to quickly identify holes where additional forward tees may be necessary for golfers with slower swing speeds. The calculator uses data compiled from the PGA of America and the USGA Test Center to compare the average hitting distance of various types of golfers to the yardage of holes on your golf course. Based on the swing speed of golfers playing from each tee, the calculator will identify whether or not golfers can reach the green in regulation and what approach club they will likely hit. This information can then be used to identify problem areas and develop solutions.

Simply put, forward tees can benefit everybody on the golf course. The benefit for players using them is obvious – more greens in regulation, more fun and lower scores. The improved pace of play enjoyed by golfers using an appropriate forward tee also benefits those playing in the groups behind them. If you happen to be a golfer who doesn't struggle to reach greens in regulation and you feel like forward tees are a waste of time and money, I encourage you to imagine playing every round with only the clubs you hit shorter than 160 yards. I'm sure you can imagine that golf would be less fun and more frustrating, right? This is the reality for many golfers with slower swing speeds, but if their tees are properly located they too can experience a round of golf that provides a fair challenge and plenty of fun. Interested in using the USGA Forward Tee Calculator at your course? Sign up for a Course Consulting Service so you can work one-on-one

with a USGA agronomist to identify where new forward tees can be located to improve the golfer experience at your course.



For information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service Contact the Green Section Staff.

[Learn More](#)



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