

The Golf Rules Review

An Intermittent Communique by the WWGA Golf Rules Maven

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USGA 40 Second Rule

The revised 2019 rules recommends a player should make a stroke in 40 seconds or less. The clock starts when it is your turn to hit, and no one is in front of you. If you use your 40 seconds to get out of the cart, take a club, measure your distance, check the wind, find your line, take your practice swing, set up to the ball, you will run out of time. Many of these things can be done while others are hitting.

If you cannot consistently hit your ball 40 seconds or less when it is your turn, **CHANGE YOUR ROUTINE SO YOU CAN!**

But Aim for 20 seconds or less

Yes, 20 seconds or less is what the USGA really suggests for pace of play. Simply put... be ready when it is your turn, then:

- Pick your line of play and trust yourself.
- No more than 1 practice swing
- Set up to your ball and fire away!

You Might Be a Slow Player If....

Contrary to what other golfers might think, most golfers rarely think they are “the slow player”. Here is a quiz to assess whether you are one of those players. Even if you think you are fast, you might still see something to help you pick up your pace even more. So here we go. You might be a slow player if you have ...

1. Arrived barely in time for or missed your tee off and must catch up.
2. Waited until the 1st hole, or when you need to use them, to find your balls, tees, markers, towels, divot repair tool etc.
3. Continued talking while you or someone else is getting ready to hit.
4. Walked up to your ball without a club to assess the situation, then go back to the cart to retrieve a club and /or then realize it is the wrong club.
5. Taken more than one practice swing for a shot (excluding tough lies, e.g., heavy clover near the green).
6. Taken more than 40 seconds to play a shot when it is your turn.
7. Put your head cover on your club and your club back in the bag before getting into the cart.
8. Sat in the cart and watch your cart partner hit, then wait until they get back in the cart to drive across the fairway to your ball.
9. Been in a group where the entire threesome or foursome is looking for a lost ball and no one is hitting.
10. Don't have an extra ball in your pocket when you need to re-hit.
11. Stopped to look for and retrieve balls from the water even when everyone's ball is safe.
12. Insist on studying the line of your putt from every possible angle.
13. Waited until it is your turn to putt before you plumb bob or study the line when you are not the first person to putt.
14. Have an alignment mark on you ball and ensure it is perfectly aligned on every putt.
15. Parked your cart near the front of the putting green instead of the side closest to the next tee box.

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You Might Be a Slow Player If You Have.....

16. When playing is a team event and your ball isn't needed, insist on holing out for your score (or because you put out good money to play).
17. Insisted on holing out even though you are at or beyond the maximum strokes allowed by GHIN.
18. Insisted on playing tees/courses harder than your playing ability.

Honestly, most of us have done these things at sometime. However, if you are doing more than a few during each round ... face it, you are slow and other players probably think so also.

Your 4-Some is too slow if:

1. They take more than 4 hours, 20 minutes to complete their round on Mountain View and 3 hours and 40 minutes for a threesome.
2. They take more than 3 hours and 40 minutes on Stony Lick or 3 hours for a threesome.
3. They take more than 2 hours for 9 holes on Stony Lick or 1 hour and 40 minutes for a threesome.
4. You no longer see the group in front of you.
5. There is a whole hole or more between you and the 4-some in front of you.

Remember “Pick up to Keep Up” meaning if you are falling behind, pick up your ball and move on to the next hole.



Q&As

We ran into trouble on a hole, how can I get my 4-some back in position?

The easiest way is to have 2 players from the same cart putt first and then go to the next hole while the other 2 players putt out. After several holes, your foursome should have caught up to the group in front of you.

But isn't rude not to stay watch everyone in my group hole -out?

No, in fact it is very inconsiderate to let your foursome hold up the entire field behind you. When you hold up the players behind you, they feel the same aggravation that you do when you are stuck behind some idiot who is driving 25 mph all the way from Mt. Lake Road to Hedgesville on Rt. 9 at 25 mph. So...PUTT AND MOVE ON.