



# HOW TO PLAY Golf!

A Complete Beginner's Guide

## Governance & Where to Learn the Basic Rules



- The R&A (The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews) & the USGA (United States Golf Association) govern the sport of golf worldwide.
- While the rules are varied & many, for the complete beginner, the best place to start is to **review the R&A's Quick Guide to the Rules**.
- These rules take everything from getting started, to **relief situations & procedures, to lost, provisional & unplayable balls** into account.

## Understanding the Golf Handicap System

**What is the golf handicap system?**

It is a system used in the vast majority of amateur competitions to allow players of any ability to compete fairly against one another.

**What does the golfer's handicap represent?**

It is the number of strokes to be deducted from a player's actual score to give a fairer standard score.

**What is a good rule of thumb when it comes to handicaps?**

In general, the better the player, the lower the handicap.

## How to Swing a Golf Club Step by Step



- Push back & angle down.
- Position the club first.
- Move your weight to the right side.
- Stretch your left lat (a muscle on the back side of your body).
- Lead with your lower body.
- Straighten your left side upon impact.
- Extend & rotate on the follow-through.
- Keep your right side moving to finish.

**Left Handed?**  
If you are left-handed, simply substitute your left hand for your right in all the steps across!



## The Main Types of Golf Grips



**The InterLinking Grip**

Your 2 little fingers are interlinking with one another as you grip the club.



**The Overlapping Grip**

The little finger on your right hand rests partially on top of the little finger on your left hand as you grip the club.



**The Baseball Grip**

Your 2 little fingers are directly alongside one another, but not linking or overlapping in any way, as you grip the club.

**Did You Know?**

Having a firm grip of the club at the point of impact with the ball gives you better control of the strike. When you go to begin your swing, your grip should be a happy medium between tight and loose.

## Getting Your Golf Stance Just Right

The **insides of your feet** should be ½ a golf club width apart, taking full shots.

**Do not point your toes out** at a wide angle or bend your knees fully.

Widen your stance by **2 to 3 inches** when using longer clubs e.g. the driver.

Your **back foot** should be at a right angle to the target line.

**Narrow your stance** by 1 to 2 inches when using shorter clubs e.g. short irons.

Your **front foot** should only be very slightly angled outwards.

## Chipping Tips for Beginners



Move your hands towards the bottom of the grip.



Flex your knees slightly more than usual.



Take a narrow stance. Do not let your body become too square.



Keep most of your body weight on its forward side.



Keep your head up & your neck in line with your spine.



Keep your eyes firmly on your ball.



**Helpful Hints**

An 8-iron is ideal for low-rolling chips. A pitching wedge works better in deeper grass. A sand wedge is made for chip shots in bunkers.

## References

- [randa.org/RulesEquipment/Rules/QuickGuide/Start](http://randa.org/RulesEquipment/Rules/QuickGuide/Start)
- [randa.org/TheRandA/Playing-Golf/Handicapping](http://randa.org/TheRandA/Playing-Golf/Handicapping)
- [golfdigest.com/gallery/todd-anderson-fix-your-swing-fundamentals](http://golfdigest.com/gallery/todd-anderson-fix-your-swing-fundamentals)
- [free-online-golf-tips.com/fundamental-golf-tips/golf-set-up-tips/proper-golf-grip](http://free-online-golf-tips.com/fundamental-golf-tips/golf-set-up-tips/proper-golf-grip)
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