

# Basic Golf Terms

The following basic list is just a compilation of common Golf Terms. (This glossary is not all-inclusive, and is aimed primarily at the Beginner to Intermediate Golfer.)

## A

**Aboard:** Safely landing on the green with an approach shot.

**Above the Hole (opposite of "below the hole"):** If the approach shot leaves the ball "above the hole", this means that the subsequent putt is going to be downhill. Distance control is more difficult when your ball is accelerated by gravity on its way to the hole.

**Ace (also known as a "hole-in-one"):** Hitting the ball directly off the Tee and into the hole or "cup" with a single swing. An Ace is most often executed on a par three (3).

**Address Position:** Stepping up to the ball (taking a stance) and setting the club down behind the ball (grounding the club head). This is the final position taken prior to the start of the shot.

**Aim:** Aligning the clubface to the target.

**Albatross (also called a "double eagle"):** A score of 3 under (less than) par for a hole.

**Alignment:** The position of the player's body relative to the target-line of the ball.

**Angle of Approach (sometimes referred to as "attack angle"):** The angle formed by the arc of the club head in relation to the slope of the ground, usually at impact either descending or ascending.

**Approach Shot:** A mid-range shot (usually 120 - 150 yards) intended to land the ball on the green.

**Apron (also called the "fringe" or "frog hair"):** The short grass that separates the putting green from rough or fairway.

**Away Player:** Refers to the golfer whose ball is farthest from the hole. The "away" player always should play the ball first.

## B

**Back Nine:** The last nine holes of an 18-hole golf course. Playing the "back nine" is referred to as heading in towards the clubhouse.

**Backspin (also sometimes called "juice"):** This describes the rotation imparted to the ball by utilizing a highly lofted club to strike the ball - reverse rotation on the ball. This is mostly accomplished on short shots using wedges. Backspin is desired when the golfer wishes the ball to "sit" (stop) upon landing.

**Backswing:** The motion that involves the club and the golfer's body in taking the club "back" away from the ball after which the club can be delivered to the ball at the point of impact.

**Bailout:** The location, direction, or position to which a golfer plays away from or out of trouble.

**Ball Mark:** An indentation or depression on the green, caused by the ball landing hard.

**Ball Marker:** A small flat round object (such as a dime) used to spot the ball's position on the green.

**Balloon:** A shot that is excessively climbing or lifting beyond its normal trajectory, usually into the wind and usually causing the shot to fall short of the intended distance.

**Ball Speed:** The initial velocity of the ball right after impact that will decrease with distance

**Bare Lie (also referred to as a Naked Lie):** When the ball is laying directly on hard ground or dirt without any grass to create a gap between the ball and the ground.

**Beach:** Any sand filled hazard.

**Behind:** Golf etiquette demands that other golfers playing on the same hole, are not permitted to stand behind the player who is hitting.

**Below the Hole (opposite of "above the hole"):** If the approach shot leaves the ball "below the hole", it means that the subsequent putt is going to be uphill. Distance control is less difficult when your ball is not accelerated by gravity on its way to the hole.

**Bend:** A term that describes curving a shot.

**Bent Grass:** Very smooth and fine-bladed grass usually used for putting greens.

**Birdie:** Score of one under (less than) par for a hole.

**Bite (also called check, grab, hold, or sit):** The act of the ball stopping quickly as a result of backspin.

**Blading (also known as "hitting it thin"):** To strike the ball with the leading edge of the club sole as opposed to the club face. The ball will be propelled with very little loft and likely no backspin, and even sometimes over-spin.

**Blast (Explosion Shot):** Depending upon the circumstances, a golfer may opt to hit the ball out of a sand trap using a technique called an "explosion shot". The shot removes a large amount of sand or earth from a buried lie in a bunker.

**Blind Shot:** A shot where the intended landing area is not visible from the player's perspective.

**Block Shot:** Shot hit directly to the right (right-handed player). Similar to a severe "push" shot.

**Bogey:** A hole played one (1) stroke over par.

**Boundaries:** Boundary markers along the fairways indicate the field of play. Generally white posts are used to mark the "out of bounds" areas. Hitting the ball "out of bounds" will result in penalty strokes if your ball comes to rest there. The "boundary markers" themselves are considered to be "out of bounds". In order for your ball to be considered in bounds, any portion of it must occupy space inbound of the stake.

**Break:** The amount of curve for a putt or running shot due to the slope of the green, gravity, grain, and dryness of the grass, speed of the putt, and extreme wind.

**Bump and Run:** A low trajectory approach shot that is intended to get the ball rolling along a fairway and up onto the green. This is similar to a chip shot, but hit from a greater distance.

**Bunker:** A rather large depression or hollow in the ground along a fairway or around the green, which is sodden or filled with sand. If filled with sand it is called a "sand trap".

**Bunker (Greenside):** Generally a sand trap located adjacent to the green.

**Bunker (Fairway):** Generally a sand trap located on the fairway.

**Buried Lie:** When the ball goes into the ground (usually the sand in a bunker) and embeds, plugs or sticks partially or completely under the surface.

## C

**Cabbage:** The deep rough or vegetation off the fairway.

**Carry:** Distance a ball actually travels in the air, which does not include the ball roll after landing.

**Can:** Another term for the hole or cup.

**Carve:** Describes shaping or bending a shot to fit a hole's terrain or curve around an object or obstruction.

**Casual Water:** Any temporary standing water.

**Center Cut:** Refers to the center of the fairway.

**Chip-In:** A chip shot from outside the green or fringe, that runs to and drops into the hole.

**Chip Shot (or Chipping):** A short shot typically played close to and around the green. The chip shot is usually made with a medium-lofted club to produce a medium loft on the ball with the intention of having the ball run to the hole.

**Choke Down:** Gripping further down the club shaft to shorten the distance from the hands to the ball, usually providing better control of the club.

**Chunk (also called a "fat shot"):** A poor swing that results in the club head contacting the ground well before the ball, causing a large "chunk" of turf being taken as a divot.

**Closed:** When the club face, relative to the target-line, is intentionally angled left towards the player's body (right-hander), to create a shot to the left of the target.

**Club Down:** The act of using a shorter - more lofted club for less distance. The opposite of "Club Up".

**Club Up:** The act of using a longer - less lofted club for more distance. The opposite of "Club Down".

**Come-Backer:** A putt required after the previous putt went past the hole.

**Compression (also ball compression):** Flattening of the golf ball when contacted by the club at shot impact.

**Condor (also called "triple eagle"):** A score 4 under par on a hole or hole-in-one on a par 5.

**Crowned:** Usually references greens or even fairways that are convex or somewhat domed, where the center is higher than the sides, so the ball will tend to roll away from the center.

**Cut:** Shot which (for a right-handed player) curves gently from left to right.

## D

**Dance Floor:** A shot made onto the putting green, but not all that close to the cup.

**Decelerate:** Slowing or decreasing club head speed through the impact area.

**Depth Charge:** Putt that is lagged softly down a slippery (fast) slope and intended to just get close rather than hit the mark.

**Deuce:** Score of 2 on any hole. A rare occurrence except in cases of a par 3.

**Divot:** The portion of turf or chunk of grass (either on the "tee box", fairway or rough) displaced when the club has swung through impact with the ball that golf etiquette requires the golfer to fix it.

**Dogleg:** Pronounced bend of the fairway (either left or right) in which a golfer has to use an intermediate strategy to play.

**Double Bogey:** Score of two (2) above par on a hole.

**Double Break:** Putt with two distinctive breaks, or curves, involving the ball path/line to the hole.

**Double Eagle:** A hole played three (3) strokes under par. Double eagles almost always occur on par five holes when a golfer holes their second shot.

**Double Sandy:** When one plays an approach shot from a fairway bunker into a greenside bunker, then holes the ball in two from there (3 total strokes from the fairway bunker).

**Downhill Lie:** When the ball rests on a downhill slope in the intended direction of play.

**Drain:** The act of sinking a putt down into the cup.

**Draw Shot:** A shot made with the clubface slightly closed at impact, causing the ball to take a moderately curved trajectory to the left (for a right-handed golfer). Opposite of a fade shot.

**Drop:** A term defining the action taken by a player when they hit a ball into a hazard, out of bounds, or to an area in which the ball is unplayable. The actual drop consists of holding the ball at arm's length horizontal to the ground, and "dropping" it a minimum of two (2) club-lengths away from the hole to a new position for hitting.

**Dub (also called "duff" or "top"):** Badly misplayed shot, where the ball never leaves the ground as a result of hitting the top or side of the ball or hitting the ground well behind the ball.

**Duffer (also "hacker"):** Refers to an unskilled golfer.

## E

**Eagle:** A hole played in two (2) strokes under par.

**Even:** Having a score equal to that of par during, or at the conclusion of a round of golf.

**Etiquette (Golf):** Set of rules, both written and unwritten, that governs behavior on a golf course.

**Explosion Shot:** This means a strong swing of the club, deliberately intended to hit the ball out of a sand trap by striking the sand just behind the ball and following through with the club head, plowing through the sand under the ball. The explosion shot is used mainly for greenside bunkers where the ball does not need to travel very far. Also called a "blast".

## F

**Face Angle:** The relative "squareness" of the striking surface of the club to the target line.

**Fade Shot:** Shot made with the clubface slightly open at impact, causing the ball to take a moderately curved trajectory to the right (for a right-handed golfer). Opposite of a draw.

**Fairway:** The area of the course that lies between the "tee box" and the green. It is well-maintained with the grass mowed shorter than the "rough", and allows for a good lie of the ball.

**Fairway Markers:** Indicate the distance (in yards) from the Marker in the fairway to the center of the green. Some courses use a sunken and anchored, colored metal disk in the center of the fairway as a marker. Others may use a colored pole set back from the fairway a distance, with an opposing pole of the same color directly on the opposite side of the fairway.

**Fall Line:** Natural and most direct downhill course of a given slope, the ball would take, or that gravity would dictate, down a slope without obstacles.

**False Front:** Slope back towards the fairway on the front section of a putting green, usually where the ball will roll back off the green, effectively making the "true" front of the green beyond the slope, where the ground is more level.

**Fan (also "whiff"):** Missing the ball completely on a shot attempt.

**Fat Shot (also referred to as a "chunk"):** A shot where the club strikes the turf behind the ball, resulting in very poor impact, and generally comes up well short of the target distance.

**Flagstick:** The tall pole used to indicate the position of the hole on a green. The flagstick is usually an aluminum or pvc plastic pole with a triangular "flag" attached to the top.

**Feel (also "touch"):** The sensation or level of sensitivity for playing a golf shot.

**Flare (also "block, push"):** Shot that is typically high and a push (to the right for a right-handed player).

**Flier:** Shot that flies further than desired as a result of decreased backspin, usually resulting from long grass (but also could be water) between the ball and clubface at impact.

**Flip:** Implies a very short or insignificant distance remaining for an approach shot.

**Flop Shot:** Refers to a soft-landing, relatively vertical shot from close to the green (usually played with a sand wedge or lob wedge) meant to land without much roll.

**Flush:** Feeling perfect contact during a shot, right on the "sweet spot" - solid, square and on target.

**Follow-Through:** That part of the swing that occurs after the ball has been struck.

**Fore:** A player warning "verbal shout" when it appears a ball may possibly hit other players or spectators.

**Free Drop:** A ball to be dropped under the Rules must be dropped by the player himself. He must stand erect, hold the ball at shoulder height and arm's length and drop it.

**Fringe (also known as "apron"):** Closely mowed grass between the green and the fairway, usually around 3 - 5 feet in width.

**Frog Hair (also called "apron, collar, fringe"):** Short grass that separates the putting green from rough or fairway.

**Front Nine:** Holes one through nine on a golf course. The first nine holes of an 18-hole golf course. Playing the "front nine" is referred to as "heading out" (away from the clubhouse).

## G

**Garden Spot:** Ideal location for placing a tee shot, usually thought of in terms of an ideal angle and lie from which to approach the green depending upon the golfer's intended trajectory.

**Gimme:** A "Gimmie" refers to a putt that the other players agree can count automatically without actually being played - conceding a Score for that putt, usually within a club length. Not legal in tournament play.

**Grain:** Direction the grass is growing referring to the fairway or green. Going with the grain will create a faster putt on the green, while going against the grain will slow the putt down.

**Green:** The area of specially prepared grass where the hole or "cup" and flagstick are located, and where putting occurs.

**Greenside Bunker:** A bunker surrounding, or in close proximity to the putting green surface.

**Grounding-the-Club Head:** To place the club head behind the ball on the ground at address.

## H

**Hacker (also "duffer"):** An erratic and unskilled golfer whose technique is characterized by an erratic inconsistent as opposed to smooth swing through the ball.

**Handicap:** A number assigned to each golfer on their ability, which in turn is used to adjust each player's score in providing equality among the players. The handicap number is subtracted from the player's gross score which then gives that player a net score of par or better half the time.

**Half Shot (also a "half swing, knockdown, punch shot"):** Shot played with less than a full swing, mainly to control distance, trajectory and spin.

**Hanging Lie:** When the ball is laying on ground substantially above the player's feet.

**Hardpan:** Very firm, unyielding ground - typically bare ground or dirt.

**Hazard:** Any bunker or permanent water including any ground marked as part of that water hazard.

**High Side:** The side of the hole that a putt breaks from, towards the hole. Also, known as the "Pro Side".

**Hitting it Thin (also called "blading"):** Striking the ball with the leading edge of the club sole rather than on the clubface. The ball will be propelled with very little loft and likely no backspin, and even sometimes over-spin.

**Hole High (also "pin high"):** when the ball has travelled the correct distance and is even with the hole, but off to one side or the other (whether or not it's on the green)

**Hole in One (also called "ace"):** Score of 1 on a hole, or holing a ball from the tee shot.

**Honor:** The side or player having priority on the tee to hit their drive first. The "honor" is usually decided by the side or player winning the previous hole.

**Hook:** Shot that unintentionally travels from right to left (right-handed player) - more severe than a draw.

## I

**Impact:** Defined as the moment in the golf swing when the club strikes or contacts the ball.

**Improved Lie:** Altering the ball's position, or the way it rests on the ground, so as to make it easier to contact cleanly. Only in effect when course conditions are not acceptable for playing the ball down - usually due to wet, soggy conditions. If the ball comes to rest within a divot or below an inch of sand, the golfer will have to extricate the ball from those circumstances with the normal swing of the club.

**Intermediate Target:** Real or imaginary reference point, or target that is in line between the ball and the ultimate target – used frequently with dog-leg situations where vision is obstructed.

## J

**Jump:** A ball that flies farther than desired as a result of decreased backspin, usually resulting from long grass (but also could be water) between the ball and clubface at impact.

## K

**Kitty Litter:** Term used to describe a sand-filled bunker.

**Knee Knocker (also "tester"):** Short putt that is challenging (not a "gimme").

**Knife (also "1 iron or driving iron "):** A slang term for a one iron.

**Knock-Down Shot:** Type of shot designed to have a very low trajectory (hit with a low-lofted club), usually employed to counter strong winds, or to hit under low-hanging tree branches. It is played with less than a full swing to control distance, trajectory, and spin.

## L

**Lag:** Long putt designed to stop close to the hole but not presumed to be in the cup.

**Launch Angle:** Launch angle is the initial angle of ascent of the golf ball immediately after impact, expressed in degrees.

**Lay Up:** A shot played to a particular location to allow for an easier subsequent shot or to keep the ball from going too far.

**Lie:** The "lie" is the position of the ball where it has come to rest. A good lie would be on the fairway, fringe, or the green. A bad lie would be in the rough or a bunker.

**Line:** The expected target path of the ball to the cup during the act of putting.

**Line of Flight:** The actual path the ball takes after being struck by the golf club.

**Lip Out:** When the ball hits the edge of the cup and spins or pops out instead of dropping in the hole.

**Loading (Club):** Refers to a transfer of energy that occurs during transition between the top of the backswing and the downswing. Dropping the club shaft right before a golfer reaches the ball, the wrists will release or follow through the ball so the club shaft will always lead. The way that the speed is generated can have a massive influence on the type and stiffness of shaft that is optimal and the way the club head is delivered to the ball, as can the characteristics of the player's swing.

**Lob Shot:** A relatively vertical shot with a steep arc that is usually played with a lofted wedge and intended to land softly with little roll.

**Long Game:** Part of the game played with full swings where the ball is intended to cover relatively long distances.

**Low Side:** Downhill edge of the cup when it is on any slant.

**Lumber:** Another term for a wood, from the days when "woods" were really made of wood.

## M

**Makeable Putt:** Putt that is relatively straight forward and predictable in terms of the green read.

**Markers (Boundary):** Markers designating areas outside the golf course from which play is prohibited.

**Mis-Club:** Selecting the wrong club, resulting in good execution but an incorrect distance result.

**Mis-Hit:** The result of hitting a weak or poor shot.

**Miss-Read:** To incorrectly discern the proper line of a putt or to "miss-read" the green.

**More Club (also "club up"):** To use a longer, less lofted club.

**Mulligan:** In non-tournament play, the custom of hitting a second ball without a penalty stroke, usually taken on the first hit or drive off the tee. This practice is not allowed according to the official Rules of Golf.

## N

**Nearest Point of Relief:** Closest spot to where the ball lies, that is not closer to the hole that allows relief from an immovable obstruction, abnormal ground condition or a wrong green.

**Nutted:** Hitting the ball squarely with the club face and on the "sweetspot".

## O

**Off-Green Putting:** When a player elects to putt from off the green rather than chipping with a lofted club.

**Off-the-Deck:** Choosing to hit a driver off the ground rather from a tee.

**Out-of-Bounds:** The area outside the boundaries of the course, usually indicated by white marker posts.

## P

**Pace:** The speed or tempo of the golf swing, but can also reference the speed of the greens.

**Par:** Standard number of strokes in which a scratch player is expected to complete a hole or course.

**Path:** The direction the club or ball travels during the swing or the putting stroke.

**Peeking:** To prematurely look up and see the result of the shot before impact.

**Peg:** Another term for a tee.

**Penalty Stroke:** A one-stroke addition to a player's score that must be added for a variety of reasons. See the official "Rules of Golf" for all conditions under which strokes may be assessed.

**Pendulum Swing:** A putting swing that moves the club head back and forth on a line without deviation.

**Pill:** Another term for a golf ball.

**Pin:** A term for "flagstick".

**Pin-High:** A ball that lands adjacent to or on the green that is positioned along an imaginary horizontal line through and across the width of the green.

**Pin Position:** The exact location of the hole and flagstick.

**Pitch:** A short shot, usually from 50 – 75 yards, normally played with a higher lofted club utilizing a shortened swing.

**Pitch-and-Run:** A shot from adjacent to the green, usually with a higher lofted club, where the ball carries in the air for a short distance then runs towards the cup.

**Playing the Ball Down:** To play the ball as it lies, as opposed to improving the lie.

**Play Through:** Passing the group in front of you (for various reasons) while they defer and wait.

**Plug:** When the ball embeds in the ground on a shot.

**Pop Stroke:** Type of putting stroke characterized by an abrupt little "hit" or twitch of force at the ball rather than a smooth acceleration through the ball.

**Pop-Up:** A poor tee shot where the top of the club head strikes under the ball, causing it to go almost straight up in the air. Also known as a "sky shot or sky ball".

**Postage Stamp:** A green with a particularly small surface area presenting a difficult to hit target.

**Pot Bunker:** Describes a very deep bunker, typically with high sides, requiring a very steep angle of ascent to escape.

**Pro Side:** During a putting stroke, if there is a slope or break in the green, the traverse of the ball will curve either from the high-side of the hole towards the hole, or fall to the low-side or away from the hole. Balls coming from the high-side are said to be the "Pro Side", and the balls following the low-side are said to be the "Amateur" side.

**Provisional Ball:** A second tee shot taken when the first ball looks as if it may be lost or out of bounds. The provisional ball may be used if the first ball has been lost, with a one-stroke-penalty. This is not allowed in tournament play.

**Pull:** Poor quality shot played severely and directly to the left (for a right-hand player).

**Pull Hook:** A shot that is both a pull and a hook, starting and curving to the left of the intended target line for right-handers.

**Punch Shot:** A shot played with a very low trajectory, commonly to avoid low-hanging tree branches or played during high winds.

**Push:** Poor quality shot played severely and directly to the right (for a right-hand player).

**Putt Out:** To complete play by holing the ball, or to putt it into the hole even though the golfer is away (farthest from the hole) due to a line issue, when balls reside in the same line of two or more players.

## Q

**Quacker (also "duck hook ")**: A shot that curves abruptly and severely right to left (right-handed player).

**Quail High**: Very low trajectory shot.

**Quit on the Shot**: Not following-through completely in the swing with momentum and decelerating through impact.

## R

**Rainmaker (also "skying, skyball, pop up")**: Hitting the ball resulting in it going straight up.

**Rake**: Tool placed in sand-filled bunkers for the purpose of re-smoothing the surface of footprints after walking on it to play a shot out of the sand.

**Reading the Green**: The entire process involved in judging the line and break of a potential putt shot.

**Recover**: To successfully hit a shot from a poor location, usually from a bad "lie".

**Relief**: To pick-up the ball and move it away from some condition, or obstacle. The rules of golf allow relief without penalty in many situations (e.g., from cart paths, ground under repair, etc.).

**Reload**: An expression used when a shot is certainly out of play.

**Rhythm**: The smooth coordination and timing of movement throughout the golf swing or putting stroke. Rhythm describes the relative duration of the parts of a complete swing.

**Rough**: The turf or grass that is outside and adjacent to the fairway, usually taller and coarser than the fairway.

## S

**Sand Trap**: A fairway or greenside bunker filled with sand, as opposed to a grass bunker or waste bunker.

**Scoop**: Erroneously attempting to get the blade of the club under the ball so as to lift up on it.

**Scratch (Golfer)**: Golfer with a Zero handicap, no handicap strokes deducted.

**Seagoer**: Term used in reference to making a very long putt.

**Second Cut**: Second longest grass area or rough in relation to the fairway.

**Shank**: A shot when the ball is struck on the "hosel" of the club, normally sending the ball severely to the right (for a right-hander).

**Shaping a Shot:** Adjusting the grip to a stronger position can help a golfer hit a shot that curves from right to left. A slight right-to-left curve is a draw shot, while a more dramatic curve is a hook. Being able to curve the ball can be useful when the shape of the hole is right to left, a dogleg. Many golfers find that a draw shot adds distance to their drives because the right-to-left spin causes it to roll farther down the fairway than a straight shot normally would.

**Short Game:** Shots played on or adjacent to the green including, pitching, chipping, and greenside bunker shots.

**Short Side:** Side of the putting green closest to the position of the cup.

**Sit:** "Slang" for describing the landing of a ball hit from an approach shot to the green, when the player wants the ball to stop rolling, or even to "backspin".

**Skull (also "blade, thin"):** When the ball is contacted with the leading edge instead of the face of the club, producing a low trajectory shot with less than the usual amount of spin.

**Sky Shot:** A golf shot that travels very high with little distance. This elevated shot is usually caused by teeing the ball up too high, and/or getting the club head (usually a driver) too far under the ball at impact.

**Slice:** A poor golf shot that curves from left to right (for a right-hander) to a much greater degree than a fade. The curved shape of the flight-of-the-ball is a result of "sideways spin" imparted to the ball at impact.

**Sliding (also Sway):** An exaggerated lateral movement ("sliding" motion) of the body on either the backswing, downswing or both, which results in inconsistent shot-making.

**Slinger:** Shot that curves gently from right to left (right-handed player) starting to the right of the intended target line and then bends back toward the target.

**Slope (Green):** The slope of the green or contours cause the ball to deviate from a straight line. If the putting green or surface is flat, the ball will roll fairly straight and true. If there are any contours to the green, the ball will "break" away from the straight line to the hole.

**Snake:** Long putt with multiple breaks (curves) in opposite directions.

**Spot:** A term for "marking" the ball position on the green so it can be temporarily lifted out of the way for another player's putt.

**Spot Putting:** Utilization of an intermediate target as a means of establishing a target-line for putting.

**Spray:** Hitting the ball wildly in all directions with no consistency.

**Stance:** The posture assumed by a golfer when addressing the ball. The types of stances are usually categorized as; Open, Square, or Closed.

**Sticks:** Slang term for golf clubs.

**Stripe:** Describes hitting a tee shot solidly and straight, implying that it finds the center stripe of the fairway. The direction of mowing and subsequent leaning of the grass blades has the visual effect on the fairway of causing it to appear striped.

**Stroke:** Every time a player makes contact with the ball on a shot. A stroke is also incurred even when contact is not made with the ball if a player's intent was clearly to strike the ball with the swing.

**Swaying:** Describes an exaggerated lateral movement ("sliding" motion) of the body. This can occur on either - the backswing, downswing or both, which results in inconsistent shot making.

**Sweet Spot:** Location on the clubface where the ball contact is made that provides optimum results in accuracy and distance.

**Swing Plane:** The path traveled by the club shaft throughout the golf swing. A shaft's path will describe an arc or elliptical shape. Ideally, if the shaft created a dotted line in the air during the backswing, it should reverse course and follow the same path -- or very close to it -- during the downswing. Employing a correct and consistent swing plane helps a golfer hit the ball farther and straighter.

## T

**Take-a-Way:** The initial movement of the club at the start of the backswing.

**Tap-In:** A ball that has come to rest very close to the cup, leaving only a very short putt to be made.

**Target:** Represents the goal a player has in mind for the initial trajectory of the ball as it is impacted by the club, and/or the final destination for the landing of the ball.

**Target-Line:** The imaginary line visualized by a player, consisting of a line drawn from behind and through the ball to the point or target for which a player is aiming.

**Tee Box:** Designated area where a player hits the "drive" or "tee shot".

**Tee Markers:** Markers made up of a variety of designs and colors, on the "tee box" which designate to the players where they are to place their ball. Typically, the championship tees are blue, the men's tees are white, and the women's tees are red.

**Tempo:** Refers to the speed of a player's swing from "take-a-way" to the point-of-impact. Tempo measures the absolute speed of the complete swing.

**Thin Shot (also called "blading"):** A poorly executed shot where the club head strikes too high on the ball making contact with the leading edge instead of the face of the club, producing a low trajectory shot with less than the usual amount of spin.

**Toe Hook:** Shot that is contacted on the toe of the club and hooks (curves from right to left for a right-handed player).

**Touch (also "feel"):** The amount of sensitivity a golfer has for playing golf shots.

**Topped Shot:** Refers to a poor shot where the club head connects with the top of the ball, causing the ball to bounce - rather than fly.

**Trajectory:** Path or angle and height the ball travels when struck. The trajectory is also referred to as the "Launch Angle".

**Trouble Shot (also "recovery shot"):** Hard shot from a troublesome situation.

**Tucked:** A hole or green location that is difficult to reach as it may be behind a bunker or trap.

## U

**Uneven Lie (also "sidehill lie, uphill lie, downhill lie"):** A ball that lies on an uneven slope, with either the ball above the feet or below the feet, and/or one foot higher than the other.

**Unplayable:** Situation where a player is allowed to declare his "lie" unplayable at any time when it is in play (other than at the tee off). The golfer can drop the ball a minimum 2 club-lengths away from the hole, and in line with the hole. A penalty of one stroke is applied. A ball declared unplayable within a hazard must be dropped within that hazard.

**Uphill Lie:** When the ball rests on an uphill slope in the direction of play or toward the target.

## V

**Verticut:** A procedure to cut grass vertically (the cutting blades dig into the grass up and down rather than cutting it off horizontally) to promote new blade growth, more turf density and smoother greens or fairways.

## W

**Waggle:** A back-and-forth sweeping motion initiated by wrist movement, behind the ball with the club head raised at address, designed to keep a player relaxed and help establish a smooth pace in the take-a-way and swing.

**Water Hazard:** Any sea, lake, pond, ditch, (whether it contains water or not), usually marked with either yellow stakes or lines.

**Whiff:** An attempt to hit the ball where the player fails to make impact with the ball, a "complete miss". A penalty of one stroke is assessed in tournament play.

**Windcheater:** A very penetrating, low trajectory shot that is less affected by wind.

**Work the Ball:** Controlling the ball in either direction as to deliberately shape or curve a shot.

**Wormburner:** Mostly unintentional shot with such a low trajectory that it appears to, or actually does, skim along the ground.

## X

**X-Out:** Golf balls that are manufacturer "seconds" and have the original label on the ball crossed out with X's. They can be labeled as seconds for any number of reasons.

## Y

**Yank (also "pull, jerk"):** A shot that goes severely to the left of the target line (for a right-handed player).

**Yips:** Refers to nervous twitching or jerking in the putting stroke rhythm resulting in poor accuracy and a lack of touch.

## Z

**Zero Iron:** Very rare long iron, even less lofted than a one iron, somewhere around 11-14 degrees.