

Official ITS Golf Rules

All general rules of golf apply as governed by the United States Golf Association (USGA), unless otherwise noted below. Adopted: March 16, 2021
Revised: October 21, 2025

1. COURSE AND EQUIPMENT

- 1.1. Facilities: Coaches, players and fans are expected to demonstrate appropriate respect for the various game locations by following the rules displayed at each site. Coaches, players, and fans are not allowed to use golf carts on the course.
- 1.2. Tee Area: The course tee area shall vary based on each division. In the event of an extreme obstacle placed on a hole, the tee area may be modified.
 - 1.2.1. *A-League/B-League*: Girls from the 1st Tee, Boys from the 2nd tee
 - 1.2.2. *C-League*: Half the distance from the forward tee box and the hole
 - 1.2.3. *D-League*: 50-150 yards from the hole.
- 1.3. Course Set-Up: **For A-League/B-League, the round is played on a 9-hole course. For C-League, the round is played on a 5-hole course. For D-League the round is played on a 3-hole course. The course boundaries are set by the host site.** Areas not on the course are out of bounds.
 - 1.3.1. *General Area*: The entire course except the tee area, penalty area, bunkers, and putting green.
 - 1.3.2. *Tee Area*: An area for players to begin the hole.
 - 1.3.3. *Fairway*: Closely mown area that runs between the tee area and putting green on a golf hole.
 - 1.3.4. *Penalty Area*: An area with bodies of water or other areas (i.e. cart path) where a ball is often lost or unable to be played.
 - 1.3.5. *Bunkers*: An area of sand, which is often a hollow from which turf or soil was removed, to test players' ability to play a ball from the sand.
 - 1.3.6. *Putting Green*: An area surrounding the flagstick for the hole, so certain rules apply to this area that don't apply for other areas of the course.
- 1.4. First Aid Kit: The host site or ITS staff shall provide a first aid kit. Essential supplies include ice packs, bandages and gauze wrap.

2. PLAYERS AND TRIBES/ORGANIZATIONS

- 2.1. Divisions: Players will be divided into coed age appropriate divisions as defined as follows. Inter Tribal Sports reserves the right to adjust or combine divisions as participation dictates.
 - 2.1.1. *A-League*: 18 years and younger
 - 2.1.2. *B-League*: 14 years and younger
 - 2.1.3. *C-League*: 11 years and younger
 - 2.1.4. *D-League*: ~~7~~ **8 years and younger** (5 years and under with approval of the parent and tribe)

2.2. Eligibility: All players must be of the appropriate age on the day of the first official round of the season. If a player's birthdate falls on opening day, they are considered the older age for that day and the rest of the season. Those turning older during the season will be eligible to continue playing for their tribe/organization with which they began the season. Players may not play down to lower age divisions but may play up with parental consent.

2.2.1. *18-Year-Old Participant*: All 18-year-olds are required to have a background check in order to participate as a player.

2.2.2. *A & B League Eligibility*: The program is open to all communities of each participating tribe/tribal organization. However, some restrictions have been placed on individuals that play in the A & B League. The following summarizes those restrictions as outlined in the Eligibility Policy 100.1 and Registration Policy 100.2 (see policy for more details)

2.2.2.1. Players must self-identify as Native American or

2.2.2.2. Be an immediate family member of a tribal member (child, stepchild, foster child, sibling, step-sibling, half-sibling, etc.) or

2.2.2.3. Live on the reservation or

2.2.2.4. Attends a school on a reservation. NOTE: In order to participate in the A & B-League under the on-reservation school student provision, any non-native youth must have previously participated in at least one sport in two different calendar years.

Tribes/Organizations may lodge a protest of ineligible players with the site supervisor and then must complete a formal protest form within 24-hours of the game. Tribes/Organizations found in violation of the eligibility rule will be subject to forfeiture of games and non-credit for all other eligible players for each game in which the infraction occurred.

2.3. Rosters: In order for a player to participate, the tribe/organization must submit their tribe/organization and player paperwork to the ITS office by the published due date. Player additions and deletions can be made throughout the season, but all appropriate paperwork must be submitted in order for a new player to be eligible to participate in the meet. (See Eligibility Policy 100.1, Registration Policy 100.2, and Game Cancellations and Forfeiture Policy 600.6)

2.4. Player Equipment: Players are required to wear athletic shoes and bring their own golf equipment: clubs, divot tool, tees, and balls. It is recommended that players bring golf gloves, a hat, and towels. Official scorecards will be provided by the score official.

2.4.1. *Eye Glasses*: Players that wear eye glasses must secure them with a safety strap

2.5. Illegal Player Equipment: Players will not be permitted to wear any item that may cause a safety

concern or that may give the player a competitive advantage. This includes but is not limited to range finders, push carts, jewelry such as rings, bracelets, necklaces, ear rings or other body jewelry; open toe shoes; and hard splints or casts. The player must remove the illegal items prior to the start of the round or when requested by league officials.

2.6. **Uniforms:** It is required to wear the ITS-issued shirt. It is recommended to wear dockers-style shorts, slacks, golf skirts or skorts, or the ITS shorts. If a uniform issue is noticed before the round begins, the player shall be permanently removed from the game or given the opportunity to comply with the 100.4 League uniform policy. All uniform issues must be resolved before the start of the round; disputes will not be permitted after the round has started.

3. GAME PLAY

3.1. **Coaches:** **Two coaches**, at most, per athlete is permitted on the course for C & D-League games only. Coaches must not interfere with game play. In the event the coach's interference occurs, play will be stopped, and the player will receive a one stroke penalty for that hole in question. Coaches are not allowed to use golf carts on the course.

3.2. **Players:** Before the start of a round, players will be placed in groups by ITS. During game play, everyone is required to keep silent and not interfere with game play. If a player deliberately makes loud noises or interferes with game play, the player that was distracted is allowed to retry the interrupted stroke. If the player continues to interfere, they will receive a one stroke penalty.

3.2.1. *Player Responsibility:* Players are responsible for applying the rules to themselves. Players are expected to recognize when they have breached a rule and to be honest in applying their own penalties. If a player becomes aware of a wrong determination before the stroke is made, it must be corrected. Players may ask for help from the course official, but if help is not available in a reasonable time the player must play on and raise the issue with the course official when they become available.

3.2.1.1. *Reasonable Judgement in Determining a Location:* Many rules require a player to determine a spot, point, line, area or other location. Some examples include estimating where a ball last crossed the edge of a penalty area, estimating or measuring when dropping or placing a ball in taking relief, or replacing a ball on its original spot (whether the spot is known or estimated). So long as the player does what can be reasonably expected under the circumstances to make an accurate determination, the player's reasonable judgment will be accepted even if, after the stroke is made, the determination is shown to be wrong by video evidence or other information.

3.2.1.2. *Forfeit Game:* If a player knows they have breached a rule that involves a

penalty and deliberately fails to apply the penalty, the player forfeits the game. If two or more players deliberately agree to ignore any rule or penalty they know applies and any of those players have started the round, the game is forfeited.

3.3. Non-Players: Non-Players are not allowed to use golf carts on the course. They will only be allowed on the cart path, except for those that apply under rule 3.1. During game play, everyone is required to keep silent and not interfere with game play. If a non-player deliberately makes loud noise or interferes with game play, the player in question is allowed to retry the interrupted stroke. If the non-player continues to interfere, they will be required to leave.

3.4. Round:

3.4.1. *Playing the Round*: A “round” will be considered 9 or fewer holes set by the host site and ITS. Players will be required to walk to each hole on foot. Carts will not be allowed for player use.

3.4.2. *Tee Time*: Tee time is the start of the 1st hole in the round. Each division will have their own designated tee time. Please see late arriving rule 3.7 if a player misses their designated tee time.

3.4.3. *Order of Play*: The right of a player to play first from the teeing area is called honour. The honour at the first teeing area will be decided by ITS. After the first hole, the honour goes to the lowest gross score in the group, followed by the second lowest and so on. If two or more players have the same score at a hole, they should play in the same order as the previous teeing area. After all players have started a hole, the ball that is farthest from the hole should be played first. If two or more balls are the same distance from the hole or their relative distance are not known, the ball to be played first should be decided by agreement or by using a random method. There is no penalty if a player plays out of turn, except if two or more players agree to play out of turn to give one of them an advantage (both would receive a two-penalty stroke).

3.4.4. *Pace of Play*: Players should play at a prompt pace, should be prepared in advance for the next stroke, and be ready to play when it is their turn. Once each group completes their hole, they will continue onto the following hole. If the previous group is not done putting, the group will need to wait to tee off. Once the previous group is done putting players may start the hole.

3.4.4.1. **Double Par Pick-Up Rule: The player must pick up their ball and move onto the next hole once they have shot double par for that hole.**

3.4.5. *Playing a Hole*: A hole is played as a progression of strokes made from the teeing area to

the putting green and into the hole. After teeing off, the player is required to play the same ball until the hole is completed. A player gets a one stroke penalty for making a stroke at a wrong ball or a substituted ball when substitution is not allowed. If the player's ball comes to rest and is then moved by natural forces (i.e. wind or water), the player must play the ball from its new spot. If a ball at rest is lifted or moved by anyone or any outside influence before the stroke is made, the ball must be replaced on its original spot. Players should take care when near any ball at rest, and a player who causes their own ball or an opponent's ball to move will receive a one stroke penalty.

3.4.5.1. *Teeing Area*: A player must start each hole by playing a ball from anywhere inside their designated teeing area (see Rule 1.2). If a player plays a ball outside the teeing area, the player receives a two penalty stroke and must correct the mistake by playing a ball from inside the teeing area.

3.4.5.2. *Penalty Area*: When a ball is in the penalty area, a player may take a one stroke penalty and use specific relief options to play a ball from outside the penalty area.

3.4.6.2.1 *Stroke-and-Distance Relief*: Place the original ball or another ball from where the previous stroke was made.

3.4.6.2.2 *Back-On-the-Line Relief*: May drop the original ball or another ball in a relief area that is based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area.

3.4.6.2.3 *Lateral Relief*: When the ball last crossed the edge of a red penalty area, the player may drop the original ball or another ball in this lateral relief area.

3.4.5.3. *Lost/Out of Bounds*: When a ball is lost outside a penalty area or is out of bounds, the player must add a one penalty stroke and take the stroke-and-distance relief.

3.4.5.4. *Putting Green*:

3.4.6.4.1. *Leaving Flagstick in Hole*: Players may make a stroke with the flagstick left in the hole, so that it is possible for the ball in motion to hit the flagstick. The player must decide this before making a stroke by either leaving the flagstick where it is in the hole or moving it so that it is centered in the hole

and leaving it there or having a removed flagstick put back in the hole.

3.4.6.4.2 *Removing Flagstick from Hole*: The player may make a stroke with the flagstick removed from the hole, so their ball in motion will not hit the flagstick in the hole. The player must decide this before making a stroke by either having the flagstick removed from the hole before playing the ball or authorizing someone to remove the flagstick in, above or next to the hole before and during the stroke to show the player where the hole is located and then removing the flagstick after the stroke is made.

3.4.6. *Round End*: Once the entire group completes a round, scorecards are to be delivered to the score official. Score officials will verify the scorecards to ensure their completion. If the scorecards are incomplete or inconsistent with one another, a stroke penalty of double the amount of par for the hole in question will be added to their score.

3.5. Multiple Division Rule: Players cannot move from one tribe/organization to another during games scheduled to start at the same time, even if the first game has ended.

3.6. Late Arriving Players: If a player has not arrived or is not ready to play at their appropriate tee time, a stroke penalty of double the amount of par for the hole in question will be added to their score. When the late arriving player is present and ready to play, the course official will send the player to their designated group. If the late arriving player has not started by the mid-way point, the player will receive game day credit but will not be allowed to participate in the current game.

3.7. Adverse Weather: The following is a summary of the 600.2 Weather Condition Policy, see the complete policy for additional details. Three days prior to the game, the weather forecast will be checked at www.weather.gov to determine if cancellation of the game is a possibility. The National Weather Service's website will be the standard resource to access the forecast for the zip codes for the outdoor race sites. No later than 1:00 pm on the day before the scheduled meet, the weather forecast will be evaluated according to the criteria detailed in the policy, a final decision will be made, and all affected participants will be notified of any schedule changes via a phone call and email.

3.8. Protests: Player protests are only permitted for ineligible players (see Rule 2.2.2.).

4. SCORING

4.1. Individual Scoring: All players compete with one another based on their total score, that is adding up each player's total number of strokes (including strokes made and penalty strokes) on each hole in all rounds. Players shall be ranked in accordance with how they scored (i.e. lowest score = 1st place, etc.).

In the event of a tie at the end of the round, the game will be considered a tie for all regular season games. However, during play-off or tournament games the top three players that are in contention will have a head to head one-hole tiebreaker round. The hole will be determined by the course official and will be repeated until a winner is determined.

4.1.1. *Scorecards*: Each player will be required to keep score for everyone in their group, including themselves, on the official scorecards.

4.1.2. *Par*: Predetermined number of strokes that a proficient golfer should require to complete a hole.

5. CHAMPIONSHIPS

5.1. Championship Eligibility: In order to be eligible for play-offs or tournament play, players must play in at least 50% of the regular season scheduled games. Game forfeiture credit, game day credit given to ineligible players that participate in a game, may not exceed 30% of the scheduled games per season. Any tribe/organization found to be playing with ineligible players will forfeit all games in which the ineligible player participated. A registered player can receive one game day credit for every missed regular season game they are scheduled to play due to participation in ITS sanctioned events. The ITS office must be informed of any players no later than one week after games have been played.

5.1.1. *Multiple Division Rule*: Players will be permitted to participate in multiple divisions during championship play provided they qualify under Rule 6.1 & Rule 2.1. Adjustments to game schedules will not be made to accommodate such players. Players cannot move from 1 tribe/organization to another during games scheduled to start at the same time, even if the first game has ended.

5.2. Championship Seeding: Individuals will be seeded in the championship tournament based on the regular season average score (www.intertribalsports.org). In the event of a tie, a head to head record will serve as the primary tie breaker. A coin toss will be the final tie breaker.

6. OFFICIATING

6.1. Course Official: The course official will be in charge of making sure everyone is following the rules. Any disputes between players will be decided by the official. Their decision will be considered final and without appeal.

6.2. Score Official: The score official will provide players with their appropriate scorecards, group, and designated start point. They will be in charge of collecting and reviewing all scorecards from players.

6.3. Volunteers: Volunteers 18 years or older are required to have a background check. Please see policy 300.1 Background Check for further information.

7. CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

- 7.1. Coach Conduct: Coaches are required to sign and adhere to the Coaches' Conduct Agreement.
- 7.1.1. *Coaches' Online Certification*: Coaches are required to complete the online coach's certification form.
- 7.1.2. *Coach Certification*: The following is a summary of the 200.2 Coach Certification Policy. Please see the complete policy for additional details. In order to be eligible to coach, head and assistant coaches must be in good standing and submit all required forms to be certified. Eligibility requirements include but not limited to: background check, Coaches Online Certification, register online as a coach, agree to and abide by the 200.3 Coaches Conduct and Ethics Policy, and attend pre-season meeting/coaches clinic, if any. Coaches that complete the certification process shall receive an ID badge as specified by the 200.4 Identification Badge Policy. The ID badge must be clearly displayed at all times during league games. Coaches without ID badges will not be allowed to coach or be present in the immediate area of the playing surface or field (i.e. bench, dugout, or sideline).
- 7.2. Player Conduct: Players are expected to display good sportsmanship at all times. Trash talking, profanity, cheap shots, and fighting will not be tolerated. Please see policy 100.5 Player Conduct for further information.
- 7.3. Fan Conduct: Coaches and/or Board representatives are responsible for the behavior of their tribes/organizations fans. Unruly or unsportsmanlike conduct by fans will not be tolerated and will result in a technical foul against the fans' tribes/organizations. In addition, fans may be subject to ejection from the facility. This may further result in forfeiture of the game or expulsion of a tribe/organization from the league.
- 7.4. Board Review: The Board Disciplinary Committee will review cases of poor sportsmanship and conduct issues and has the authority to issue penalties against players and coaches at their discretion.