

Tips for Maintaining Pace of Play

The single biggest complaint from DWGA members is the slow pace of play during a tournament. Whether you are playing in a very serious tournament like the Women's Amateur or a fun event like Opening Day, pace of play can make or break the enjoyment of your outing. If one player squanders just 30 seconds per hole, which isn't hard to do, that's an extra 9 minutes per round. If everyone in the foursome does this, it is the difference between a 4-1/2 hour vs a 5 hour round.

Everyone wants to have fun but finish "While We're Young". Following are some tips for improving pace of play.

1. **Play Ready Golf** - There is no need to debate, particularly when you are in the fairway, who is furthest out. The first person who is ready should hit.
2. **Get ready to play** - If you aren't hitting, get ready to play. Know where and how far you want to hit the ball when it is your turn to swing.
3. **Don't wait in the cart** - Don't wait in the cart for your partner. Drop her off, go to your ball and get ready to hit. If you have to leave the cart, that's fine, but take some clubs and start walking to your ball. Nothing wastes more time than sitting in the cart and watching someone hit the ball.
4. **Hit a provisional** - When in doubt about the safety of your ball, declare and hit a provisional.
5. **Time spent looking for a ball** - Be aware of how much time you spend looking for balls in the woods. Too many amateurs end up traipsing through the trees in search of a ball that will provide an unplayable lie even if found. Don't be afraid to declare a ball lost. Unfortunately, it's part of the game.
6. **Scorecards** - Fill out the scorecard on the next tee box, not beside the green where you just putted.
7. **Avoid trips to the cart** - Take every precaution to avoid walking back to the cart. Keep an extra ball in your pocket, bring more than one club, particularly if you are chipping and have a variety of choices. Golf is a thinking woman's game and using your head before you get to the ball will speed up play.
8. **Don't mark every putt** - If you have a two-footer or something just outside the leather, go ahead and knock the ball in the hole. You shouldn't rush, but conversely, there is no need to slave over every putt as if The Masters is at stake.
9. **Range finders** - Using distance finders is fine as long as you take some clubs with you. Don't waste time shooting a distance and then walking back to the cart to get clubs.
10. **Cell phones** - Use of cell phones in a tournament is strictly prohibited.