

Tee off with these free golf apps

Marc Saltzman, Special for USA TODAY 12:23 p.m. EDT April 8, 2016



(Photo: Andrew Redington, Getty Images)

If the only jacket you're concerned about this weekend is a green one held up at [Augusta National](#), then you've likely caught Masters fever.

But most golf fans aren't fortunate enough to line the fairway in Georgia to watch the Masters in person. Instead, there's the televised tournament and a handful of downloadable apps to help you get the most out of the game -- and the start of golf season.

You can fill up your smartphone or tablet with golf apps tied to stat tracking, course mapping, swing improvement or interactive golf games to keep you entertained on the go.

The following are four ("fore"?) free hole-in-one picks available at both the App Store for iOS (iPhone, iPad) and Google Play for Android devices. Be aware you'll need an [Internet connection](#) – [Wi-Fi](#) or cellular – to access all of these apps.



A screenshot for the Official Masters Tournament app. (Photo: Augusta National)

[Official Masters Tournament](#) (4 stars out of 4)

A must-have digital companion to the Masters Tournament, the redesigned Official Masters Tournament app offers a live HD video simulcast of Masters broadcast coverage, April 7 through 10, along with six additional live streams, including tournament play at Amen Corner (hole nos. 11, 12, and 13), tournament play at hole nos. 15 and 16, and the Masters Green Jacket Ceremony at the conclusion of tournament play.

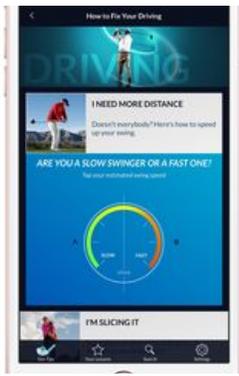
Along with the live leaderboard – with up-to-the-minute scoring and video highlights – the app houses a course overview with detailed hole information (including flyover videos and 360-degree views); live radio coverage of the tournament; tee times for each player; and the latest news and commentary.

Powered by IBM and new for 2016, the Official Masters Tournament app now includes a shot-tracking feature for iOS devices, which lets you follow any player and view every shot, of the course, in real time. View ball location, shot distances, and pin placements, and on the iPad version, read the break of the green with new slope animations and see multiple players' shots with a new "Compare" feature.

Also new this year: Apple Watch support (along with [Android Wear](#)), and push notification alerts.

GOLF Fix Finder (3.5 stars out of 4)

If you're more interested in improving your own game than watching the pros tee off, Time Inc.'s GOLF Fix



Getting serious about your golf game? You may want to try Time Inc.'s GOLF Fix Finder app. (Photo: Golf Fix Finder)

Finder app might be for you.

Compiled by the editors of GOLF, this app taps into its extensive database of Top 100 Teachers in America – including the likes of Claude Harmon II, [Mark Blackburn](#) and [Kellie Stenzel](#) – to deliver more than 140 customized video lessons and drills.

Golfers first choose from eight different categories, such as Driving and [Chipping](#), and then select from a list of common shortcomings within each category. Optimized for mobile phones and tablets, each tip can be favorited and saved for offline viewing under the “Your Lessons” tab. Time Inc. says the app will be continuously updated with additional lessons and practice drills for all levels of players, along with other game-improvement advice.

Fix Finder also includes a handy “Golf 101” glossary for beginners, along with social sharing tools.



Improve your golf skills - virtually. (Photo: World Golf Tour Mobile Game)

WGT: World Golf Tour Mobile Game (3.0 stars out of 4)

One of the highest rated golf games at the App Store and Google Play, WGT: World Golf Tour Mobile is a fun and accessible golf simulation that lets you hit the virtual fairways on more than a dozen world-famous courses, such as [Pebble Beach](#), [St Andrews](#), [Chambers Bay](#), [Pinehurst Resort](#), [Valhalla](#), and [Bandon Dunes](#).

Using high-definition photography and GPS terrain mapping to render 3D courses, each hole is authentically recreated for your smartphone or tablet, and with realistic club and ball physics.

Along with 9- or 18-hole solo play, TOPGOLF Media's game supports head-to-head multiplayer modes (with live chat), along with free and sponsored tournaments and Hole-in-One challenges.

Easy to pick up but difficult to put down, WGT Mobile is free to play but with option to purchase credits to upgrade equipment or compete in special challenges (300 WGT Credits are \$3.99, for example).



Golf Boost is two apps in one. (Photo: Golf Boost)

Golf Boost (3.5 stars out of 4)

A lesser-known gem, Golf Boost is really two apps in one: it's a social network and swing analyzer.

With the former, you can connect with likeminded friends online – whether they're on an iOS or [Android device](#) – and create golf groups, chat about your game, arrange for tee times (coming soon), or upload photos and videos, read golf news feeds, and more.

Think of it as Facebook for golf enthusiasts, if you will.

Secondly, the patent-pending golf swing analysis tool lets you upload a video of your swing and have it analyzed by Golf Web Academy's software within a few seconds, and then provides you with a set of video lessons to help you fix your stance and swing. Tap on the “How it works” video on the Home screen of the app to get going. The first golf swing analysis is free, which includes swing frame positions and introductory explanation video, but then after that prices start at \$9.99 for bundles of video analyses and lessons or annual subscription packages.

While not available until an app update is rolled out in a few weeks, golf legend [Jim McLean](#) has signed on to apply his signature “8-Step Swing” into the analysis tool, which has helped PGA championship winners, to break down your swing action into the eight key checkpoint positions.

Golf, anyone?

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