

Golf Equipment for Beginners

What YOU need to get started based on your budget and interest.

The Minimalist This is the bare bones person who wants the minimal investment to get started. (\$0-\$85)

► **ONE golf club...**a Pitching Wedge (PW), 9, 8, or 7 iron. Stay with the higher numbered irons which have short shafts and lots of club face loft. They will help the ball get up in the air and flying straighter than the longer clubs. With these clubs, you can work on your fundamentals, mechanics, and chipping. That is plenty to get started. Try out the game and see if you even like it before you invest in a whole set. If it is not for you, your investment is minimal.

Where to find it:

Used 1. Lost and found. Call around to clubs. They usually have bins full of lost clubs and most of these are wedges 2. A friend, neighbor or relative who has an extra set or is not currently playing.

New 1. Golf shop. The top manufacturers will sell individual clubs. 2. Online search can find you both new and used individual clubs.

The Bag Half Full This is the person who wants to get a feel for the whole game but doesn't want to sell the farm to do it. (\$0-\$400)

► **5-7 Clubs...**Get a PW, 8 iron, 4 or 5 hybrid, driver, putter. (optional bonus clubs are SW and a 7 or 6 iron). As a beginner, you do NOT need fairway woods. The longer clubs are harder to hit off the ground. If you buy them you will want to hit them and if you hit them you will get frustrated. They will be your least consistent club early on and if you use fairway woods on the golf course you will lose a bunch of golf balls! With that said, most amateurs just want to hit the ball a long way. These clubs are designed to go further but only if you can produce a

repeatable golf swing. Manufacturers will sell beginner sets with a fairway wood because folks think they need it but you really don't right away. The rules of golf allow for 14 clubs but there is no need to have all of them as a beginner, you won't use them all. So don't feel as if you are missing out if you have a partial set. It is plenty to get you started. If you find a full set, consider splitting it in half with a friend or selling the other half. When I was a kid, we would buy one set of clubs, I would get the even numbers and my sister got the odd. We made two sets out of one.

Where to get them:

Used: 1. Big box stores sell sets with a bag. 2. Golf shops 3. Online - The downside is that the quality is usually less than fair. I would rather see you get a used set from one of the big club manufacturers than buy a new knock off or cheap set but they will work.

New: 1. Online : Ebay, Craig's List, websites selling used clubs. 2. Golf courses selling used rentals 3. Friends, neighbors, relatives that have extra sets in the garage.

The Go Big or Go Home Ready or not, you want the best equipment and you want it all. (\$400-\$900)


► **14 clubs...** A sample full set of clubs would be lob wedge SW, PW, 9,8,7,6,5*,4*,3* iron, 5,3, wood, Driver, Putter. To get more technical, the irons with an asterisk are often swapped for hybrids these days. Women's sets are often a hybrid for 5,4,3 irons and men usually at 4 or 3. Technically all these clubs should have a 10 yard difference between them. That is of course if you are hitting them solidly. I have a lot of students who spend a bunch of money on clubs and only hit a few of them. But if you feel that you are going to stick with the game, you have the money and you don't want to be bothered with upgrading later, then I say go for it but, get fitted. It does not cost anymore money and you will get equipment that will be the right length, weight, and lie angle for you. Look to find a demo day at one of the local clubs. This is where all the top manufacturers set up tents on the range and you can try the equipment.


Where to get them:


Used: 1. Online: ebay, or used club websites 2. golf clubs selling rentals


New: 1. Golf Shop and have a professional fit you. 2. Golf Stores and sporting stores but BUYER BEWARE. They are there to move their inventory so proceed with caution.

The other stuff you need to get started!

 **Golf shoes** are optional in the beginning. You can wear flat soled tennis shoes especially if you are going to a range with mats. When you do go to buy shoes, keep your first pair plain. A solid white or black pair is a good bet. Wait until you are totally hooked to buy the designer, wild-colored shoes. Though I am the Imelda Marcus of golf shoes so no judgement here if you do!

 **Golf glove.** Yes, you should buy a glove. Please note, in golf we typically wear one glove and it will go on your non-dominant hand. So if you are right-handed you are buying a glove for your left hand. When you buy the glove it needs to be super tight. With your hand spread open you should not pinch any material in your palm. Next, make sure that the glove fits down to the base of all your fingers. Don't worry, the gloves will stretch a bit. Try it on in the store and if it doesn't fit try another or select a different manufacturer...there is often a lot of inconsistency with gloves.

 **Golf Bags** come in all sizes and colors. If you buy a box store set of clubs it may include a bag. If not, I suggest you buy a carry bag that is light weight and comes with a stand. They are lighter and easier for you to lug around. I pick my bags based on color and pockets. There really is no need for a big heavy bag. You can simply order from a sports store, your local golf shop or online.

 **Head covers** usually come with your purchase of hybrids or woods and advertise the brand and manufacturer. These are totally fine to start. Head covers were originally used to protect the finish on the clubs in the "old days" when they were actually made of wood. Today they merely quiet the clanging of the metal clubs. If you are really particular about your "look" you can dump the set covers and

buy ones that match your bag and personality. There are covers that look like stuffed animals, represent favorite sports teams, knitted and monogrammed, or come in solid colors. The options are endless. Please note, nice head covers will in no way make you play better golf but I am all about you looking good on the golf course and they will help with that!