



## How To Fit Golf Products

The Official Rules of Golf mandate no more than 14 clubs are allowed in your bag during a round of golf, and that includes your putter. So it is vital that you choose a selection of clubs that best fits your swing, where you play and your ability level.

## Determining the Right Clubs

### Determining Your Ability Level

Players can be divided into 3 basic ability levels--low-handicaps, mid-handicaps, and high-handicaps. A handicap is the golfer's way of measuring their performance against the par on a course, usually in relation to a par 72-regulation course.

#### The Low-Handicap Golfer

A low-handicaps player has a single-digit handicap, meaning he or she generally scores less than 10 strokes over par, or an 82 or less on a par-72 course.

- Woods
  - The low-handicap player should carry a driver and at least 1 fairway wood, most likely the 3-wood.
- Irons
  - The low-handicap player will benefit from lower irons in his bag, because the 3 or 4-iron is a difficult club to hit, but can be very useful if it can be controlled.
- Wedges
  - A minimum of 3 wedges--pitching wedge, sand wedge, and either a lob wedge or approach wedge--in their bags, with a maximum four-degree difference between each one.

#### The Mid-Handicap Golfer

The mid-handicap golfer plays "bogey golf," meaning his or her score averages out to 1 over par on each hole, or somewhere in the 11-20-handicap range.

- Woods
  - In addition to the driver and a 3-wood and a 5-wood, consider adding a 7-wood or even a 9-wood. These fairway woods give much better control and consistency than the harder to hit long irons.
- Irons
  - Most sets are comprised of the pitching wedge and irons 3 through 9.
- Wedges
  - Three different wedges are recommended--pitching wedge, sand wedge, and either a lob wedge or approach wedge.

#### The High-Handicap Golfer

The high-handicap golfer is either a beginner or has not had the time to hone his game to reach the mid-handicap level. The high-handicapper usually shoots close to or over 100.

- Woods
  - You may not even want to have a driver in your bag. Instead, go with the 3-wood as your off-the-tee wood and add the easier-to-hit 7- and 9-woods.
- Wedges
  - Up to 3 wedges--pitching wedge, sand wedge, and either a lob wedge or approach wedge--should be carried.

### Determining the Type of Club

Various shafts and club head compositions and designs make it possible to select the right combination to suit every individual's golf game.

#### The Shaft

Golf club shafts now primarily come in 2 materials, steel and graphite.

- **Steel shafts**
  - Stronger, more durable and generally less expensive.
  - Offer greater consistency from shaft to shaft.
  - More control on shots, but requires a faster swing speed to generate the same distance as graphite.
  - Recommended for stronger players who could use a little extra control in their game.

- **Graphite**
  - Generally lighter, Graphite is typically more expensive than steel and less durable.
  - The lighter shaft allows greater swing speed for more power, but it sacrifices control.
  - Graphite absorbs shock in a swing.
- **Flex**
  - Flex refers to the amount of "bend" in a shaft.
  - Your shaft flex needs to match with the speed of your golf swing.
  - Beginners and players with less powerful swings will benefit from a more flexible shaft.
  - An average player has a swing speed of 75-90 mph, and should look for a regular shaft.
  - Players with powerful swings - in the 90 -110 mph range - should purchase a stiff or firm shaft. This will provide a stiffer club for more control.
  - Many shafts are now available in a uniflex that will fit most any golfer's swing.

## Irons

### Types of Irons

- **Cast irons**
  - Cavity back construction, also known as perimeter weighted irons.
  - Most of the head weight on the outside of the head.
  - A larger sweet spot because it puts more weight on the edges of the clubface.
  - Beginners who tend to miss hit the ball more often would benefit from cavity back/perimeter weighted irons because they are more forgiving.
- **Forged irons**
  - Blade style has no special weight distribution on the back of the club head.
  - Cavity back style can have perimeter weighting and a larger sweet spot.
  - The center of gravity is in the center of the club head.
  - Small sweet spots, offers lower handicapper more control.
  - More advanced players who tend to strike the ball consistently in the center of the club would benefit from forged irons.

## Drivers

There are many options out there when it comes to drivers.

### Loft

- Loft is the measure of the angle of the club head.
- The greater the loft, the greater the angle on the face of the head and the more control but less distance.
- The less loft, the greater distance, but at the risk of less control.
- Generally, a driver's club head loft is between 8-12 degrees. The slower you swing the club, the higher loft you will need.
  - Slow swing - 10.5-12 degree loft
  - Average swing - 9.5-10.5 degree loft
  - Fast swing - 8-9.5 degree loft

### The Club Head

- **Woods**
  - **Standard**
    - Better control but a smaller sweet spot.
    - About 360 cubic centimeters.
  - **Midsize**
    - Positioned between standard and oversized.
    - About 380-420 cubic centimeters.
    - Different club head materials allow for a combination of benefits with a medium-sized sweet spot and lighter weight than an oversized head.
  - **Oversized**
    - The largest club head size, up to 460 cubic centimeters.
    - Offers the largest sweet spot of any head size, and is the most forgiving on miss hits.
- **Wood materials**
  - **Stainless steel**
    - Less expensive, but slightly heavier than the more modern titanium and other alloys.
    - The slightly smaller head gives a more traditional look and feel to the club.
  - **Titanium**
    - Lighter weight allows for the creation of even larger club heads.
      - Larger sweet spot.

## Junior Sets

### Buying a child's club set

Children just learning the game have certain requirements.

- Children should not learn on an adult-sized set of clubs.
- Children should not use a cut-off set of adult clubs because the shafts will be too stiff.

#### Starter sets offer child-specific designs

- **Undersized grips**
  - Children have smaller hands and therefore need narrower grips.
- **Length**
  - Starter sets are usually sized for children under 10, for pre-teens and then for teenagers.
- **Weight**
  - Need to be light enough to be swung easily and balanced enough to simulate full-sized clubs.
- **Number of clubs**
  - Most children's starter sets have a reduced number of clubs, decreasing the club decisions they have to make while learning the game, as well as decreasing the weight of the golf bag.
- **Irons/Woods**
  - The lowest iron is usually a 6-iron.
  - The driver is now being replaced in starter sets by the easier-to-hit 3-or 5-wood.
- **Putter**
  - Proper size is essential.
  - Measure from slightly above the child's waist to the ground to determine an approximate size. This should give you the approximate proper length of a child's putter.

## Ladies

### How To Buy Women's Golf Clubs

Women golfers now better understand the necessity of making a good investment in golf clubs. Buying the right golf clubs for women is an important investment because it could mean the difference between abandoning the game and playing it for a lifetime. The choice in women's golf clubs has grown dramatically and it's important to know what each woman-specific club offers, whether it's a lightweight and more controllable design or a simple differences in length.

- **Woods**
  - Woods made for women are often lighter for faster swing speeds and more distance.
  - Women's woods that don't specify the size for which they are designed generally suit people between 5'5" and 5'9".
- **Irons**
  - Look for irons that are super-light and easy to control.
  - More and more women are using utility woods in place of long irons. Most women find it easier to hit 7- and 9-woods consistently, so they replace 3-irons and 4-irons. It is not uncommon for avid women golfers to have a driver, 3-wood, 5-wood, 7-wood and 9-wood in the bag - these woods have heads with larger hitting areas than traditional irons, so it makes them easier to hit and get the ball airborne.
  - The soles on the wood club heads are designed to glide along the ground, which leads to better contact and straighter shots.
  - Finally, the overall length of a 7-wood, for example, is longer than a traditional 4-iron. This creates more club head speed for greater distance.
- **Short Game**
  - Women's clubs are lighter in weight and shorter in length, so they are more comfortable to use.
  - Wedges are sold by degrees of loft, with the standard sand wedge at 56 degrees. The lob wedge, which can also be used in bunkers, has 60 degrees of loft. Both serve well in the trouble shots around the green.
  - Most novice golfers use their putter more than any other in the bag. It requires the most precision, so it must feel and fit right. A 33-inch putter suits most women 5-5 and under. For women 5-6 and above, length is determined by personal preference.