



Talking in the 19th Hole

DRIVER. Knowledge of golf is currently very accessible through the media: internet, apps, television, etc. In many countries, there are still a few who can enjoy this fantastic game. This time we will talk about how to play golf without being a member of a club.

The media, such as movies, television, newspapers, magazines, etc., have contributed by creating the myth that golf is a game for the rich. The golfer stereotype is a gentleman, an adult, a businessman, professional, executive, politician, etc., successful, with people at his service close to him. This stereotype has contributed to most people not being interested in learning about golf, much less playing it. Let's see some facts that destroy this myth:

- Caddies play golf. The caddy profession consists of assisting the players by carrying their bag of clubs and advising them during the game. On most courses, caddies are allowed to play on a particular day of the week. It is a fact that most caddies are not rich.



- The club staff play golf. Some clubs allow club staff to play golf on a specific day of the week. Among the personnel who play are starters, marshals, driving range personnel, carts, caddy house, greenkeeper, maintenance personnel, etc.
- Caddies that are pros. Some of the best players that there are and have been in Mexico and many countries were caddies.

Like many activities in life, interest and desire are the sparks of motivation. There are different reasons for learning to play golf: for fun, for entertainment, to play with family, friends, colleagues, etc., for health, to compete, etc. The essential thing is to have a motive that moves you to action.

One of the first actions in the learning process is to know the details of the game. Watching competitions on television or the internet will help you understand the game: what it consists of, the specific language, the rules, etiquette, strategy, equipment, etc.

The next action is to buy clubs and balls. Complete equipment has 14 clubs, including the putt, the irons, the hybrids, and the woods. My recommendation is to buy three used clubs: the putt, the sand wedge and the iron 8. In most classes, I only use these three clubs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9CE8yzCLXg&list=PLDED44875947D0034&index=2>

If you wish and have the economic resources, you can buy the complete equipment. The purchase of the complete equipment or the three clubs can be made in a public driving range, online, or at the nearest golf course.

On the golf course, contact a pro, shop manager, caddy master, or a caddy; any of them will help you with the purchase. The clubs' price varies depending on the brand, quality, and model, but each club used costs between 25 and 50 dollars. You also buy 50 used balls, each cost between .40 and .50 dollars. I suggest you buy 10-20 plastic balls to train indoors or in the garden.

<https://franklygolf.com/simple-rules-for-buying-golf-equipment.aspx>

If you went to a public driving range or the nearest golf course, take the opportunity to observe the pros teaching a class. When I was working in Vallescondido, a person who seemed very suspicious watched our classes on several occasions. This person just waved, to then observe. Then he requests classes. His name is Emilio Juárez, known among the pros as Don Emily Woods. Mr. Juárez was around 55 years old, but due to the way he approached the game, his disposition, and his discipline, he learned to play in a short time and has achieved a good level.

The next step in the process is knowing the technique. For this, there are many resources available on the internet. My recommendation is that you learn through my channel www.youtube.com/jugargolf

My channel has the following benefits:

- The videos are arranged following an incremental learning process.
- Videos are organized in playlists by topic.
- The videos are short and focused on the essential aspects of the technique.
- Most of the drills can be done in the garden of your house.

The incremental learning process is one of the best ways to learn to play. This process consists of learning the short shots first and then the long shots. The process is to go from the simple to the complex, spending enough time to master the short strokes, like the foundation of a building.

Following this process, the putting stroke is the first to learn. On my YouTube channel, see the putting playlist. Soak up the theory of technique. Then apply it. Putting can be trained on a mat at home, or you can buy a special putting mat. When I was a kid, I learned putting stroke on the dirt, and my putt was a glass bottle.

Chipping and pitching strokes are the next to learn. Learn the technique by watching the playlist about these shots on my YouTube channel. To train these shots, you can do it in the garden of your house with the plastic balls, or you can do it in a public driving range, a park, a plain, a soccer field, etc., where you have a 50-yard space. Take as long as it takes to learn these shots. They are the basis for making the full swing.

The next shots to learn are the $\frac{1}{2}$ swing, $\frac{3}{4}$ swing, and the full iron swing. Finally, you learn the shots with woods. In our YouTube channel, you will find the information to achieve it. If you want a complete program, we offer you a plan of 40 classes at <https://www.handy.golf/aguila/>. You can train these shots in a public driving range or a wide area such as a ranch or a plain.

If you have access to a public driving range, you will find pros who can teach you in private or group clinics. The private classes' price is between 30 and 50 dollars per hour; the clinics are cheaper because they are in groups of 4 or 5 people. A clinic is recommended, among other reasons for the social issue and competitive spirit. You can rent the balls and clubs at the public driving range.

When I was a child, I played golf in the mornings, as I went to elementary school in the afternoon. During my round, I would see Julio César Chávez, the famous boxer, running. Julio, who was not yet recognized, would jump over the fence at the golf course's bounces to go running. Julio trained shadow boxing, which consists of fighting an imaginary rival, doing the movements with the best possible technique. In golf, we use drills, which are specific exercises to master the swing's positions and movements. You don't hit the ball on many drills, just as Julius Caesar on shadow boxing doesn't hit an opponent. In my channel, you will find many drills. I am sure that doing drills will accelerate your learning.

The time to master the technique varies from person to person, among other factors due to each individual's genetics, sports background, and dedication to training. Still, in general, a person can go to the golf course to try the skills acquired in 3 or 6 months.

Visiting a golf course and seeing the players in action will broaden your understanding of the game. For this, you can do the following. Talk to a club, ask if they have memberships available. If they have them, ask for details and ask if you could visit them to see the facilities and understand the game of golf a little more. In most of the clubs, they give this type of tour. Another way is to investigate when there is a club tournament since it is easy to enter on those days. The joke is that you behave as if you are a golfer or a member of the club. Another way is for a friend to invite you to lunch at the club and then tour the golf course or invite you to join him when he plays.

Following the process that we have seen, the time has come for you to get into the pool, that is, to play on a golf course. Let's look at some ways to do it:

- Be a weekend caddy. Some people are weekend caddies on a golf course. They do it for extra income and to play golf on the day the caddies play.
- Semi-private or public golf courses. In most Mexican cities, there are golf courses where you can play, paying the green fee. It is not necessary to be a member. The green fee varies a lot from one course to another, but you can find some between 30 and 50 dollars.

- Green fee in private clubs. In private clubs, members have green fees to invite friends. If you have a golfer friend, ask him to invite you to play using his green fees.
- Green fee in a beach destination. In beach tourist destinations, there are generally several golf courses. The green fees in these places are expensive, but it is possible to find discounts in the low season, or if you stay at the hotel, the green fee may be included or cheaper.
- Play in the United States. In the US, there are public courses where the green fee is 30 dollars.
- Los Cajones Country Club. In Calacoaya, Atizapán de Zaragoza, State of Mexico, there are extensive areas in dispute. In that place, near the Bellavista Golf Club, the caddies made Los Cajones, a 9-hole golf course. The course is very rustic, but it has allowed Calacoaya to be the largest hotbed of pros in Mexico, including the Silva, Serna, Ávila, Pereyra, etc. You can make your version of Los Cajones.
- Tournaments open to the public. In most clubs, there are tournaments open to the public. In general, these tournaments are in the Scramble format, which is played in teams, usually with 4 or 5 players. Some people enjoy these tournaments because by registering, they can play, have breakfast, eat, drink, receive a gift kit, prizes, etc.

I have met people who are not club members but play and enjoy golf more than a member. The difficult thing is to start; once you decide to play golf, you will find ways to train and play it. **FORE.**

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