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## Free golf course design software

Hint: It's not just your caddy.When someone is looking for the best golf stay and pay package, he or she is possibly hoping to enjoy some lavish indulgences. However, everybody has a different approach to a golf vacation. While many greatly value the social aspect of the game and consider the course an ideal setting for meeting new people, others view a golf vacation as the perfect way to reunite with childhood pals and rekindle old flames. Some go on a golf vacation to network with people that matter for their businesses. Others find the fairways to be the perfect place to come face to face with their inner selves. Socializing is a big part of golfing as the idyllic setting of a golf course provides ample opportunities to people looking to know a person or a group on a more personal level and subsequently forge a deeper relationship. A golf vacation can do wonders for you if you are looking forward to bonding with the following types of people: 1. Future Business PartnerFairways are more conducive to business deals than a boardroom where you can have only measured interactions. A golf course allows people to get to know one another in a more relaxed environment. You can even make use of your golfing skills to impress your future partner. One point to be noted, though — a chance encounter at the golf course does not automatically grow into a powerful connection. You need to have some planning to grow a casual nicety into something real.2. Future Life PartnerMeeting your perfect partner is said to be written in the stars. So what do we singles do about this? Well, you have two choices – either sit and wait for the right person to cross your road or simply venture to write your own destiny and be at the right places at the right time to meet your future soul-mate. All of us are busy and it's not easy to find a person with whom you may want to spend your whole life. However, golf might help. Wondering how? The scenic backdrop, a relaxed pace of the game and the long walk through the course would all play the cupid for you, while the shared passion ensures that it is least likely that you two would get bored of each other very soon. 3. Old PalLife would not be as nearly exciting without friends. And nothing could be more fun than bumping into an old pal from college or even high school. Any reunion has enormous elements of drama and when the meeting happens in the fairways, after a long hiatus, it carries with it the potentials of a blockbuster. Walk side by side reliving the happy memories and sharing a good laugh over the shared past, crack jokes on one another's swings or just buzz it out in the clubhouse in the evening, a golf vacation is a perfect way to reconnect with a long-lost friend. Catching up with an old friend is an extremely happy occasion and a golf outing can facilitate that without making any one of you feel creepy or awkward. 4. Characters of Your Future BookDoes an author reside inside you who has always dreamt of taking the literary world by storm? But do your gray cells refuse to cooperate whenever you hit the keyboard so that you stop short of creating intriguing characters that would make your readers think, laugh and cry? Again, a golf course is the place, where you can find interesting characters for your future book.From utterly annoying to hilariously funny and from the loner to the ultimate gossipy – a golf course is more like an enormous open book that would let you make a detailed study into human characters. You will come across that hot-tempered guy who makes a good candidate for the anger management program that your boss was talking about the other day. Let him miss another swing on the par and see the balls, caps, stray branches and other things fly across the green. And the language? It would sure make Tiger Woods run for cover! Then there might be that fashion hara-kiri guy, whose attire will make you feel like you are watching a 1929 Ryder Cup match. Should you be spending your weekend in a golf resort, you are expected to come across a whole gamut of colorful characters. Study them in between playing your shots, and you will have your plate full for your maiden novel. 5. YourselfThe personality of a human being is the sum total of multiple aspects. Sometimes we strive to hide certain parts of our character from ourselves, simply because we consider them bad, and so undesirable. This tendency is only normal, as every person strives to be perfect. But all of us have some elements of gray areas inside us. Like them or not, they are only valid parts of our personality. It is because of the pressure of the socially acceptable norms dictating the line between 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' that we tend to mask them or bury them deep into our subconscious. But at some point of time, you must come face to face with yourself and see yourself as who you really are. It is important because meeting the real you and facing reality actually make you come to terms with life, ultimately making you happy. There cannot be any better place than a golf ground, where you can discover the inner you, perhaps for the first time in life. This introspection can go a long way to enrich yourself. All sports have immense emotional and health benefits. It is, however, the social side of golf that differentiates the gentleman's game from any other outdoor games. Whether you are in search of your life partner or simply seeking to stand face to face with yourself for some honest introspection, a golf course is a place to be. Availing the luxury of the best stay and play golf package in an exotic golf destination is absolutely worth if you are looking forward to meeting the right people and nurture long-term relationships.Featured photo credit: via piquacountryclub.com Bobby Jones selected and hired Alister MacKenzie as the golf course architect for Augusta National Golf Club, and Jones and MacKenzie collaborated on the design: Jones would hit test shots from different spots to help MacKenzie calibrate the holes as he laid them out. One of the biggest ways Jones assisted in MacKenzie's design was by, along with Clifford Roberts, selecting the property in Augusta, Georgia. It was a 365-acre parcel with great, up-and-down, rolling terrain. And it was covered in beautiful vegetation owing, in part, to the fact that for decades previously the land had been used as a tree and plant nursery. MacKenzie was born in England in 1870 and worked with one of the early giants of course design, Harry Colt, on golf courses in Great Britain before emigrating to the U.S. in the early 1920s. Augusta is one-third of MacKenzie's trifecta of masterpieces, the other two being Cypress Point Golf Club in California and Royal Melbourne Golf Club (West Course) in Australia. All three are considered among the handful of the world's very best golf courses. Other famous golf courses designed by MacKenzie include Pasatiempo in California, Crystal Downs in Michigan and the Scarlet Course at Ohio State University. He is credited with designing more than 50 golf courses total. MacKenzie died in 1934, the year of the first Masters. Many other architects have made alterations in years since, beginning with Perry Maxwell in 1937. Others who've done work to Augusta National over the years include Robert Trent Jones Sr., George Cobb, Tom Fazio and Jack Nicklaus. In the Official Rules of Golf, jointly written and maintained by the United States Golf Association and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Rule 8 is titled "Course Played as It Is Found." The purpose of the rule, as explained in the rule book, is this: Rule 8 covers a central principle of the game: "play the course as you find it." When your ball comes to rest, you normally have to accept the conditions affecting the stroke and not improve them before playing the ball. However, you may take certain reasonable actions even if they improve those conditions, and there are limited circumstances where conditions may be restored without penalty after they have been improved or worsened. Before summarizing the contents of Rule 8, please note that it is the obligation of golfers to know the rules, and the USGA and R&A have tons of resources on their respective websites to help us learn and understand. To that end, these are links directly to the text of Rule 8 that is found on the governing bodies' websites: In our Quick Intro to the Rules of Golf, we summarize Rule 8 as follows: You must accept the conditions where your ball ends up. After all, you hit it there! You can, however, reasonably move loose impediments and obstructions. Don't position any marker to indicate your line of play. There are three sections included in Rule 8. Rule 8-1 is titled Your Actions That Improve Conditions Affecting Your Stroke. Rule 8-2 is titled Deliberate Actions to Alter Other Physical Conditions to Affect Your Ball at Rest or Stroke. And Rule 8-3 is titled Deliberate Actions to Alter Physical Conditions to Affect Another Player's Ball at Rest or Stroke. The first section, Rule 8-1, is the part of the rule most likely to come into play during a round of golf. In fact, that section pertains to virtually every round of golf because it covers what golfers can and cannot do to "improve any of the conditions affecting your stroke." Quoting from the Player's Edition of the rule book, actions that golfers are not allowed to take include: Move, bend or break any growing or attached natural object, or immovable obstruction, integral object or boundary object, or tee-marker for the teeing area when playing a ball from that teeing area. Move a loose impediment or movable obstruction into position (such as to build a stance). Alter the surface of the ground. Remove or press down sand or loose soil. Remove dew, frost or water. The penalty for breaching these prohibitions is loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play. Actions that the golfer is allowed to take (again, quoting from the Player's Edition) include: Fairly search for your ball by taking reasonable actions to find and identify it. Take reasonable actions to remove loose impediments and movable obstructions. Take reasonable actions to mark the spot of your ball and to lift and replace your ball. Ground your club lightly right in front of or right behind your ball (but you cannot do this in a bunker). Firmly place your feet in taking a stance, including a reasonable amount of digging in with your feet in sand or loose soil. Fairly take your stance by taking reasonable actions to get to your ball and take your stance. But when doing so you are not entitled to a normal stance or swing and you must use the least intrusive course of action to deal with the particular situation. Make a stroke or the backswing for a stroke which is then made. But when your ball is in a bunker, touching the sand in the bunker in taking your backswing is not allowed. On the putting green, remove sand and loose soil and repair damage. Move a natural object to see if it is loose. But if the object is found to be growing or attached, it must stay attached and be returned as nearly as possible to its original position. Be sure to read the full Rule 8, interpretations of Rule 8, and definitions of important terms either on USGA.org or RandA.org. What is a golf course? In the official rule book, a golf course is defined as "the entire area of play within the edge of any boundaries set by the Committee," and the rules state that "the course is made up of the five defined areas of the course." The dictionary definition of "golf course" is "the ground or course over which golf is played." But if you're a beginner, those definitions probably don't help much. So: Golf courses are collections of golf holes. A standard round of golf consists of playing 18 holes, and a "full-sized" golf course contains 18 holes. The golf course includes elements of the holes such as teeing areas, fairways, and putting greens, plus rough, bunkers and penalty areas. In this article, we'll introduce you to those different parts that make up the whole of a golf course. Michael Roberto / The Image Bank / Getty Images An 18-hole golf course typically occupies around 100 to 250 acres of land (older courses tend to be more compact than newer courses). Courses of nine holes in length are also common, and 12-hole courses are being built, too. A full-size, or "regulation" golf course, ranges from (typically) 5,000 to 7,500 yards in length, meaning that is the distance you cover as you play all the holes from tee to green. The "par" for a golf course is the number of strokes an expert golfer is expected to need to complete play, typically 69 to 74, with par-70, par-71 and par-72 most common for 18-hole courses. Most of us aren't expert golfers, however, so "regular" golfers might need 90, 100, 110, 120 strokes or more to complete a golf course. There are also "par-3 courses" and "executive courses," both of which are comprised of shorter holes that take less time (and strokes) to play. The holes on a golf course are numbered 1 through 18, and that is the order in which they are played. Several golf holes as seen from above. Michael H/Stone/Getty Images The term "hole" has two meanings in golf. One is the, well, hole in the ground on each putting green —the "cup" into which we are all trying to place our golf balls. But "hole" also refers to the entirety of each tee-to-green unit of a golf course. As noted on the previous page, a full-size golf course contains 18 holes — 18 teeing grounds that lead, via each hole's fairway, to 18 putting greens. A golf hole generally comes in three varieties: Par-3: Up to 250 yards for men and 210 yards for women Par-4: 251 to 470 yards for men and 211 to 400 yards for women Par-5: 471 yards to 690 yards for men and 401 to 575 yards for women Par-6 holes are sometimes encountered, too, but they are scarce. The par for each hole is the number of strokes it is expected an expert golfer will need to complete play of that hole, which always includes two putts. So a par-3 hole is one short enough that the expert golfer is expected to hit the green with his or her tee shot and take two putts. (The yardages listed above are guidelines, not rules.) A golf hole always begins at the teeing area (which is also called a tee box or teeing ground), and always ends at the putting green. In-between is the fairway, and outside these areas is the rough. Hazards — bunkers and bodies of water called penalty areas — might show up on any hole. too. Two tee markers demarcate the teeing ground on this hole at Quail Hollow Club in North Carolina. Scott Halleran / Getty Images Every hole on a golf course has a starting point. The teeing area is that starting point. The teeing area, as the name implies, is the one place on a golf course where you are allowed to "tee up" your ball — to place the golf ball on top of a tee. Lifting it off the ground. Almost all golfers, and particularly beginners, find this advantageous. The teeing area is denoted by a set of two tee markers. Typically, there are multiple tee markers, each set a different color, on each hole. The color corresponds to a line on the scorecard and signifies the length, or yardage, that you are playing. If you are playing the Blue tees, for example, there is a line marked "Blue" on the scorecard. You will play from the Blue tees that appear on each hole's teeing area, and mark your scores on the "Blue" line of the scorecard. The teeing area is the space between the two tee markers, and extending two club-lengths back from the tee markers. You must tee the ball within that rectangle, never in front of our outside of the tee markers. Teeing areas are also called tee boxes,, and in the Rules of Golf prior to 2020 they were called "teeing rounds." A typical golf course has three or more teeing areas per hole, but some have as many as six or seven on each hole. Once you've chosen the teeing area from which you are playing, you stick with those tees throughout the round. This view from behind a teeing area shows the well-defined fairway running away from the tee box and toward to the green in the distance. PBNJ Productions / Getty Images Think of the fairway as the path from the starting point of the hole (the teeing area) to the end point of the hole (the hole on the putting green). It's the route you want to follow when playing each hole on a golf course, and it's the target you want your ball to hit as you play your first stroke on each par-4 or par-5 hole (on par-3 holes, which are short, your goal is to hit the green with your first stroke). Fairways are the connections between teeing areas and putting greens. The grass in the fairway is mowed very short (but not as short as on the putting green), and fairways are often set off and easy to see because of the contrast between the height of grass in the fairway and the taller grass — called the rough — on either side of the fairway. The fairway doesn't promise a perfect situation for your golf ball, but keeping your ball in the fairway as you play toward the green does vastly improve your odds of finding the best playing conditions. As you stand on the teeing area of a par-4 or par-5 hole, your goal is to hit your ball onto the fairway, advancing the ball toward the green, avoiding the danger of the rough, and giving yourself the best chance of success on your next stroke. This putting green at the Bethpage Black course in New York is surrounded on different sides by bunkers and by rough. David Cannon / Getty Images So far we've seen the teeing area and the fairway, the starting point and mid-point, respectively, of each golf hole. The putting green is the terminus of each hole. Every hole on the golf course ends at the putting green, and the object of the game is to get your golf ball into the hole that is on the putting green. There are no standard sizes or shapes for greens; they vary widely in both regards. Most common, however, is a shape that is rounded or oblong. As for green size, the greens at Pebble Beach Golf Links, one of the game's most famous courses, are considered small at around 3,500 square feet each. Greens of around 5,000 to 6,000 square feet are fairly average. Greens have the shortest grass on a golf course because they are designed for putting. You need short, smooth grass for putting; in fact, the official definition of "putting green" in the Rules of Golf is that area of a golf hole "that is specially prepared for putting." Putting greens sometimes are level with the fairway, but often are raised slightly above the fairway. Their surface can include contours and undulations (which cause putts to "break," or veer off a straight line), and can pitch slightly from one side to another. Just because the green is specially prepared for putting doesn't mean you get a perfectly flat, easy putt. You are allowed to pick up your golf ball once it is on the surface of the green, but you must place a ball marker behind the ball before lifting it. The play of a hole is over as soon as your ball drops into the cup where the flagstick is located. Look closely at the right side of this image from Oakmont Country Club and you'll see two different "cuts" of rough. The lighter grass on the left is the fairway; immediately next to the fairway is the first cut, and far right is deeper rough. Photo by Christopher Hunt; used with permission "Rough" refers to those areas outside the fairways and greens where the grass is generally taller or thicker or left unmanicured — or all three. The rough is a place you don't want to be because it is intended to make it tougher for you to hit a good shot when your ball is in it. After all, you are trying to hit the fairway and then hit the green. If you wind up in the rough, you get punished for that mistake by finding your ball in a disadvantageous spot. The grass that makes up the rough can be any height, or in any condition (good or bad). Sometimes rough outside of fairways is mowed and maintained by greenskeepers; sometimes the areas of rough on a golf course are left natural and unkempt. Areas of rough around putting greens are usually maintained by greenskeepers, cut at certain heights, but can be very thick and highly penal. Many golf courses have roughs of different severity depending on how far off-target your shot is. If you miss the fairway or the green by just a couple feet, for example, the grass might only be slightly higher than the fairway or putting green grass. Miss by 25 feet, though, and the grass could be higher still. The so-called "Hell Bunker" on the No. 14 hole at The Old Course at St. Andrews is one of the most famous bunkers in golf. David Cannon / Getty Images Bunkers are areas on a golf course that have been hollowed out — sometimes naturally but usually by design — and filled in with sand or a similar material comprised of very fine particles. Bunkers can be located anywhere on the golf course, whether next to or in fairways or adjacent to putting greens. They come in many different sizes, from under 100 square feet to some that are huge and might stretch all the way from the teeing area to the putting green. But more typical are bunkers from 250 to 1,000 square feet. The shape of bunkers also varies widely, with no guidelines set forth in the rules and limited only by the designer's imagination. Perfect circles, oblongs, kidney-shaped, and much more adventurous designs are common. The depth of bunkers also varies widely, from almost level with the fairway or green to 10 or 15 feet below the surface of the surrounding area. Deeper bunkers are more difficult to play from than shallower bunkers. Bunkers, generally speaking, are more difficult to play out of, and that is especially true for beginners and higher-handicap golfers. So trying to avoid them is important. Sometimes golfers have to play around or over a body of water on a golf course. Jordan Siemens / Digital Vision / Getty Images Basically, any water on the golf course that is something greater than a rain puddle or other temporary source (leaky pipes, watering systems, etc.) is a "penalty area": ponds, lakes, streams, creeks, rivers, ditches. ("Penalty area" is a relatively new term in golf, introduced in an update to the official rules in 2020. Prior to that, bodies of water on the golf course were known as "water hazards.") Obviously, penalty areas are things you want to avoid on the golf course. Hitting into one usually means a lost ball, and always means a penalty stroke or strokes (unless you try to hit your ball out of the water, which is not a good idea). Sometimes golf course designers put a pond or creek in a position where the only option is to hit over it. And sometimes that water will run alongside the fairway or to the side of a green, where it still might pose a threat to a wayward shot. As with putting greens and bunkers, the size and shape of water hazards vary greatly. Some are natural elements, such as streams. Many golf course ponds and lakes are manmade, however, and so are shaped as the golf course designer wants them. These manmade bodies of water are often more than just cosmetic, too, with many of them serving as catchments for rainwater, holding water for later irrigation use around the golf course. And those — golf holes, teeing areas, fairways, putting greens, rough, bunkers and penalty areas (water) — are the major elements that make up a golf course. The driving range is one of the other elements sometimes found at golf courses. A. Messerschmidt / Getty Images Here are a few more things golfers encounter as we play our way around a golf course: Driving range/practice areas: Many, but not all, golf courses have both a driving range and a practice putting green. Some also have a practice bunkers. Golfers can use these areas to warm up and practice before teeing off on the golf course. Cart paths: Prepared, often paved, pathways for the use of motorized golf carts. Out of bounds: "Out of bounds" areas are often outside the golf course itself; for example, on the other side of a fence marking the boundary of the course. But "out of bounds" areas are sometimes found within golf courses; they are areas from which you should not play. Hitting the ball out of bounds is a 1-stroke penalty and the shot must be replayed from the original location. Out-of-bounds areas are usually marked by white stakes or a white line on the ground. Also, check the scorecard for info. Ground under repair: A part of the golf course that is temporarily unplayable due to repairs or maintenance issues. Typically, white lines are painted on the ground around a "GUR" to designate it, and you are allowed to remove your ball from the area. Starter's shack: Also known as a "starter's hut." If a course has one, it's somewhere near the first teeing ground. And if a course has one, you should visit it before teeing off. The "starter" who occupies the starter's shack calls groups to the first tee when it is their turn to begin play. Restrooms: Yes, many golf courses provide restrooms for golfers out on the course. But not all!

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