



Hurry Up and Wait!



They say it's Murphy's Law. Whenever you're in a hurry, it always takes longer.

It was late in the afternoon and our foursome was trying to finish the round before the sun went down. As my partner and I hustled, we found ourselves waiting for the other twosome. And waiting. And waiting. I heard my partner say, "if this is their fast game, I'd hate to see their regular game!"

As for slow play, it happens. Sometimes the course mandates cart-path only, other times newer golfers, golfers not familiar with the course, or golfers being disrespectful/unaware of the etiquette or Rules of Golf that might slow things down. And still other times it's the little things that we could do that might speed things up. Consider this: if each person in your foursome shaved 20 seconds off of each hole, that would be 80 seconds per hole or 24 minutes over 18 holes. This is especially important when you're playing golf on a weekday morning and need to be in the office for an early-afternoon meeting. The last thing you want to do is introduce stress into your game by watching the clock.

Here are some time-savers you can easily incorporate into your game. The challenge is on, can you save at least five seconds on each hole?

- Have someone time your pre-shot routine. If it's longer than 30 seconds, you need to modify your routine to shorten it up. Watch the line of flight of your ball and note the landing area on each of your shots - and do the same for each person in your group.
- Be ready to hit when it's your turn. Consider your lie, line up your intended stroke and visualize your shot before it is your turn to hit. Set up, address, and hit the ball as soon as it is your turn. Continue your conversations with other players after your turn.
- When unsure of which club to use, take two or three clubs to your ball. Pay attention to yardage markers, hazards, length of the grass, and obstacles as you approach your ball.

- After you hit, if you're riding in a cart, hold onto the club you have just used, drive to your ball or your cart partner's ball, then clean and replace your club(s) into your bag.
- On the green, move promptly to your ball, repair any ballmarks, and mark your ball. If you are closest to the flag, ask the other players if anyone wants the flag in or out. Tend or pull the flag.
- If you are the first one to hole out, position yourself near the flagstick so that you can replace it into cup once everyone else has holed out.
- If possible, park the golf cart on the far side of the green so that you walk toward the next hole when leaving the green
- Mark your scores at the next hole.
- Learn more about the Rules of Golf.

Now don't think that you need to be the over-achiever and incorporate all of these into your game by next week. Depending on the extent of your golf experience, some of the above concepts might even be gibberish. And that's the beauty of this game... the more we play, the more we learn, the more we grow. We gain experience, which opens the door to new opportunities, new shots to try, new courses to play, new challenges, and new accomplishments. Sounds like a metaphor to life, doesn't it?

I invite you to peek back at the above list and pick out one or two ways to improve your pace of play. Don't get caught waiting around. Take a chance and incorporate something new into your game.

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