



Stay Classy, Disc Golfers: Rules of Disc Golf Etiquette



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Learning the norms of a new culture – a different workplace, a foreign country – can be difficult and intimidating. The same is true of sports cultures. Not knowing what to do or how to act in certain situations can lead to awkward moments during what should be a purely fun activity.

To help new disc golfers avoid just such situations, we've come up with a list of 15 rules that cover the most widely-held norms of courtesy in the sport.

Since some rules mostly apply to people playing in groups, we've divided the rules up into two categories: Always Good and Playing in Groups.

ALWAYS GOOD

1. Let faster players go ahead.

If you notice that a player or group behind you is moving at a faster pace, wait on the next tee and allow them to go ahead. This is called letting someone "play through."

Note that this is just for casual rounds. In tournaments, groups must always stay in the same order during rounds.

2. Any chance of hitting someone is too much.

People getting hit by discs is terrible for everyone involved. So if there's even the slightest chance your disc could hit someone or their pet, don't throw.

It's also good to remember that disc golf courses are often in public parks, and if disc golf begins to be seen as a danger, the course is likely to be removed. Don't let one person's impatience be the reason a whole community loses a course.

Sometimes people or groups unaware of the disc golf course sit or play other games in fairways. When this occurs, engage the person/group politely, explain what you're

doing, and ask if they can briefly move to a safe location while you throw. If they won't, stay polite and skip the hole.

3. Don't damage or remove trees or branches.

The location of certain trees and their branches can really alter how people play a hole. Breaking any of them to give yourself a better throw is both against the rules and could greatly alter what the course designer intended a hole to be like.

4. Don't litter.

If a course has trash cans, dispose of your trash in them. If it doesn't, keep your trash with you until you find a proper receptacle.

5. Try to return lost discs.

If you find a disc, look to see if there is any way you could possibly contact its owner. Often, people put phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses on discs. Always call or e-mail.

Sometimes there's just a name. In this case, ask players you see who appear to know the course well whether they know the person whose name is on the disc. If so, see if they can contact the player and return it.

You may also want to see if there's a social media group (likely on Facebook) dedicated to the course or area you're in and ask if anyone there has lost a disc on the course you found it on. Generally, posts like this ask people in the group to describe the lost disc rather than providing a description.

When there's nothing to identify a disc's owner, you can ask other groups you see if they've lost a disc.

6. Don't inconvenience others if you skip holes.

Sometimes there's a long wait on hole 1, so you might decide to start elsewhere. If you do this, you need to be extra sure that the hole you choose to start on does not put you in front of another player or group that will suddenly have to wait on you.

On many private courses or disc golf courses built alongside ball golf courses, starting anywhere other than hole 1 or skipping holes is often not allowed.

7. Keep music at a reasonable volume.

Most players accept that some people like music when they play and others don't. If you're a music person, make sure it's just loud enough for you to hear it so your personal preference doesn't make non-music people's rounds less pleasant.

If you let someone play through, it's also polite to offer to turn off music while they tee.

8. Know and follow local, park, and course rules

Wherever you're playing, make sure you do your best to learn what is and isn't allowed by local ordinances and park/course rules. For example, don't play in a public park that's closed or break rules of a ball golf course when playing disc golf there.

PLAYING IN GROUPS

9. Know the basics of the game.

If you join a group of more experienced players, it's good to have an idea of how things like throw order and marking where your disc lands work. You can learn those things in [our article](#) explaining the basics of how to play disc golf.

10. Be respectful when others throw.

Stand well behind other players while they're throwing and don't talk or make noise. Save drinking from a crinkly water bottle or opening that soda until the disc leaves their hand.

It's also part of being respectful to actually watch every player's throw because it will make it easier to...

11. Help find discs.

If a member of your group can't find a disc after they throw, always help them try to locate it. If you ever play competitions, it's actually required that you actively help other players look for discs.

12. Remove your disc from the basket.

Because discs in the basket could affect whether other players' stay in, it's common courtesy to remove your disc from the basket as soon as it's securely in. When you do this, you "clear" the basket. If you forget to do this, you

might hear "Could you clear that?" from a more experienced player.

13. Keep your cool.

It's normal to get frustrated by bad shots or bad luck, and small gestures of annoyance or disappointment are common on the course. However, big displays of anger like yelling, kicking or hitting things, long streams of expletives, etc. are not just annoying and distracting to your card mates, but can give off a bad impression to other park-goers, too.

Another word to the wise is once a bad thing happens, stop talking about it. What happened on hole 8 can't be changed by continuing to talk about it through the end of the round.

14. Keep up the pace.

Some shots require more thought or preparation than others, and that's fine. However, try to make your pre-shot routine and disc selection process as efficient as possible so your group can keep a consistent pace.

15. Hold your compliments until after a shot lands.

This one is admittedly a little weird, but there is a common superstition in disc golf about "getting niced." It's the belief that if someone says "Nice!" or any other compliment before a disc lands, the shot will somehow turn out badly – hit a branch, roll terribly, catch a gust of wind, be carried off by a bird of prey, etcetera.

Really, few people will really mind if a kind word slips out early, but it's a good little bit of disc golf culture to know if you play with experienced groups.

THERE'S ALWAYS MORE TO LEARN

The official rules of disc golf are a searchable text in the UDisc app.

While these rules will get you through most casual rounds with no problem, if you ever plan to play a league or tournament, you'll need to know the official rules of disc golf pretty well. These are available in searchable form in the [UDisc app](#). Just tap the **More** tab in the app and look for "Official Rules and Regulations." You can type what you're looking for into the search bar to find what the rules have to say about it.