



How to...

OUT OF THIS WORLD

During the Apollo 14 space mission in 1971, astronaut Alan Shepard hit two golf balls on the Moon.



Take a swing at golf

Spring is the perfect time to get outside and give this sport a try.

More than 66 million people around the world play golf. Many people say they enjoy the sport because there are endless possibilities—you can play a short game or a long one, and every golf course is different. People of all ages can take part, too, so you can play with anyone from your friends to your grandparents. Here's how to get started.

Know the basics

The basic premise of golf has remained the same since the game was invented hundreds of years ago. Using metal sticks called clubs, players take a stroke (swing) to hit a small ball into holes on a golf course. Courses typically have 9 or 18 holes and can have challenging obstacles like sand traps and ponds. The winner is the player who hits the ball into each hole with the fewest strokes.

Get set up with good gear

To play golf, you'll need clubs. Adult clubs may be too large, making it difficult for you to hit and control the ball. Try to use clubs specifically made for kids. You don't need a whole set—just a few to start out. Many golf courses have junior clubs that kids can borrow or rent. A parent can also check local social media groups for used equipment. Other things you'll need are golf balls, gloves (to prevent blisters), and shoes, which can be rented or purchased at a golf shop or sporting goods website.



Clubs in the right size can help.

Aim for proper form

The first step in playing golf is to learn the proper way to hold and swing your clubs. If you do this correctly from the start, you may save yourself from having to spend time correcting your technique later on. There may be an adult in your life who can show you the basics, or you could view online instructional videos, such as the ones at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-golf. If your town has a public golf course, it might offer clinics for kids or even camps this summer. Check with the course or local recreation department to find out. You can also check out uskidsgolf.com for junior golf programs in your area.

Practice and play

The best way to get better at golf is to practice. You can get extra golf time in at a driving range, which is a place where you can pay for a bucket of golf balls, then hit them onto a big field. A putting green is where you can work on closer shots. It will feature a small grassy area where you can putt (hit the ball into the hole with a short swing). When you feel like you're ready to play a full game on the course, book one with 9 holes. Ask for a time when your local course won't be too crowded (like a weekday afternoon). That way you'll be less likely to have other groups of golfers waiting behind you, so you can take your time and just enjoy playing.

4 sports that boost your golf game

These activities, which you may already enjoy doing, teach skills that transfer well to playing golf.

Baseball

Hand-eye coordination is important for being able to hit a baseball and send it flying. This same skill applies to hitting a golf ball off the tee.



Soccer

Running up and down a soccer field builds lower-body strength. This



can help you be stable and strong for swinging your golf clubs. Soccer can also help build the endurance to play a full 18-hole game of golf.

Tennis

When you swing a tennis racket, you're rotating your arms and shoulders. These are the same kinds of movements you need to comfortably handle a golf club.



Kayaking

Propelling a kayak through the water using a two-sided



paddle can bolster your upper-body strength, which can help you develop a more powerful golf swing.