

Quick facts about golf courses

Presented by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

1. A properly repaired ball mark heals completely in 2-3 days, while an unrepaired ball mark takes 15-20 days to heal properly.
2. A typical 18-hole golf course covers approximately 125 - 150 acres of land. The total landmass of golf courses in the United States equals about 1/2 the state of Connecticut.
3. A typical 18-hole golf course produces enough oxygen to support 4,000 to 7,000 people.
4. Golf courses nationwide combine to filter 13 million tons of dust from the air every year.
5. Golf courses have a cooling effect during the hot summer months. The average temperature on the golf course is typically 5- 7 degrees cooler than a residential area and 7 - 15 degrees cooler than an urban downtown setting.
6. The infield of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway is home to four holes of the Brickyard Crossing golf course. The remaining 14 holes outside the oval are accessed through a tunnel under the track.
7. Golf courses delay play on frost-covered turf (especially greens) because stepping on frost-covered grass causes the frozen leaf cells to rupture. The turf will turn brown and eventually die.
8. The Old Works Golf Course in Anaconda, Mont., is the first golf course built on an Environmental Protection Agency Superfund Site. Designed by Jack Nicklaus, the land served as a smelting location for the mining of iron ore. The golf course opened in June of 1997.
9. Why do golf course superintendents aerate turf? Because it reduces compaction on a golf course by removing soil cores from the ground, allowing the movement of water, air and nutrients to the turf roots. Highly traveled areas plus poor soil composition creates compacted surfaces.
10. What is the origin of the stimpmeter? In the early 1900s, a man by the name of Edward Stimpson was looking for a means to create more fairness in the game of golf. Specifically, he was looking to make putting surfaces on a particular course all relatively the same speed. He developed the stimpmeter to achieve this purpose. By using this device, he could determine, for example, if the fourth green was the same speed of the 17th. The device is often misused and

- misinterpreted by the novice and avid golfer alike. It is best used to compare greens on the same course, NOT to compare greens from one course to another.
11. How much has technology and research improved speed and quality of a putting green? In the early 1960s, professional tour event superintendents cut putting green turf heights at about 1/4 inch. Today, the height of putting green turf for professional tournament competition is 1/8 inch or less.
 12. How do trees affect the quality of a putting surface? All things being equal, a putting green with air circulating around it will be in better shape than a green with little or no air circulation. Trees tend to reduce circulation, thereby having a negative effect on putting green quality. Older, more mature trees adjacent to putting greens will negatively impact surface conditions because the tree roots will grow under the putting surface and disrupt the flow of water and nutrients.
 13. What is a golf course superintendent doing when he/she syringes a green? Syringing is the process of spraying a light cover of water on a green during hot weather to reduce the temperature of the turf. This prevents putting surfaces from becoming “baked” and “dried-out,” and having a negative impact on putting surface quality.
 14. What is topdressing? It is the practice of spreading material over a putting green to level and smooth the surface. The material is generally sand and/or organic matter that improves drainage, controls thatch and maintains biological balance.
 15. Since its emergence as a major spectator sport in the 1920s, the game of golf has provided lifelong recreational opportunities and enjoyment for millions. Beyond its sport and recreational value, golf is a major industry that generates jobs, commerce, economic development and tax revenues for communities throughout the country. The national golf economy was \$76 billion at last count in 2005, and the total economic impact of golf in America in 2005 was \$195 billion, including direct, indirect and induced impacts.

Quotes About GCSAA

Previous Old Tom Morris Award Winners

Byron Nelson

“I think the job the superintendents have done is the biggest improvement in golf today. The demands have caused it, yes, but also the education that the superintendents have now in agronomy and such (is critical). What I like is that golf course management has become so good universally.”

Tom Watson

“In this day and age, a golf course superintendent must be an educator, scientist, agronomist, economist and a good people manager. If you put all this together with a love for a piece of earth, then you’ve got a good golf course superintendent.”

Robert Trent Jones Sr.

“To golf course superintendents around the world I owe a great debt, and every architect owes a great debt. We can only continue to provide these great golf facilities with well-educated professionals to maintain them.”

Miscellaneous Quotes

Jack A. Vickers, President Castle Pines Golf Club/International Charities, Inc.

“Perhaps no one adds more to the success of the game of golf than does the golf course superintendent at each facility – his/her job insures the appearance of the course, and when it is selected as a site for a major golf tournament, showcases it to fans of the game throughout the world via television.

“Through my long association with my good friend Jaime Ortiz-Patino, I have come to have an even deeper appreciation of the role of the golf course superintendent and, in view of this, I want to join Jaime in promoting this program to benefit golf course superintendents.”

Mark McCormack, former CEO International Management Group (on golf course management)

“Operational efficiencies, the establishment of profit centers and agronomic conditioning are now taking a front seat, right along the general purpose of a club. Having a superbly qualified superintendent is a critical requirement today, and his or her stature in the club hierarchy is rising accordingly.”

Director of USGA Green Section Construction Jim Moore

"I believe there has never been a time when golf course superintendents have played a more important role in the game of golf. The business of maintaining a golf course has become much more complex and expensive."

PGA TOUR pro and course designer Hale Irwin

I think one trend that we have had little discussion about in the industry is the way in which golf course superintendents across the country have made our playing surfaces really, really good.

Golf legend Arnold Palmer on GCSAA and its members

"The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and all Golf Course Superintendents are probably the most important single entity that we have in golf...The conditions and the golf course's beauty, the environment, the wetlands, everything depends on their perseverance and their knowledge and the work that they do to maintain the golf courses."

Arnold Palmer in Golf Magazine Q&A

Q: What are the biggest changes you've noticed in the game in 45 years?

A: The conditioning of golf course is so much better today. The one place everybody enjoyed going to so much was Augusta because it was always immaculate. But today, you have those impeccable conditions everywhere.

Mike Davis, USGA director of rules and competitions

“The most important person at a U.S. Open is the golf course superintendent.”

For more information regarding golf course management practices, contact your local superintendent or the GCSAA at 800-472-7878 or www.gcsaa.org.