

PLAYer

Scramble

The Scramble is probably the most-common format for team tournaments. It can be played by 2-, 3- or 4-person teams, and involves choosing the one best shot following every stroke, with each team member then playing again from that one spot. Variants include the Texas Scramble, Florida Scramble and Ambrose.

Bingo Bango Bongo

Bingo Bango Bongo rewards players for three things on each hole: being the first player in the group to get onto the green; being closest to the hole once all group members are on the green; and being the first player in the cup.

Best Ball

In a Best Ball tournament, all members of each team play their own balls on each hole. At the completion of the hole, the lowest score among all team members serves as the team score. Best Ball can also be called Four Ball, and variations include 1-2-3 Best Ball.

Alternate Shot

Alternate Shot is a format for 2-person teams and is sometimes called Foursomes. The two players on a team alternate hitting shots, playing the same ball. Odds and Evens and Scotch Foursomes are other versions of Alternate Shot.

Dr. Doolittle

Dr. Doolittle comprises various accumulators, such as Snakes for one-putting. Each time someone one-putts, this adds 1 unit to the value of the snake. The last person to one-putt is deemed to be holding the snake. You can combine this with other accumulators for various rewards using the same principle: Gophers for holing out, Camels for going in a bunker, Fish/Frogs for hitting into water, Bears/Monkeys for hitting trees, Rabbits for going in the gorse or bushes, and Grouse for landing in the heather.

Five of Clubs

If you learned you were going to be playing a golf format called "Five of Clubs," you might guess that meant you'd be allowed to use only five clubs. And you'd be right. A "Five of Clubs" format is one in which each golfer has to choose only five of his or her clubs to use during the event. In most cases, the putter counts as one of those five.

Greensomes

A combination of 2 other golf formats: scramble and alternate shot for 2-man teams. Both players hit a tee shot. The best shot is chosen and the other player will hit the next shot. The team will continue to hit alternate shots until holed out.

Par

HONEST JOHN

How well do you know your own golf game? What is your Personal Par? Honest John is one of the simplest games and puts your predictive powers to the test. Very simple: Each player predicts the score they will shoot. At the end of the round, the player who came closest to his predicted score wins.

NO ALIBIS

No Alibis is a game of do-overs, or mulligans that can be used from any point on the course. In No Alibis, handicaps are converted into free shots that are used during a round. Say a player has a handicap of 14. Rather than applying the handicap in the proper manner, the player is instead given 14 free shots to use at any point on the course, at any time. Hit a bad shot off the second tee? Hit it again. Now you've got 13 left. The game can be played with full handicaps (as in the example above) but it most common to use only three-fourths or two-thirds of handicaps. That forces the player to be judicious in using his replay strokes.

Two other conditions usually apply: The first tee shot of the day may not be replayed, and no shot can be replayed twice.

Flags

In a Flags event, all golfers begin the round with a set number of strokes (related to their Personal Par), and they play until their strokes run out. The player who makes it farthest on his or her allotment of strokes is the winner.

LOW PUTTS

Low Putts is a popular tournament format or side bet. It's very simple: Keep track of your number of putts throughout the round. At the end of the round, total up the putts. The low individual or low group in number of putts is the winner.

NO PUTTS

No Putts is the opposite of Low Putts. Rather than the winner being determined by fewest putts, in No Putts the winner is determined by all strokes *other* than putts. At the end of the round, subtract the number of putts from the total strokes; the player or group with the fewest remaining strokes played is the winner. In No Putts, putts just don't count.

Birdie/Eagle

Chapman (Pinehurst)

When the Chapman System (a.k.a. Pinehurst System) is the format for a tournament, it means that 2-person teams will be competing. Chapman is really a melding of several formats into one. In a Chapman event, teammates switch balls after their tee shots, select the one best ball after their second shots, then play alternate shot until the ball is holed.

Lone Ranger

Lone Ranger, also called Money Ball, Yellow Ball or Pink Ball, puts the onus on one player per team per hole to come through with a good score. Players in a group of four rotate as the "Lone Ranger;" on each hole, the score of the designated Lone Ranger is combined with the low score of the other three team members for the team score.

THREE CLUB MONTE

Three Club Monte is a golf format that requires the players to pick just three clubs to use during their round. All players are allowed their putters in addition to the three other clubs they choose. The choice of clubs can't be changed during the round - once you've chosen a 3-wood, 5-iron and 9-iron, for example, those are the only clubs (other than putter) you can use during the round. Three Club Monte is a good game to play in order to learn and practice half-shots, knock-downs and so forth.

FISH

Fish is a game for groups of golfers that is modeled after a popular fishing bet, hence its name. The fishing bet is threefold: who catches the first fish, who catches the biggest fish, and who catches the most fish. Likewise, Fish on a golf course is threefold, but this time involving birdies: who makes the first birdie, who makes the longest birdie, and who makes the most birdies. Keep track of the distance of each birdie in case you need to go to a tiebreaker for most birdies. The tiebreaker is greater total distance on the birdies. Also, eagles can be set to be worth two "fish" (birdies) for the most birdies.

THE TRAIN

The Train is a golf betting game for groups that awards points for positive accomplishments - but can wipe those points away with a high score. In The Train, positive points are awarded thusly:

- Par - 1 point
- Birdie - 2 points
- Eagle - 5 points

The object is to accumulate the most points over the course of your round. But there's a catch, and it's a big catch. If at any point in the round you make two bogeys in a row - or one double-bogey - you lose all your points and start over again at zero.

TRIPLES

Triples can be a competition between players in a group of three, or a side bet in a [three ball](#) competition. Either way, it involves groups of three players.

In Triples, a point value is assigned to a player's standing on each hole. Most commonly, a player gets 6 points for having the best score on a hole, 4 points for the middle score and 2 points for the worst score. For ties, the point values for the places in question are added together and divided by the number of players tied. Two examples: First, all three players tie on a hole. Six plus 4 plus 2 equals 12; 12 divided by 3 equals 4, all three players get 4 points. Second, two players tie for low score; 6 plus 4 equals 10; 10 divided by 2 equals 5; each of those two players gets five points.

PLAY IT AGAIN SAM

Play It Again Sam is often just another name for No Alibis. In this version, handicaps are converted into, essentially, mulligans. If you are a 14 handicap, then you'll get 14 chances during a round to replay a stroke. (See No Alibis link above for full explanation of this version.) However, Play It Again Sam is also often a term used for a game that is sort of the *opposite* of No Alibis. Instead of each golfer being able to replay his or her own strokes, in this version of Play It Again Sam your opponent gets to make you replay strokes. Hit a fantastic approach to within inches of the cup? Your opponent can make you hit it again. Sink a long putt? Your opponent can call "do over."

This version is best played among good friends, for obvious reasons, and is only well-suited to groups of players of similar abilities. Also, it is advisable, in the interest of time, to limit the number of strokes that are re-playable.

DERBY, or HORSE RACE

Shoot Out is a tournament format with a field of 10 players. On each hole, one player is eliminated until only one remains - the champion, crowned on the 9th hole.

Shoot Out is a slow game, very slow in the early going, because all remaining players must complete each hole before play moves on. On each hole, the high score is eliminated. Expect a lot of playoffs in the early going, adding even more time.

STABLEFORD

A Stableford competition is a golf tournament in which the object is to get the *highest* score. That's because in Stableford, golfers are awarded points based on their scores in relation to a fixed score at each hole. That fixed score can be par, or any number of strokes a tournament committee chooses (6, 8, whatever).

The USGA and R&A define Stableford points in this manner:

- More than 1 over fixed score (or no score returned) - 0 points
- One over fixed score - 1 point
- Fixed score - 2 points
- One under fixed score - 3 points
- Two under fixed score - 4 points
- Three under fixed score - 5 points
- Four under fixed score - 6 points

Rules related to Stableford competitions can be found in the official rules under [Rule 32](#).

Stableford competitions are usually played with full handicaps, but might be played at scratch with handicaps used to determine higher point rewards for higher handicappers. For example, golfers might be flighted as A, B, C and D players, with points adjusted so that a par gets an A player 0 points, a B player 1 point, a C player 2 points and a D player 3 points.

Golfers might be more familiar with the term [Modified Stableford](#), which refers to a Stableford competition in which the points or exact format differs from the Stableford system described in the rulebook.

Modified Stableford

Definition: Modified Stableford is a [Stableford](#) competition whose rules have been modified.

Here's a real definition: A Stableford competition employs a points system that is set forth in the Rules of Golf under [Rule 32](#). A Modified Stableford is a competition that employs the same principle - golfers are awarded points based on their performance on each hole, with the highest point total winning - but with a different set of points than what is described in the rulebook.

- Double Eagle: 8 points
- Eagle: 5 points
- Birdie: 2 points
- Par: 0 points
- Bogey: -1 point
- Double Bogey or Worse: -3 points

POWER PLAY GOLF

9- hole format with two flags on each green. One flag is "easy to moderate" and second flag is "hard" or more challenging. Player is faced with risk/reward with each approach shot and is rewarded for taking a risk and going for the more challenging of the two flags. Scoring is a Stableford system with double points being awarded on a "Power Play" flag. For more information go to www.powerplay-golf.com