

## What Is An Amateur Golfer?

To an outsider looking in, what makes up an amateur golfer may be ambiguous and mystifying. It's more than a simple definition; however, and one looking at joining the amateur circuit needs to be aware that it is more than simply expanding on their hobby. A simple definition of an amateur is a participant who plays for enjoyment and does not receive payment in cash or kind as a reward. But that is not a total definition of an amateur golfer. It's important to note that there is an actual definition of an amateur player according to the United States Golf Association. An amateur player reaches that status first by reaching what is known as golf skill. Golf skill is assessed by a player's success at a competitive level. The level of competition can be local or national; the important aspect is that the player is successful competitively. Once a player has success in competitions and is recognized as having golf skill, this is known as golf reputation. Again, a reputation can only be gained through actual playing and recognition of golf skill. Simply being associated with the game of golf, administering tournaments or being an instructor does not gain a player reputation or skill. After achieving a level of reputable golf skill and establishing a status, an amateur may become an amateur player. This is a player that does not yet play for money and does not accept money for teaching the sport of golf. An amateur player may not claim to be a pro golfer, either, and may not engage in any action that would credit them in the same fashion as a professional player. Breaking this code of ethics would also include accepting any endorsements from commercial groups, allowing names or likenesses to appear for commercial purposes, or entering into professional agreements with sponsors or agents. Finally, an amateur player is not allowed to apply for membership to any organization for professional players. Of course, there are exceptions for every rule, and amateur golf is no exception. An amateur player is allowed to apply for an assistant professional player. They are also allowed to enter and play in a tournament or competition that will lead to play in a professional competition. The only difference in play between them and a professional player is that an amateur player must forfeit all rights to any prize monies that they could potentially win. The rules and exceptions of amateur golf play are numerous, but the most important factor of note throughout the process is that becoming an amateur golfer can be relatively simple. Becoming an amateur golfer is, however, only for those that take the sport of golf seriously and not for those that want to make a quick splash as a pro. With the comprehensive rules of payment and expenses as they are, making a career as an amateur is simply downright impossible. Becoming one, though, is directed aptly towards those that are game for competition and those that are looking to strike their golf game up to the next level of such competition. As with any sport, becoming well-versed in the rules and regulations of the governing body is of utter importance. Read and familiarize the USGA regulations prior to making any significant decisions towards amateur golf.

## About the Author

Graham Johns owns and writes regularly for GolfingLifet where you can read many more articles on all aspects of [golf](#) and go to Well Spoken Audio for a collection of entertaining and informative golfing audiobooks on golf and [golfing personalities](#).

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