

ABOUT THE PLAYER PATHWAY

New golfers learn best when engaged in a program that is clear, fun, easy to learn and rewarding.

These essential elements are provided in the U.S. Kids Golf **Player Pathway** as players advance from level to level as their skills improve.

Completion of Levels 1-5 establishes the basic fundamentals to ensure a lifetime of enjoyment and knowledge of the game. Advancing through Levels 6-10 provides the skills to successfully compete in tournament play.



Created by the U.S. Kids Golf Coaches Institute

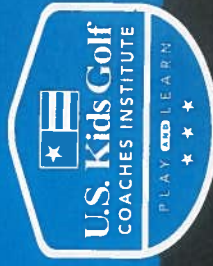
An initiative of the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation

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LEVEL 1

PLAYER PATHWAY



For a lifetime of golf...

Golf is a fun game to play and learn

To make it fun to learn the key fundamentals of the game, U.S. Kids Golf has developed this easy to use **pathway**, which consists of ten levels. The first five are shown in this overview.

Within each level, there are five checkpoints in which Achievement pins may be earned: **Putting, Around the Green, Full Swing, Knowledge, and Scoring**. Once all five are attained, a Mastered pin is awarded, and the player advances to the next level. Players who complete the first five levels are recognized on our website at uskidsgolf.com/mastered

It is possible for a player to enter the program at Level 3 if the player brings attested scoring information and passes the skill requirements of the previous level



Level 1: Optional Gear



Matching Hat



Bag Tag



Proudly display your achievements on the U.S. Kids Golf Learning Scoreboard, designed to be framed or placed on the player's bookcase

Level 1 Player's Booklet and Achievement Pins



Player's Booklet



Mastered Pin



Achievement Pins

Pins shown are actual size



Start on the Putting Green

The best place to begin learning golf is on the putting green.



1

Thumbs on Top

Let your arms hang freely and grip the club with both thumbs on top.



Form Completed



2

The "Y" Setup

Your arms and the putter form the letter "Y". Place the ball between your feet. Relax.



Form Completed

3

Eyes Over the Ball

Your eyes should be directly over the ball to help you aim.



Form Completed



4

Backswing = Follow-through

Making a practice stroke, swing the "Y" the same distance and pace back as through.



Form Completed



PACE

Progress Check

Once Putting Forms are complete, move to Skills and put your Forms to work.

Notes



Put Your Forms to Work

After completing all of your Putting Forms, you can take this Putting Skills test. It has two parts—a short putt and a medium putt. Both parts must be completed with your coach.

1

Short Putt

Place a ball two feet away from the hole on a flat part of the green.

You must make 3 out of 5 attempts.

Skill Completed



2

Medium Putt

Place a ball 10 feet from the hole on a flat part of the green.
You must two-putt 3 out of 5 attempts.



Skill Completed

10'



Achievement Pin Checkpoint

Once Putting Forms and Skills are complete, congratulations on earning your Putting Achievement Pin!

Date Earned



Just Off the Green

Chipping is a small swing similar to putting, with a few adjustments. Start with a Yard Club or 8-iron to produce a low running shot.



1 Hotdog in the Bun

Start with the ten-finger grip and put the hotdog (left thumb) in the bun (right palm).

Form Completed



2 "Y" Setup | Ball in the Middle

Using the "y" setup, position the ball in the middle of your stance with your hands slightly ahead of the clubhead.

Form Completed

3 Backswing = Follow-through

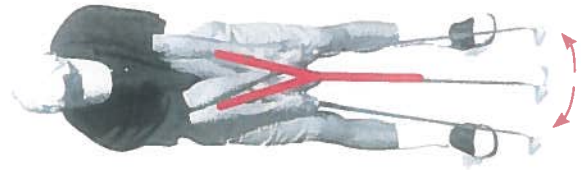
Practice swinging the "y" the same distance and pace back as through.

Form Completed

4 Brush the Grass

While swinging the "y", let the clubhead brush the grass.

Form Completed



Progress Check

Once Chipping Forms are complete, move to Skills and put your Forms to work.

Notes



Put Your Forms to Work

After completing all of your Chipping Forms, you can take this Chipping Skills test. It must be completed with your coach.

1

Short Chip

Place five balls a few feet from the green, 20 feet from the hole. **You must chip 3 out of 5 shots within eight feet of the hole.**



Skill Completed

Progress Check

Once Chipping Forms and Skills are complete, move on to Pitching

Notes



Shots Around the Green

Pitch shots are a half swing that goes higher than chip shots. To do this, the "Y" is swung further back and through. Start with your Yard Club or pitching wedge.



1

Hotdog in the Bun

Start with the ten-finger grip and put the hotdog (left thumb) in the bun (right palm).

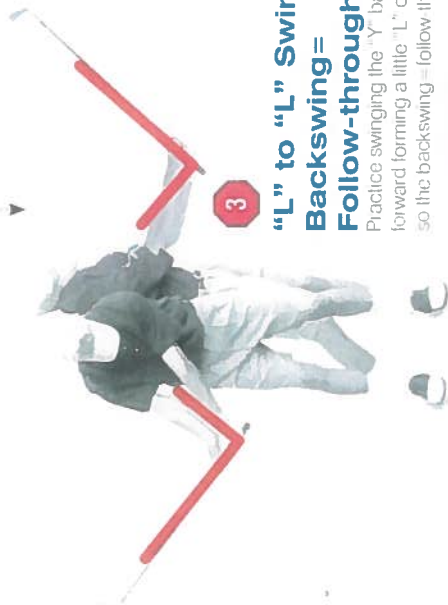
Form Completed

2

"Y" Setup | Ball in the Middle

Using the "Y" setup, position the ball in the middle of your stance with your hands slightly ahead of the clubhead.

Form Completed



3

"L" to "L" Swing | Backswing = Follow-through

Practice swinging the "Y" back and forward forming a little "L" on both sides, so the backswing = follow through.

Form Completed

4

Brush the Grass

While swinging through the shot, be sure to brush the grass.

Form Completed



5

Stick the Finish | Show Some Shoe

After swinging the little "L" forward, stick the finish and hold there for three seconds, showing some shoe.

Form Completed



Progress Check

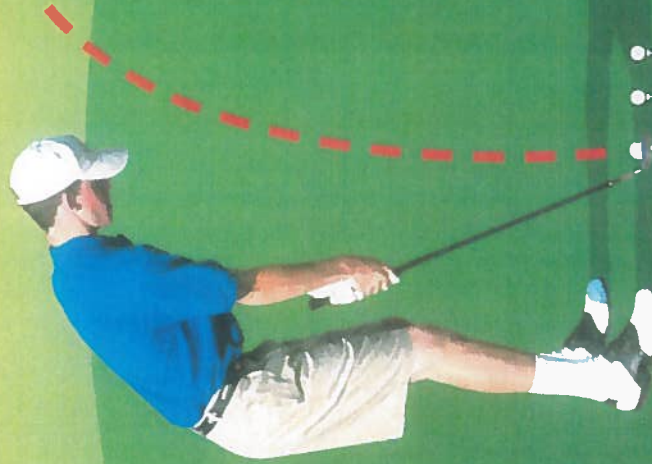
Once Pitching Forms are complete, move to Skills and put your Forms to work.

Notes



Getting on the Green

After completing all of your Pitching Forms, you can take this Pitching Skills test. Using a tee is encouraged. It must be completed with your coach.



1

Short Pitch

Using a tee, or with the ball on the ground, place five balls 10 yards from the green.

Your ball must land and stay on the green in 2 out of 5 attempts.



Skill Completed

Progress Check

Once Pitching Forms and Skills are complete, move on to Sand

Notes



Playing from the Sand

Playing a shot from sand is similar to a half-swing pitch shot, with a few adjustments. Use your Yard Club, sand wedge, or pitching wedge from a shallow bunker.



1

Hotdog in the Bun

Start with the ten-finger grip and put the hotdog (left thumb) in the bun (right palm).

Form Completed

2

"Y" Setup | Ball Forward

Position the ball forward of the center of your stance and open the clubface.

Form Completed



3

"L" to "L" Swing | Backswing = Follow-through

Practice swinging the "Y" back and forward forming a little "L" on both sides, so the backswing follow through.

Form Completed



4

Splash the Sand

Swing your clubhead down and through the sand, splashing sand out of the bunker.

Form Completed



5

Stick the Finish | Show Some Shoe

After swinging the little "L", forward, stick the finish and hold there for three seconds, showing some shoe.

Form Completed



Progress Check

Once Sand Forms are complete, move to Skills and put your Forms to work.

Notes



Getting Out of the Sand

After completing all of your Sand Forms, you can take this Sand Skills test from a shallow bunker. It must be completed with your coach.

1

Sand Shot

Stand in a shallow bunker without a ball.

You must splash the sand out of the bunker in 3 out of 5 attempts.



Skill Completed



Achievement Pin Checkpoint

Once Forms and Skills for Chipping, Pitching, and Sand are complete, congratulations on earning your Around the Green Achievement Pin.

Date Earned _____





Making a Full Swing

Use a long swing to hit your ball greater distances. Start with your Yard Club or 8-iron



1

Hotdog in the Bun

Start with the ten-finger grip and put the hotdog (left thumb) in the bun (right palm)

Form Completed

2

"Y" Setup | Ball in the Middle

Using the "Y" setup, position the ball in the middle of your stance with your hands slightly ahead of the clubhead

Form Completed

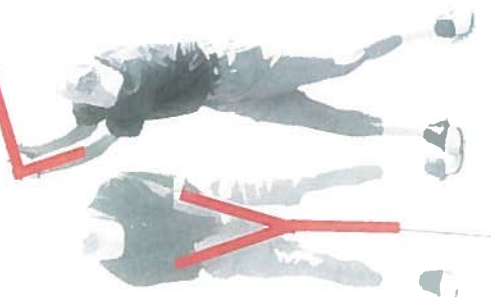


3

"Y" to "L"

Practice swinging the "Y" back until it forms an "L" at the top of your swing

Form Completed

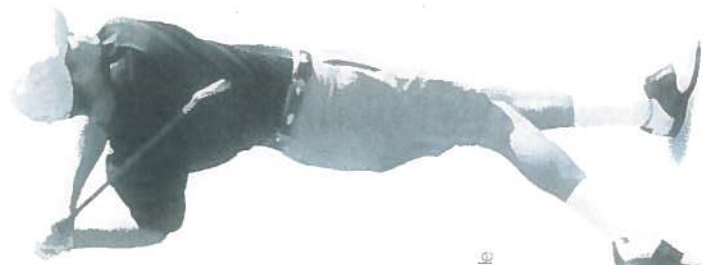


4

Release the "L" | Brush the Grass

On the downswing, release the "L" to create speed and brush the grass

Form Completed



5

Stick the Finish | Show the Shoe

Swing through to the finish position and hold there for three seconds while showing the bottom of your shoe

Form Completed

Progress Check

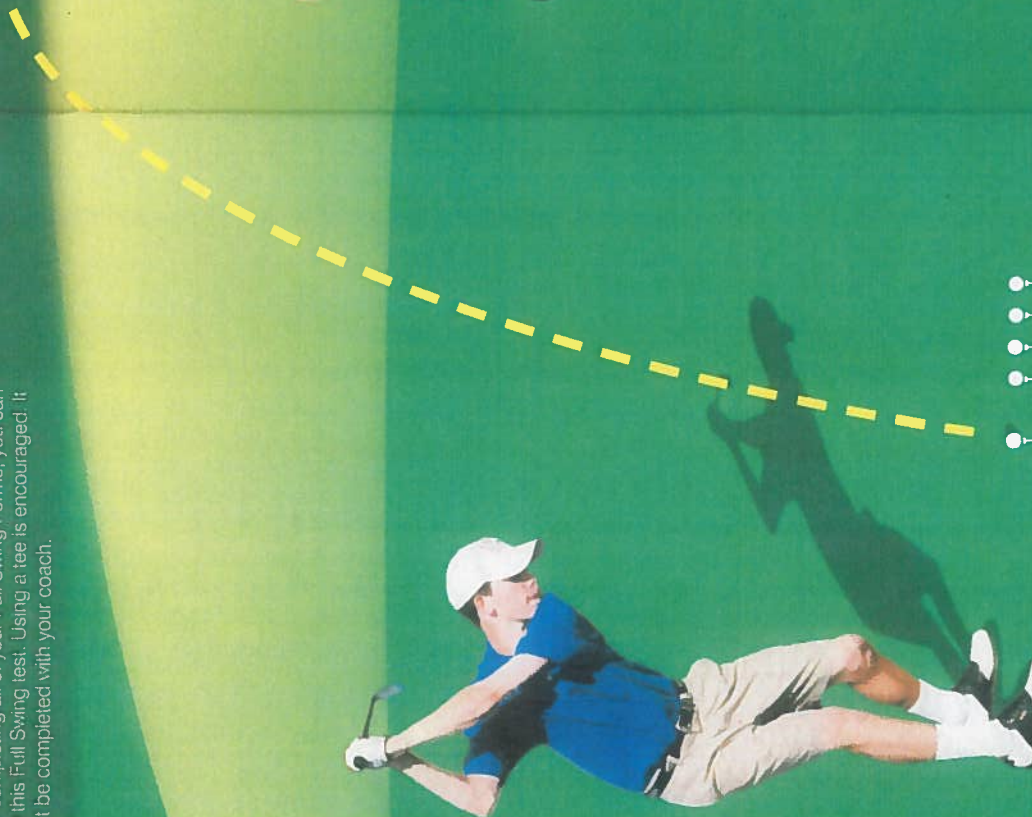
Once Full Swing Forms are complete, move to Skills and put your Forms to work

Notes



Put Your Forms to Work

After completing all of your Full Swing Forms, you can take this Full Swing test. Using a tee is encouraged. It must be completed with your coach.



25

1

Full Swing Shot

Using a tee, hit your Yard Club or 8-iron, flying the ball at least 25 yards in the air.

You must do this in 3 out of 5 attempts.



Skill Completed



Achievement Pin Checkpoint

Once Full Swing Forms and Skills are complete, congratulations on earning your Full Swing Achievement Pin!

Date Earned _____



Your Manners on the Course

This is a 10 question test with YES or NO answers (pre-checked). Select 5 out of the 10 questions for your student to answer. The student must correctly answer 5 out of 5 questions to pass this section.

- 1 Is it ever acceptable to miscount your score?
☐ Yes ☒ No
- 2 Is it okay to talk while another player is playing a stroke?
☐ Yes ☒ No
- 3 Should you be ready to play when it is your turn and not cause delays?
☒ Yes ☐ No
- 4 Should you replace your divots, fix your ball marks, and smooth the sand bunkers after your shots?
☒ Yes ☐ No
- 5 Is it okay to run on the putting green if your shoes don't damage the grass?
☐ Yes ☒ No



- 6 Should you stand in a place where you won't get hit by another player's club or ball?
☒ Yes ☐ No

- 7 If you think your ball is going to hit someone, should you yell "Fore!" as loudly as you can to warn them of danger?
☒ Yes ☐ No

- 8 Should you always be seated when riding in a golf car?
☒ Yes ☐ No

- 9 Is it okay to lay your golf bag on the putting green?
☐ Yes ☒ No

- 10 Should you mark the position of your ball on the green with a small coin or ball marker placed behind the ball?
☒ Yes ☐ No

5 out of 5 Correct

Progress Check

Once the Etiquette portion is complete, move to the Rules section.

Playing by the Rules

This is a 10 question test with YES or NO answers (pre-checked). Select 5 out of the 10 questions for your student to answer. The student must correctly answer 5 out of 5 questions to pass this section.

- 1 Can you tee your ball in front of the tee markers?
☐ Yes ☒ No
- 2 If you're trying to hit the ball and you miss, does it count as a stroke?
☒ Yes ☐ No
- 3 Do you have to add a stroke to your score if you accidentally knock your ball off of its tee?
☐ Yes ☒ No
- 4 If you lose count of your strokes on a hole, is it okay to guess?
☐ Yes ☒ No
- 5 Once your ball is very close to the hole, is it okay to pick it up without actually finishing the hole to save time?
☐ Yes ☒ No

- 6 If your ball lands in a bad spot, like long grass or a patch of dirt, should you try to hit it anyway?
☒ Yes ☐ No

- 7 When you're waiting for your turn to hit, can you practice chipping if it doesn't bother the other players?
☐ Yes ☒ No

- 8 If your ball is close to the putting green, can you take out the flagstick?
☒ Yes ☐ No

- 9 Before you putt, can you place the flagstick behind the hole to stop your ball?
☐ Yes ☒ No

- 10 Are you allowed to drop your ball without a penalty if it ends up on a paved cart path?
☒ Yes ☐ No

5 out of 5 Correct

Progress Check

Once the Rules portion is complete, move to the Equipment section.





Identifying the Parts of a Golf Club

The student must identify the three basic types of clubheads and the parts of the club described below

1



DRIVER



IRON



PUTTER

4

CLUBFACE

3

SHAFT

2

GRIP

CLUBHEAD

5

5 out of 5 Correct

Progress Check

Once the Equipment portion is complete, move to the Sportsmanship section.



Qualities of a True Champion

In this Sportsmanship section, one quality of a true champion is of utmost importance, and the student must briefly describe how a golfer can show

1 RESPECT FOR THE COURSE

A golfer can show respect for the course in many ways. Some of these are:

- never running on the golf course
- wearing proper shoes
- always repairing his or her ball mark plus one other
- keeping the course free from litter
- raking sand bunkers properly
- never damaging the course in any way

Can you think of others?

Achievement Pin Checkpoint

Once portions for Rules, Etiquette, and Sportsmanship are complete, congratulations on earning your Knowledge Achievement Pin.

Date Earned



GOLF WORDS AND PHRASES

Address Position	you are in this position when you have taken your stance and grounded your club
Attending the Flagstick	the act of holding the flagstick for someone who is on the green and who cannot see the hole
Ball Marker	a coin like object used to mark the position of your ball on the putting green
Divot	an area of turf damaged by a golf club during a swing
Divot Repair Tool	a tool used to repair a ball mark on the green
Fore!	warning cry you shout if you think your ball is going to hit someone
Gimme	a short putt that is conceded in match play
Greens Fee	the amount you pay to play the course
Hat Clip	a clip on your hat that has a magnetic ball marker attached to it
Head Cover	a cover that fits like a sock over your metal wood
Honor	order of play based on previous hole score
Pro Shop or Golf Shop	this is where you check in before you begin play or practice
Range	an area where players practice golf shots
Sleeve of Balls	an oblong box holding three golf balls
Tee Marker	object used to define the teeing ground where you begin play on a hole
Tee Time	an exact time your group begins play on the course

What other golf words do you know?

Player Pathway: Level 1



Scoring Test Level 1

- To pass Level 1 Scoring, you must score 6 or less three times from 50 yards.



Scoring Test Level 2

- To pass Level 2 Scoring, you must score 6 or less three times from 100 yards.



Scoring Test Level 3

- To pass Level 3 Scoring, you must score 6 or less three times from 150 yards.

Level 4 and 5: Transitioning to the Course

Generally speaking, many golf courses are not set up well for beginners. The holes, even from the shortest of tees, are simply too long and this means that those new to the game will not be able to play without feeling rushed. However, once a player has passed the Level 3 scoring test and can shoot a score of 8 on a 150-yard hole three times, it is time to transition to the course.

Scoring Test Level 4

- Level 4 course set up:** Set the course up with 100-yard par 3's, 150-yard par 4's and 200-yard par 5's to total approximately 1,350 yards.
- The 9-hole requirement can be met by playing a complete 9 holes or consecutive 3-hole interments.
- To pass Level 4 scoring test, you must score 54 or less one time that is collected by another player.

Scoring Test Level 5

- Level 5 course set up:** Set the course up with 100-yard par 3's, 150-yard par 4's and 200-yard par 5's or approximately 1,350 yards.
- To pass Level 5 scoring test, you must score 51 or less twice and have it collected by another player.

Scoring Requirement for Levels 1-5

	Required Score	Number of Holes to Play	Frequency	Length
LEVEL 1	6	As needed	3 times	50 yard hole
LEVEL 2	6	As needed	3 times	100 yard hole
LEVEL 3	6	As needed	3 times	150 yard hole
LEVEL 4	54	9	1 time	1,350 yard course
LEVEL 5	51	9	2 times	1,350 yard course

LEVEL 1	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3

Scoring Requirement Completed

Achievement Pin Checkpoint

Once the Scoring portion is complete, congratulations on earning your Scoring Achievement Pin.

Date Earned

Advancing to Levels 6-10

Once Level 5 is completed, players have a solid base in golf's fundamental forms and skills. From there, players may move on to Levels 6-10.

Before beginning Level 6, players should have an evaluation of their skills, including driver carry distance. With this information, please see the chart to the right to determine your recommended course length. On course play and scoring requirements will be matched to the player's carry distance throughout the program.

By playing a course that is "scaled," every golfer will have the opportunity to reach Level 10. Players reaching Level 10 have achieved the pinnacle of skills necessary to compete at the highest level.



ASGCA
FOUNDATION

Shooting Par or Below

To excel as a golfer, players must learn to shoot low scores. In order to do so, it is imperative to play the course from a length that matches the player's driver distance. The Longleaf Tee System, shown to the right, provides you with the recommended course length and jointly promoted by the American Society of Golf Course Architects Foundation and U.S. Kids Golf Foundation.

Scoring Requirements for Levels 6-10

Level	Scores*
LEVEL 6	48 or better 3 times
LEVEL 7	45 or better 4 times
LEVEL 8	42 or better 5 times
LEVEL 9	39 or better 6 times
LEVEL 10	36 or better 7 times

*Each must include a minimum of one tournament round.

The Longleaf Tee System

