



**Play Collegiate Golf**

"creating academic and athletic success"

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## ***Ten Ways to Improve Your Golf Game in 2010***

*Guest Column by Gordon McGarva...former college golfer; current St. Andrews' caddy, teacher of the game.*

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The 2010 golf season is well under way. Is this the year you decided to improve your golf game? Not as easy as you thought, is it? The game of golf is a continuing challenge that even the greatest players in the history of the game continually try to master.

The following are ten ideas that could improve your game starting today, with little cost and not a lot of effort.

#1) Read a golf book, any golf book. The range of topics for golf books is as varied as golf courses themselves. Bob Rotella has a series of wonderful books that can assist you with the mental aspects of the game. A classic and timeless instruction book would be Ben Hogan's *Five Lessons: The Modern Fundamentals of Golf*. First written in 1957 it can be found in book stores or online and is worth every penny spent.

#2) Re-grip your clubs. PGA Tour professionals are constantly making sure their grips are in excellent condition and clean. While you don't have a caddie to scrub your grips clean every day or a club repair truck on site to change grips when needed, there is no excuse to be playing with dirty and worn grips.

#3) After having your clubs re-gripped, be sure to check the lofts and lie angles of your golf clubs to make sure they have not been altered. What is your lie angle? It is the angle between the bottom, or sole, of the golf club and the shaft. Golf professionals will be able to fit you with the correct lie angle for your golf swing.

#4) Do you play the same golf course 3 or 4 times a week? If so, then head out to another golf course. This will help you think about your shot and not just play on auto pilot. A different golf course forces you to make a myriad of decisions while picking new targets. A different golf course will keep you mentally sharp and focused during the round.

#5) Do you play golf with the same people all the time? It may be time to mix up your regular foursome and expand your horizons beyond your comfort level. Ask one of the better golfers at your course or the golf professionals in the shop for a game. Watch what these better players do on the course and if you are observant of their game you may learn a new shot or two.

#6) Watch golf on TV with a new twist; turn off the sound and just watch the pros play. The commentary can be distracting and you may miss the important parts.

#8) Walk. To quote Shivas Irons in Michael Murphy's famous book *Golf in the Kingdom*: "Ye're makin' a great mistake if ye think the gemme is meant for the shots" .... "The gemme is meant for walkin'." Walking allows you develop an even pace and rhythm that will carry over to your golf swing. It is also good exercise.

#9) Learn the rules of golf. There are 34 rules of golf. The current RCGA rule book is 194 pages long. I am not suggesting that you should learn every rule, but a good general knowledge of the rules of golf could save you strokes. This weekend a member of our group saved himself two shots after he was going to re-tee when he was not allowed. Someone in the group instructed him that he must continue to play from where the ball entered the hazard once he dropped and played a stroke from there. Confused? Time to read the rule book.

#10) Try your best not to keep score. Easy to say, difficult to do. Recall your best rounds and there is a good chance that you were not sure how well you were scoring. Some of the best golfers are poor mathematicians.

Good luck for the remainder of the season and remember it is just a game! *Gord McGarva*

*Gord McGarva has been playing golf for over 30 years around the world. He played collegiately at Midlands (TX) Junior College and the University of Louisiana Monroe (formerly Northeast Louisiana University). He currently is a middle school teacher in Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada, during the academic year and spends his summers caddying in St. Andrews, Scotland. He has won numerous junior, collegiate, and amateur events. He has competed in Canada, the USA, and the United Kingdom.*

*Dr. Bruce Fleming is the founder of Play Collegiate Golf, created to mentor young women and men interested in continuing their competitive golf careers at institutions that support their academic, athletic, and personal goals. He played collegiate golf at Washington State University and has won tournaments in both the USA and Canada. He is currently an academic administrator at a Division 1 NCAA institution. Additionally, he is in his fifth year as the Tournament Director for the Rice Planters Amateur, a major national and international golf tournament in South Carolina that brings the top amateur golfers to the Charleston area each summer.*

*For more information please visit [playcollegiategolf.com](http://playcollegiategolf.com)*

## Freshmen: What to Bring to College

### College Survival Tip

Figuring out what to bring to campus can be quite a task. College residence halls are fairly small and cramped so don't over-pack as some of it may end up going back home!

- Check with your college to see what they provide
- Find out what is not allowed in the residence halls
- Talk to your roommate and bring one of each major item per room (i.e. television, stereo, mini-fridge)

