

1. Don't ask for autographs.

It's okay to seek autographs before the players reach the practice area and after they've signed their scorecard and left the scorer's area, but never in between. Often there's an area set aside for autograph signing. If so, go there.



2. Don't try to speak to the players.

The proximity of spectators have to players- another great thing about attending a golf tournament- can make it seem as if exchanging a few words would be okay. It's not. While it's acceptable to offer encouragement to the players such as "Keep it up, Phil!" or "Great birdie, Tiger!" avoid trying to engage them directly with comments like "Hey, Tiger, what club did you hit?" or "Hey, Vijay, my son goes to the same school as yours."

3. Don't offer advice to the players.

This is a special subcategory of the previous guideline. The player knows better than you do- much, much better- exactly how to play a shot to fit his game. Your suggestion is obnoxiously superfluous, to say the least.

4. Don't touch a player's ball, ever.

Players' shots don't always land "inside the ropes." Watch the ball, stay out of its way as it lands, and don't think you're being a help by moving it, kicking it, catching it, or stopping it.

5. Stand still when the players are hitting shots.

Something as seemingly innocuous as shifting your position for a better view can catch a player's attention at just the wrong moment. Players will tell you that one of the most annoying things spectators do at tournaments is laugh, talk, and move about when they're trying to hit. Whenever a player is addressing the ball, stand still and be quiet.

In Addition...

Watch your language.

Children do attend golf events. And in the crowded confines of a large gallery, adults who might be offended by foul language won't necessarily be able to "move away."

Don't make negative comments about the players.

It's likely that among the spectators following any given golfer will be members of his family and some of his friends. Be considerate of what impact your words might have on them before you let fly with a disparaging comment.

Cheer, don't jeer.

Golf has a great tradition of complimenting golfers' shots, and, as a rule, crowds at tournaments cheer loudly in appreciation of players' efforts. Recently, though, there have been sporadic instances of jeering from the gallery- especially at international events such as the Ryder Cup or Presidents Cup matches. Unfortunately, it's showing its ugly face at some of the regular tour events as well. Jeering has no place in the game. Perpetrators can, should be, and have been removed for such behavior.

Dress appropriately.

[Wear golf attire at a golf venue.](#)

Don't over-imbibe.

It appears as if the combination of spectating and alcohol is here to stay, since beer and liquor sales are now such an important revenue stream for professional sports. Even though alcohol is served at a sports event, however, doesn't mean that drunken behavior should be or is tolerated. At golf tournaments, inebriated spectators will be asked to leave.

Be careful where you smoke.

I'm sure no player appreciates a puff of smoke wafting across him as he addresses his ball.

And even though they're outdoors, some of your fellow spectators may also be very disturbed by your smoke. If you have to have a cigarette, move away from the gallery and be aware of the wind direction.

Watch your shadow.

If it's late afternoon, your shadow may be in a player's line of sight or actually on him or his ball. If you can't move, it becomes more important than ever to stay perfectly still.

Don't block other people's views.

Often the gallery at a pro tournament can be large and deep. Take care to give the people behind you a chance to see. Be especially careful if you're carrying a shade or rain umbrella. There's nothing more infuriating than the person with a large umbrella who blocks the view of people all around him.

Don't touch that chair.

At the Masters, there's a tradition that says a folding chair holds a place for the owner when the owner isn't there. Other spectators shouldn't move that chair. This tradition is now extending to other tournaments as well. It makes sense: The person sitting in that chair may be in that position for several hours watching all the golfers go by, and it stands to reason that he'll need a brief bathroom break or a chance to get something to eat from time to time.