

Considerations for Female-Friendly Golf Courses

Compiled for CPRA Gender Equity – Facility Use & Design Workshops, 2022/2023

a) Welcoming Atmosphere (LPGA)

[Signs of a Female-Friendly Golf Course – LPGA Women's Network \(lpgawomensnetwork.com\)](https://lpgawomensnetwork.com)

Questions women and girls might ask before investing their time and money in a particular course.

1. Am I greeted with a smile by the person at the bag drop area?
2. Is the pro shop staff friendly and accommodating or just collecting my money?
3. Is there a female professional on staff? Better yet, is she a leader in the organization?
4. Does the course encourage family play opportunities?
5. Are there rental clubs for females and juniors?
6. Are there female-only events posted and marketed?

Female -friendly courses understand that the more events they have for women, the more women will come and play. Look for free clinics, leagues, group instructional programs, club demos, fashion shows, 9-hole scramble, special tournaments, greet & meet events, golf & social events, and special discounts.

7. Does the pro shop offer as much or more women's goods and apparel as the men's section? Do they strive to stock items and lines I can't typically find in a retail store?
Stocking the golf shop to be attractive and welcoming to females is a good indicator that you are a valued customer.
8. Are the overall facility appearance and restrooms clean? Are there amenities in the restroom for freshening up before or after your round?
9. Is the overall condition of the golf course acceptable?
10. Do the restaurant's hours of operation accommodate your playing schedule? What's on the menu? Are there healthy alternatives? Is the atmosphere inviting and friendly?
11. Would I recommend the overall experience to my friends and family?

Additional suggestions from on-line response postings:

- Label the tee boxes by handicap NOT gender
- Provide wine in cans on the bar cart, in addition to beer
- Ensure wide range of sizes to clothes for sale
- Accessible washrooms every 4-5 holes
- Ball washers on the forward tees
- Provide course ratings for females from a variety of tee boxes. The vast majority of courses provide female ratings only from the forward tee. Also providing a "hybrid" rated tee offers more of a challenge to those who find a forward tee too short and the next tee too long.
- Offer some preferred tee times to women
- Do the male members treat women with respect?
- Does the teaching pro take women seeking to improve their game seriously?

b) Golf and women - What could convince women to play golf?

[Solutions to bring more women and girls on golf courses – untracedgolfing](#)

Structural changes that should be made by golf clubs:

- Golf clubs must be more welcoming, social, and accessible to women and girls. Initiatives like creating a cool atmosphere, promoting friendship and inclusivity/flexibility, being cool with the dress code, and introducing flexible rules in the clubhouse (phones and computers allowed) should be implemented
- The improvement of the gender balance on golf courses must be considered as a priority by golf clubs
- Female and family imagery must be more visible/obvious in internal and external golf club marketing and communication
- Special memberships for women and girls should be introduced (pricing/discounts on memberships, flexible memberships like a summer-only membership for instance)
- Special programs should be developed to make women and girls like golf (shorter formats of play with no pressure put on performance, adapted courses, beginner time slots, girls-only groups lessons, introductory golf lessons, women open days, family coaching sessions, or adult/child sessions)
- Affordable equipment rentals should be proposed
- Referral programs should be implemented (bring-a-friend discount for example)
- Having women working on staff at club's and on boards/management teams
- Female lessons should be taught by female coaches
- Organizing social events for women and family (like father-daughter or friend's tournament for example)
- Building infrastructure aside from golf like mini-golf, pitch and putt, short courses and driving ranges, play areas for kids, tennis and squash courses, yoga and pilates, well maintained changing rooms...
- Building after-golf facilities in the clubs like spa, gym, daycare, and areas for children
- Building leisure areas like a bar or a restaurant for social matters
- Building alliances and partnerships with brands like us :-)
- Introducing golf at schools. Young people need to be introduced to the game early. Implementing after-school lessons could be great for the sport

Non-structural changes that should be made by brands like us:

- Changing the perception of golf to make it accessible and inclusive by positioning it as a great sport for girls and women
- Fighting against wrong and persistent clichés: golf is a private world, expensive, elitist... We have seen that all this negativity is damaging to the sport in the previous articles
- The perception of golf that girls should have: playing golf means having fun with friends in a cool and relaxed environment. Golf is a slow pace activity that keeps you fit and healthy. No physical skills are needed and you can wear whatever you like
- The perception of golf that women should have: playing golf means meeting new people and enjoying a great social life on and off the course. Golf is for everyone and is not elitist. You can have a great time outside getting fit, staying healthy, and relieving stress. Golf is a great new challenge, but experience or special skills are not needed. More than anything, golf is a family game filled with fun
- Positioning golf as both an individual and a team sport is a must
- Finding ambassadors, influencers, and the best female golf players to tell their golf stories and inspire women and girls to join in
- Collaborate with other sports (cross-promotion) like walking, running, yoga, pilates, and fitness for example