

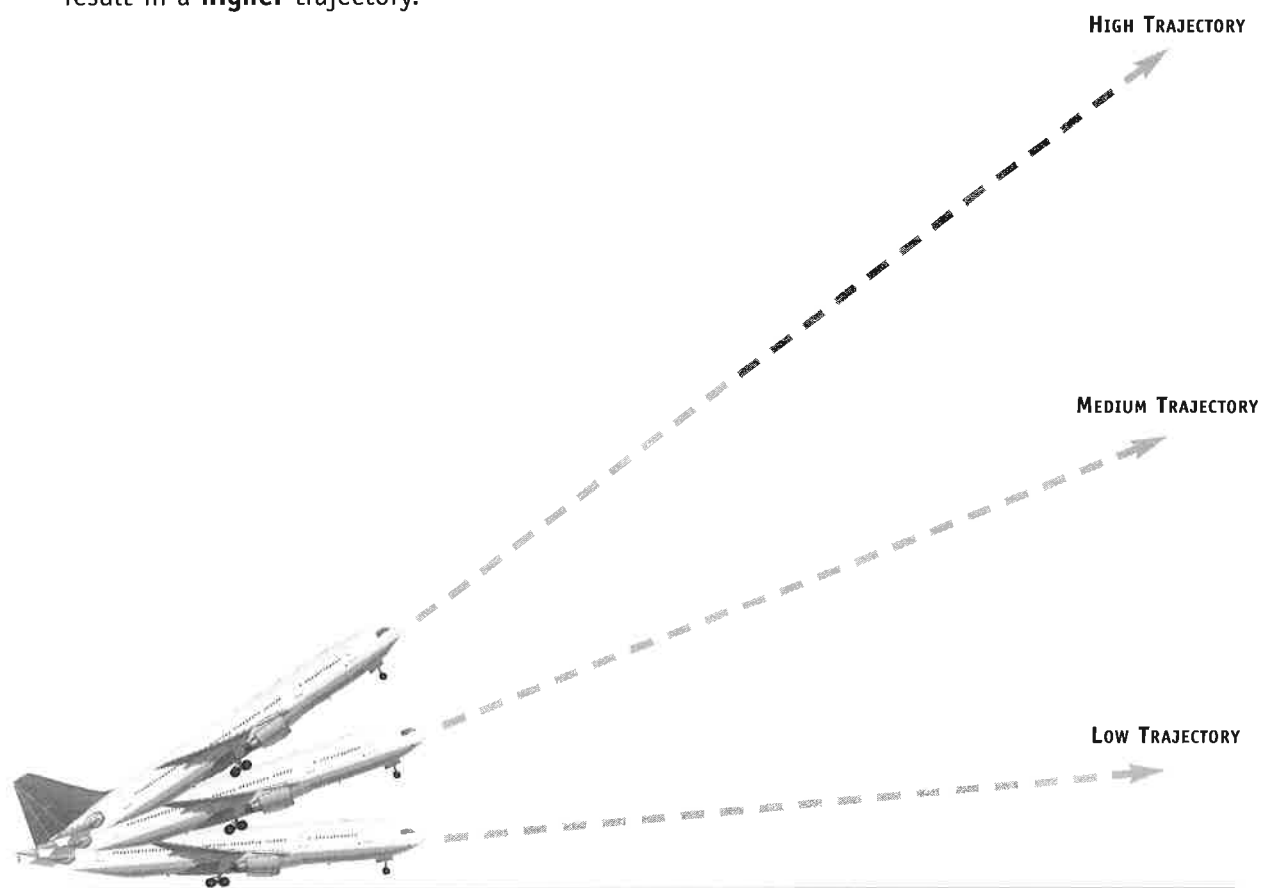
THE FIRST TEE GOLF FUNDAMENTAL: BALL FLIGHT



BALL FLIGHT is the height and side-to-side shape of the flight the ball takes through the air and the curvature of the path that the ball travels on the ground. Coaches are encouraged to integrate distance-response as part of ball flight for older and/or more advanced PLAYers. PLAYers will explore various methods to alter ball flight which includes the (a) trajectory and (b) curvature of the ball.

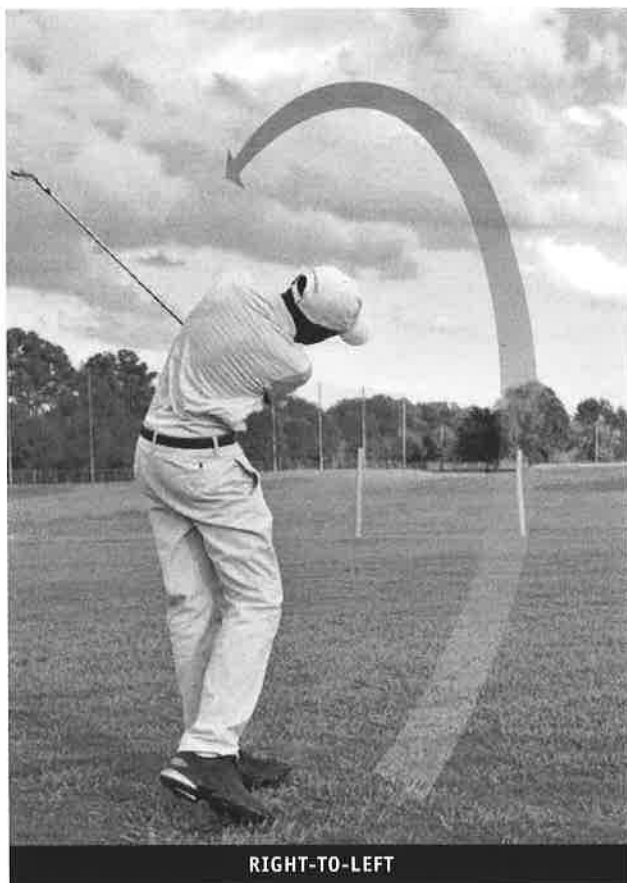
Trajectory—Refers to the height the ball flies through the air.

- The trajectory of shots in golf generally progresses from putting the ball on the ground, to chipping the ball slightly above the ground, to pitching the ball moderately to high above the ground and to full-swings, which go even higher.
- Shot trajectory may need to be intentionally higher and lower with the full-swing as well as around the green with the short-game.
- Trajectory can be affected by multiple factors including the club selected, ball position, angle of club head approach, swing path, speed of swing and slope of the land.
- **Downhill** lies generally result in a **lower** trajectory, whereas, **uphill** lies generally result in a **higher** trajectory.



Curvature—Refers to the side-to-side shape of a shot, as well as how the slope of the green or land can affect shape.

- Curving the ball is used mostly when matching the shot/curve to the shape of the hole or navigating around obstacles.
- Curvature can be affected by multiple factors including ball position, angle of approach, swing path, clubface angle, speed of swing and slope of the land.
- Side hill lies—where the **ball is above** the feet—typically result in a **right-to-left** curvature.
- Side hill lies—where the **ball is below** the feet—typically result in a **left-to-right** curvature.



DEVELOPING BALL FLIGHT—TRAJECTORY



Mastery-driven ideas for creating golf games that must be integrated seamlessly with life skills:



Corresponding open-ended questions coaches can ask to **empower youth**:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use other sports and fundamental motor skills to teach trajectory and its importance in golf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How is trajectory in golf the same or different than other sports?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toss soft balls with dominant and non-dominant hand (overhand, underhand and roll) into or through different targets (garbage barrels, baskets, hoops, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When tossing a ball, what do you do differently to make the ball go different heights?</i> • <i>How does trajectory vary based on the golf club used?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using swim noodles as obstacles, allow PLAYers to experiment with hitting the ball different heights (avoiding obstacles) toward a target. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you do to hit the ball different heights?</i> • <i>Why might you need to hit the ball different heights when playing golf?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore which clubs go higher and lower and the variation with each. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does the trajectory vary between a pitching wedge and a 5 iron? 7 iron and driver? etc.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore influence of uphill/downhill/side hill on trajectory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do different slopes affect the trajectory of the ball?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how pre-swing and in-swing adjustments can affect trajectory and distance (one thing at a time): (a) ball position, (b) weight distribution at address, (c) shaft lean at address, (d) hold pressure, (e) different clubs, (f) swing tempo and (g) other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does adjusting your ball position (normal vs. forward vs. back) affect the trajectory of your ball flight?</i> • <i>Ask similar question(s) for other adjustments.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the same club to hit it high, medium and low. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you adjust to make the same club hit the ball with different trajectories?</i> • <i>What trajectory is more/less challenging for you?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putt balls on the green and notice if there is air time when the ball leaves the putter face. (Note: Even if not visible, there is always air time.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you notice about how the ball rolls when there is more air time vs. less air time?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an obstacle course tournament where Hole #1 starts from behind a bush so they'll have to use a club and trajectory to hit over the bush. Hole #2 may start from under a branch, and so on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are you going to do on this shot in order to hit the ball over the bush, under the branch, etc.?</i> • <i>Ask similar question(s) based on the obstacle.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to experiment with ways to get the ball to go extra high or extra low and determine the most effective method(s) for the individual PLAYER. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What's your method for hitting the ball extra high/low?</i> • <i>I wonder what would happen if you _____ to hit the ball extra high/extra low, etc.?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play on-course games involving manipulation of trajectory (for example, call your trajectory before shots). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why do you decide to hit a shot high vs. low?</i>

DEVELOPING BALL FLIGHT — CURVATURE



Mastery-driven ideas for creating golf games that must be integrated seamlessly with life skills:



Corresponding open-ended questions coaches can ask to **empower youth**:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use other sports and fundamental motor skills to teach curvature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do you curve the ball in other sports?</i> • <i>How could you apply that knowledge to golf?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiment with bowling/rolling on the greens to see how slope and gravity work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you notice about how the ball rolls based on the slope of the green?</i> • <i>How does this relate to playing golf?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toss tennis balls, golf balls, etc. toward targets to determine how the slope of the ground causes the ball to ricochet relative to the tilted surface. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you notice about how the ball ricochets based on the slope of the ground?</i> • <i>How do the trajectory and or speed of the throw affect how the ball ricochets?</i> • <i>How does this relate to playing golf?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an alley of tees for a curving putt that is about two inches in width from the start of a putt to the hole. Putt through the alley. Then, move off the green to chip on a similar line. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you notice about how the ball rolls based on the slope of the green?</i> • <i>What do you notice about how the ball ricochets based on the slope of the ground?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the amount of break based on aim and speed (slow, medium and fast pace at hole) for putting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does where you aim affect the amount of break?</i> • <i>How does the speed of the putt affect the amount of break?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select an intermediate target that accounts for the slope of the ground for chipping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do you determine your intermediate target?</i> • <i>How does the slope of the ground affect your selection of an intermediate target?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience the tendencies of curvature off uphill, downhill and side hill lies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does the slope of the ground affect the curvature of your shot?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how pre-swing and in-swing adjustments can affect curvature (one at a time): ball position, aim of clubface, alignment of body, hold position and pressure, different clubs, swing path, swing tempo and more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does adjusting the aim of your clubface (really closed, closed, square, open, really open) affect the curvature of your ball flight?</i> • <i>Ask similar question(s) for other adjustments.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiment with different lofted clubs from lies with the ball above and below feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you notice when you use different lofted clubs when the ball is above your feet? Below your feet?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play on-course games involving manipulation of curvature (call your curvature before shots). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why did you decide to curve a shot that direction?</i> • <i>How might being able to curve the ball different directions improve your golf performance?</i>

THE FIRST TEE GOLF FUNDAMENTAL: ON-COURSE STRATEGIES



ON-COURSE STRATEGIES include both (a) self-management and (b) course management and draw heavily from the Life Skills Experience with a focus on golf performance. PLAYers will explore various methods to play their game on the golf course.

Self-management—The *internal* aspect of on-course strategies; focuses on learning skills that help young people become aware of whom they are as PLAYers and individuals.



- Self-management focuses on learning skills that help PLAYers become more self-aware and begins with becoming aware of one's abilities—physical, psychological and emotional—and the surroundings to better understand what it takes to perform one's best.
- Examples include understanding that their performance (score) does not equal who they are as a person, knowing their best state for performance and how they get there, and understanding and developing their visual, kinesthetic and auditory information-processing skills.

Course management—The *external* aspect of on-course strategies; involves planning and decision-making while playing golf.

- The purpose of effective course management is for a PLAYER to select shots relative to his/her confidence and preparation that maximize opportunities for a successful outcome.
- Examples include: green-reading (p. 113), creating a go-to shot, using a yardage book or distance information and using the Rules of Golf to his/her advantage.



ON-COURSE STRATEGIES—SELF-MANAGEMENT

 Mastery-driven ideas for creating golf games that must be integrated seamlessly with life skills:	 Corresponding open-ended questions coaches can ask to empower youth :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience and understand the observable behaviors of the Nine Core Values that are embedded in The First Tee Code of Conduct, especially keeping up with the pace of play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are some behaviors of the Nine Core Values that are embedded in the Code of Conduct?</i> • <i>How does keeping up with the pace of play relate to on-course strategies?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience and understand the Nine Core Value of respect and the healthy habit of safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can drinking water when you are playing golf affect your performance?</i> • <i>How can drinking water and using sun protection measures help make you healthier?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the 4Rs in practice and play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do you use the 4Rs to better manage your emotions?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Personal Par in practice and play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does using Personal Par help you manage your game?</i> • <i>How can using Personal Par influence confidence?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Personal Par scorecard to evaluate emotion management and planning/decision-making. Chart during play and review post-round. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is your Personal Par score?</i> • <i>How does your Personal Par relate to your golf performance?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the healthy habit of energy and the Nine Core Value of judgment, create a meal and/or snack plan to enhance golf performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is your meal or snack plan?</i> • <i>How will you know if the plan enhances your performance?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a Go-to Team, develop a pre-round warm-up and post-round Good-Better-How feedback process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is your pre-round warm-up process? How does it help prepare you to play your best?</i> • <i>What is your post-round feedback process?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track statistics from certification rounds and other recreational or tournament rounds. Then, utilize statistics in goal-setting and development of purposeful practice sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do you track your statistics?</i> • <i>How do you use your statistics in developing goals?</i> • <i>How do you use your statistics in developing purposeful practice sessions?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create goals for Wellness for Life and one of the Nine Healthy Habits that will impact golf performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is your goal? Does it meet the criteria for effective goal-setting? How will you track it?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create on-course games that allow PLAYers to explore the Nine Core Value of judgment and the healthy habit of play. For example, play "roadrunner golf" with 3 to 5 clubs and run between shots from tee to just before the green. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What happens to your heart rate when you run?</i> • <i>What can you do to slow your heart rate before each shot (deep breathing in preshot routine)?</i> • <i>How does this relate to what your heart rate does when you are under pressure in competition?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set process, performance and outcome goals. Track progress, assess and adjust throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are process, performance and outcome goals?</i> • <i>How will you track your progress? Assess? Adjust?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use The First Tee goal-setting principles to set a process goal for round. Track after each shot/hole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is your process goal for today's round?</i> • <i>How will you track your process goal today?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set specific practice goals and record them before practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What will you do today to achieve your goals?</i> • <i>How will you know if you achieved them?</i>

Special Note: Self-management is not only one aspect of on-course strategies, but is also one of the four life skill categories addressed through The First Tee. Given this purposeful overlap between the life skills and Nine Golf Fundamentals, the starter ideas listed above (see left-hand column) provide a foundation for creating seamless games and, in some examples, integrating the Nine Healthy Habits.

ON-COURSE STRATEGIES— COURSE MANAGEMENT



Mastery-driven ideas for creating golf games that must be integrated seamlessly with life skills:



Corresponding open-ended questions coaches can ask to **empower youth**:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience course management through games/activities that connect other sports to golf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How is course management in golf the same/different from other sports you have played?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play putting and up-and-down courses with various levels of obstacles and enforce playing fast, safe and courteous. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why is it important to play fast, safe and courteous?</i> • <i>What can you do to play faster?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play on-course challenges (over a bunker, behind a tree, etc.). Discuss green light (go-for-it shot), yellow light (determine risk/reward), red light (play safe). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do you know if it is a green/yellow/red light shot?</i> • <i>What can you do to turn a yellow or red light shot into a green light shot in the future?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play appropriate tees (set-up shorter tees from yardage markers or similar if needed). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does playing from the yardage that matches your distance base affect the pace of play?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create own distance-response charts with shot lengths for various clubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are your carry distances for each club?</i> • <i>What are your gaps between clubs?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a yardage book for home course(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does creating and using a yardage book help your planning and decision-making? Performance?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create on-course games/activities that challenge course management and/or self-management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Play from tees longer/shorter than normal. - Create landing areas on certain holes and if not in landing area off tee then add a one-shot penalty. - Play with only odd- or even-numbered clubs. - Play with only three clubs, without driver, etc. - After PLAYers pick club on par 3s, require them to hit one more or one less than selected. - Call your shot with a different trajectory and/or curvature on every full-swing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For each game, ask questions such as:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What was your experience like playing this game?</i> - <i>What did you learn from playing this game?</i> - <i>What did you learn about your course management skills?</i> - <i>What did you learn about your self-management skills?</i> - <i>What is your favorite/least favorite game and why?</i> - <i>How can you apply what you learned to home, school, etc.?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop grids and quadrants; hit to those spots on the fairways/greens with tee/approach shots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can this activity help improve your golf performance?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk the course backwards. Start from the green and observe the hazards as you walk toward the tee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does this view change your plan for playing the hole?</i> • <i>How can this help you become a better PLAYER?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine your risk tolerance as a PLAYER. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are you a "go for it" or "conservative" PLAYER?</i> • <i>Could you be more effective by being more/less aggressive?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a go-to shot under pressure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is your go-to shot?</i>



Eagle Curriculum Progression

On the following pages, the Golf Skills curriculum content is presented in a progressive and condensed form for the Eagle level. Specifically, the curriculum progression demonstrates a way for The First Tee Nine Golf Fundamentals at the Eagle level—and corresponding factors of influence (p. 118)—to be chunked into simpler content pieces for participants to explore and learn.

For example, if coaches look at distance-response (see chart on p. 154), they will notice a progression at the Eagle level adds an emphasis on the variable amount of energy or speed applied to the motion for the putt, chip, pitch and full-swing:

The rationale for a general progression of distance-response is when PLAYers are at younger ages, speed (or full force) is easier to develop than when they get older (remember to consider both chronological and developmental ages).

Consequently, it is developmentally appropriate to encourage PLAYer- and Par-level participants to swing with speed—while changing the size or length of motion—rather than having them adjust the speed of their swing to anything less than full-force.

As PLAYers develop cognitively, they can begin to add club selection as an additional way to modify their distance-response (Par and Birdie levels). As they continue to progress physically, PLAYers can start to change and control force, so variable amount of energy or speed applied to the golf swing is the third and final factor of influence on distance-response (Eagle level).

Coaches should modify the learning environment to accommodate individual differences of young people. In doing so, coaches may choose to use what is listed on the following pages and/or develop learning progressions of their own.