

Golf Balls: What Type Should You Buy?

Have you ever walked into your local golf store or a nearby Dick's Sporting Goods store to get some golf balls? It may seem like the easiest task at hand as you walk from your car, through the parking lot, and into the store. You're just there to pick up some good old golf balls for your game later that evening. You pass a nice looking golf shirt, some golf shoes, and then you see them. You stop dead in your tracks.

The shelves... upon shelves... upon shelves of golf balls seem to stare blankly at you. And they all seem to be screaming at the same time: Long distance, More spin, More control, Hi-spin, Raw distance fusion. Raw distance fusion? you ask yourself.

Ok, time out! It's time to take a deep breath and relax. No, the golf ball world does not want to make you have a panic attack before you even get out on the green! But, it is no question that buying golf balls, even for some experienced golfers, can be a tad bit confusing. Let's take a closer look at the basic types of golf balls on the market today and perhaps this will help you in your next endeavor into the store!

Basic facts about golf balls:

To begin, there are some specifications that all golf balls must meet in order to be sold for golfers. First, all regulated golf balls have a size limit. This limit is 1.68 inches in diameter. And, a golf ball cannot be any heavier than 1.62 ounces. The only other specification that must be met on a golf ball is its shape - yes, it must be round! No square, rectangle, or triangle balls allowed.

The importance of compression:

Quite simply put, the compression of a golf ball will give you a certain feeling from having hit the ball - it will either feel solid or not solid enough. The higher the compression of a golf ball, the more solid it will feel to you. Typically, golf ball compressions are rated between 80 and 100 - 90 being the most common. What type of golf ball compression you favor is completely up to you. In the game of golf, no two players are the same.

Ball coverings:

Golf ball coverings come in two main types of materials: Surlyn and Balata. First, a golf ball covered with the material Surlyn cannot be scuffed or broken. This is because Surlyn is a manmade substance that withstands a great amount of pressure and outside damage. A golf ball made of Surlyn also has a solid core on the inside. The positive aspects of getting golf balls covered with Surlyn are that they are fairly inexpensive, have a long life, and can travel far distances. On the other hand, these balls get less spin than others.

The other type of golf ball to look at is one that is made with Balata. Balata balls have liquid-filled cores. These cores are then bound together with rubber and covered with Balata - which is a fairly soft covering. Although a Balata covering can be nicked and cut up, it allows the ball to have more spin and backspin than otherwise usual. For you, this means more control over your golf ball. Despite its higher cost and shorter life on the golf course, it is a good choice of balls for experienced players.

Once you find the golf ball that is right for you, the only thing you will have to get nervous about is whether or not you should buy one case or two of them!

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