

WORST-CASE SCENARIO®

HOW TO TEE OFF IN FRONT OF A CROWD

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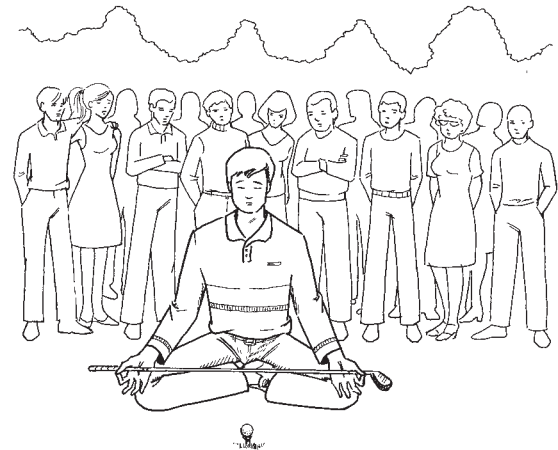
Relax.

Try to see the first tee as any other shot in the round. Do not make significant changes in your tempo. Try not to rush any aspect of your pre-shot routine or swing. Ignore comments from the crowd waiting to play, or pressure from the starter to speed up.

2

Warm up.

Thoroughly stretch in whatever way increases blood flow to your body and feels good. Take as many practice swings as you need.



Focus your thoughts on your mind, body, and swing.

3 Release the tension in your body.

Identify where the tension is, consciously tighten that area of your body, and then consciously relax that area while noticing the difference. Take a deep breath—in through your nose and out through your mouth—before you hit.

4 Be mindful.

Tune in to your feelings prior to your first swing. Are you nervous? Anxious? Steeped in self-judgment? Be aware of these negative feelings and the consequences of them on your body. Recognize that these feelings often get in the way of your true golf swing and game. Replace those feelings with positive energy. Choose to feel competent and content. Remember a time when you played your best. Generate these thoughts until you are ready to hit the ball.

5 Be confident about your abilities and expectations.

If you hit the ball 200 yards 80 percent of the time, you will most likely hit the ball 200 yards this time. This does not mean that you should not strive for your personal best throughout the game. Recognize that the first tee is a starting point on which you are building a solid foundation for your day's golf game.

6 Select the club with which you feel most comfortable.

This may not be your driver. Use a long iron or three wood if your driver is not your best club off the tee.

7 Follow a routine for addressing the ball.

Keep to an established pattern of how you walk up to the tee, how many practice swings you take, how you set your stance, and at what moment you start your swing. This routine is especially important on the first tee.

8 Do not overanalyze your swing.

Your muscle memory will complete the swing for you if you cease to over-think it. Do not over-swing in an effort to hit the ball farther.

9 Focus.

Choose a single location on the fairway and aim at that spot.

Be Aware

- Spend time on the practice tee prior to hitting off the first tee. Go through six to eight clubs in your bag—start with wedges (they are easy to swing) and work your way up to woods. Visualize hitting off the first tee on your last 10 to 12 practice drives.
- Golf is the culmination of physical, emotional, and mental preparedness. It is a game that begins and ends in both the body and the mind of the golfer. The first tee is the initial setting where you need to understand and accept the interrelation of these three elements.