



Q&A FOR GOLF CLUBS

GA Guidance & Regulations Regarding the Positioning of Permanent Plates & Daily Tee Markers

1. What are the handicapping regulations around maintaining the overall distance of a rated course?

(A) Whilst a course should generally be played at its rated length, a club does have a large degree of flexibility around the movement of tee markers from day to day provided overall course distance remains substantially the same. Where unusual weather or course conditions are in evidence, a club may wish to set the daily tee markers such that overall course distance is altered provided the overall change is no more than 100 metres.

Note: Notwithstanding any of the above, the definitive limits within which a club is required to operate in order for scores to be eligible to be handicapped are set out within the following clauses (B) and (C).

(B) Scores must not be handicapped when the position of the daily tee markers on the course played are more than 100 metres overall from the permanent rating markers for that course for an 18-hole round.

Note i: If on one hole the tee markers are 15 metres forward and on another hole they are 10 metres back, the overall difference for these two holes is considered to be 5 metres from the rated length.

Note ii: For a round of less than 18 holes, a pro rata length must be calculated; eg for a 9-hole round, the distance is 50 metres.

(C) Unless determined otherwise by the State Association, handicap conditions do not prevail when the tee markers, under normal circumstances, are placed more than 20 metres in front or 20 metres behind the relevant set of permanent rating markers on more than three holes for rounds of 14-18 holes, or on more than two holes for rounds of 8-13 holes. (An exception applies for courses with cyclical permanent rating marker placements which have been approved by a State Association.)

Note: Where average tee marker placement over time on a course results in an effective average total course distance that is considered by the State Association to be materially different to the rated course, the State Association should amend the official Scratch Rating accordingly.

Note: Hole placements are not taken into consideration in determining whether or not a club has satisfied the requirements around maintaining the overall distance of a rated course.

2. Will clubs/facilities need to amend the positioning of their permanent plates because of the guidance and regulations detailed within this document?

No club will need to move its permanent plates. Some clubs may choose to move their permanent plates in order to obtain more day-to-day flexibility and variety in positioning their daily tee markers (see Item 1 above).

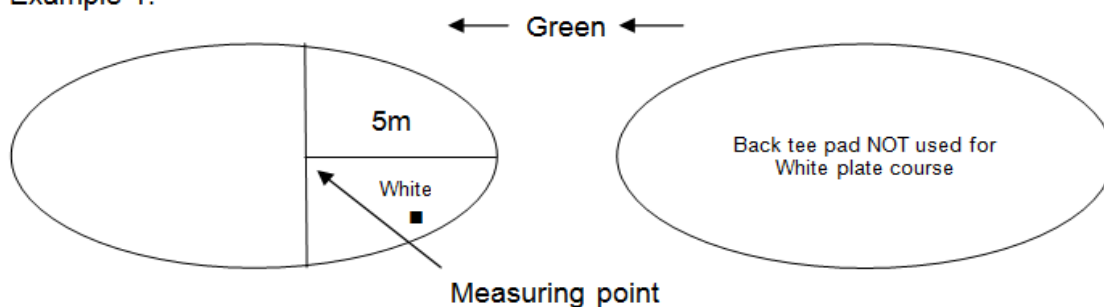
3. What are the regulations for determining the starting point from which a course option is measured?

The starting point from which a course option is measured is the relevant permanent plate.

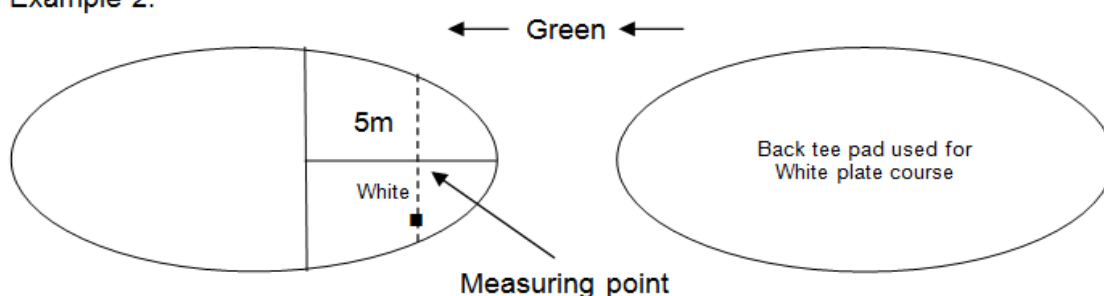
EXCEPTION A:

- The permanent plate should not be less than five metres from the centre-point of the rear of the tee pad OR where multiple tee pads are utilised, the furthest tee pad from the green that the specific tee uses (refer Examples below). (Where a club has tee pads that are shorter than 8 metres in length, the permanent plates should be positioned at the mid-point between the rear centre-point of the teeing area and the front centre-point of the teeing area. Although note Exception B below.)
- If the permanent plates are situated otherwise in such cases, the plate will NOT be used as the starting point for measuring purposes.
- The starting point for measuring purposes will be the point at which the plate should be positioned.

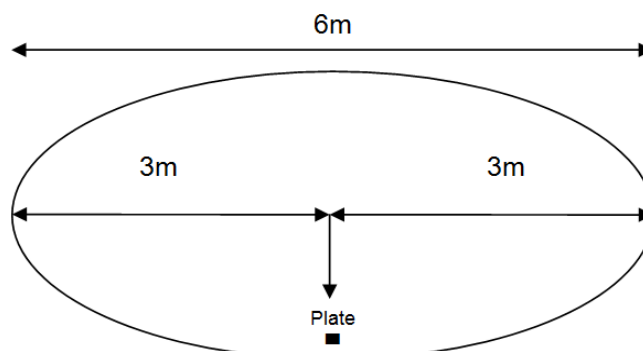
Example 1:



Example 2:

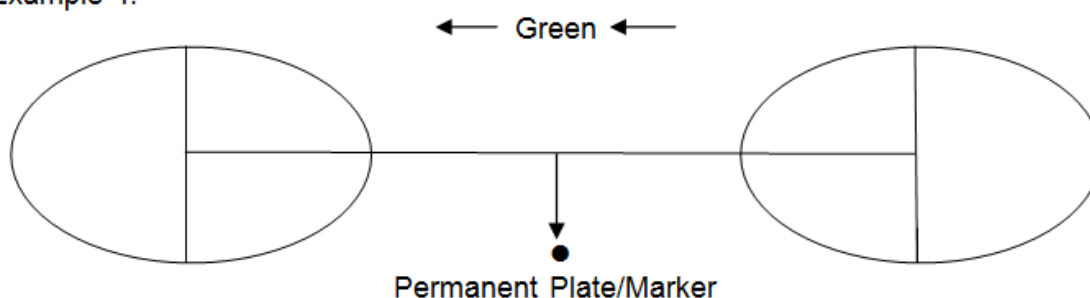


Example 3:



EXCEPTION B:

- Where daily tee markers for a rated course option may alternate from day-to-day between two or more tee pads, it is permissible (and in some cases advisable) for the permanent plates to be positioned in the rough between these tee pads (see diagram below).
- In such cases, the starting point for measuring purposes will be the exact position of the permanent plates.

Example 4:

4. The guidance and regulations detailed within this document will result in our score card measurements and course signage measurements being different to those obtained by the State Association course rating team. Does this mean we will need to change our score cards and course signage?

No. The State Association figures will be for internal purposes only.

5. What colours should we paint our permanent plates and how many sets of permanent plates should we have?

Each course should have at least three different sets of permanent plates on each hole unless the State Association considers proper handicapping can be achieved with a lesser quantity. If three sets of permanent plates are used, the following colours are strongly recommended:

- Blue
- White
- Red

A recommended fourth colour option is Black (longer). A recommended fifth colour option is Yellow (shorter).

6. The State Association course raters will soon be visiting our course. In preparation for their visit, do we need to have our permanent plates already permanently installed in the positions we want our course options to be rated from?

This is not necessary and in some cases not advisable. For example, you may wish to seek the advice of your State Association course raters as to the best position for some of your permanent plates before you have them installed.

If you want the course raters to rate from positions that have not as yet been marked by permanent plates, THESE POSITIONS MUST STILL BE CLEARLY MARKED (eg by stakes) – the permanent plates will need to be installed as soon as is reasonably possible after the day of the course rating.

7. Why is it important for daily tee markers to be positioned close to the permanent plates?

Your State Association will visit your course and assess all factors on each hole which need to be considered in providing a course rating. This assessment is based on there being a specific starting point on each hole (which is precisely indicated by the permanent plates). This specific starting point is critical to the rating process because it is what the hole measurement and the evaluation of obstacles in the measured landing zones are tied to. If the tee markers are moved too far away from the permanent plates on enough holes, the course being played becomes notably different to the course that is rated.

8. Does that mean that if we move our daily tee markers too far away from the permanent plates, our course rating becomes too different from the course we are actually playing?

That's right. You are effectively playing a different course to that which has been rated.

9. If we move our daily tee markers too far away from the permanent plates, will we be able to use the scores returned on that day for handicapping?

No. (See Item 1 above.)

10. We only have one course rating option for men, and one course rating option for women. Are we able to have more?

Yes. Whilst not all clubs have tee pads that allow for much (or any) movement of daily markers, clubs that do have this flexibility should have more than one rating (and set of permanent plates) for each gender.

It is critical to many clubs/facilities that they explore ways in which they may be able to extract increased flexibility from their courses so as to enhance the experience of the golfer. GA and State Associations will actively encourage clubs/facilities to take advantage of the tee options that their courses provide. Although we are not intending to assess ratings that will never be used, just for the sake of having a standard number of ratings at each course/facility.

11. The new regulation says that we can have as many as three men's ratings and two women's ratings. Must we have this many?

No. This is up to the club/facility. Additionally, your State Association may determine that you don't need this many, so it may assess a lesser number. The purpose of this regulation is to improve the integrity of handicapping in Australia.

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12. What if we need more than three men's ratings and two women's ratings?

If your State Association considers that you need more than this, it will provide the appropriate number at no charge.

13. What if we want more ratings than the State Association considers is warranted?

In the event of a club/facility desiring an additional rating which is not considered warranted by the State Association, the committee of a club/facility may still have this rating assessed upon payment of a fee. There will be a separate fee for each additional rating. Golf Australia recommends that State Associations charge a fee of \$500 per additional rating (with the club/facility to also cover all reasonable expenses associated with providing additional ratings).

14. Can we use our red permanent plates for a men's rating as well as a women's rating?

Yes. In fact if your red permanent plates are more than 100 metres shorter (over 18 holes) than your next shortest set of permanent plates, GA strongly recommends that a men's course rating be assessed for the red permanent plates. It is critical that golf clubs/facilities provide more enjoyable options for high-handicap players, players who hit the ball short distances, and beginners.

15. Does this mean that the men at our club could be allowed to start using the women's tees?

There are teeing areas that are commonly used by women and there are teeing areas that are commonly used by men, but it should not be considered that there are exclusive gender rights to teeing areas. It is critical that clubs/facilities extract increased flexibility from their courses so as to enhance the experience of the golfer. This should result in red tees being used by men, with particular consideration being given to high-handicap men, players who don't hit the ball very far, and beginners.

16. We currently only have one women's course rating. Can we get a women's rating done for our white permanent plates?

Yes. In some cases this will provide much greater flexibility for women players.

17. We would like to provide a forward course option for women golfers (or for junior players, beginner players, or players who don't hit the ball very far) but our red permanent plates are as far forward as our prepared teeing area allows. May we install new permanent plates on our fairways?

Yes. Some of Australia's best courses already feature permanent plates positioned on fairways for this exact reason.

18. Some of our white permanent plates could be regularly used by women players but others would never be used (for example a 200-metre par 3 which is also too short to play as a par 4). Does that mean we shouldn't get a women's rating assessed for our white permanent plates?

These regulations have been formulated both to improve the integrity of handicapping in Australia and to provide greater flexibility for golfers. GA has no wish to provide ratings which will never be used simply for the sake of having a greater number of ratings. As a result, what you may want to do in your case is to create a new course option which on some holes utilises the existing red permanent plates and on other holes utilises the existing white permanent plates.

To clearly indicate the new rated course, the respective existing permanent plates will be utilised but will have a new neutral colour added. Where an existing white permanent plate is being used in the new course, half of it will remain white, and the other half will be painted black (for example); and where an existing red permanent plate is being used in the new course, half of it will remain red and the other half will be painted black (for example).

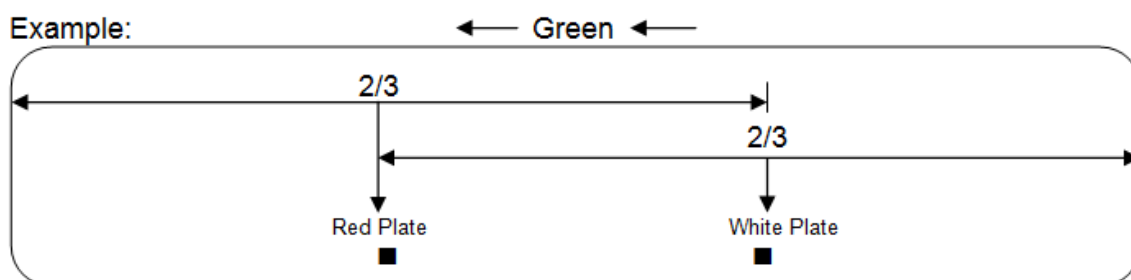
19. What should we be considering when positioning a new set of permanent plates?

You should be considering the following:

- Options that will be used and that will be enjoyable to high-handicap players, beginners, juniors, and players who don't hit the ball very far.
- Options that will be used and that will be challenging to elite players.
- The impact that soft or firm conditions may have on where you want to position your daily tee markers.

20. Our club has only 2 sets of permanent tees (red and white) on each tee pad, however the forward tees (red) only utilise the front 2/3 of the tee pad and the rear tees (white) the back 2/3 of the tee pad. Where should the permanent plates be situated?

The permanent plates should be placed at the mid-point of the average use of the tee pad (as per the below diagram).



21. Our club has signs on the side of each tee (at the rear) indicating the length of the hole from that point, however there are no permanent plates in the ground. Do we need to install permanent plates?

A sign can serve as the permanent marker.

22. We have four permanent cyclical plates on each tee (and on each tee we set the daily tee markers exactly in line with one of the cyclical plates); all of our cyclical courses (which are 18 holes) are exactly the same overall distance. Will we be given a separate rating for each of our cyclical course options?

No. The purpose of cyclical plates is to have each set of tees represent a course option which is of exactly the same difficulty, so it would defeat the purpose to have a separate rating for each course. However, it should be noted that the key consideration with cyclical plates is not the overall distance, but the overall difficulty. Whilst in most cases, the difficulty will not alter at a given facility if the overall distance is the same, it may be necessary for your State Association to work with you in the re-positioning of some permanent cyclical plates.

23. We have four permanent cyclical plates on each tee (and on each tee we set the daily tee markers exactly in line with one of the cyclical plates); all of our cyclical courses (which are 18 holes) are exactly the same overall distance. How do we determine the starting point for rating and measuring each hole?

In preparation for when you will be visited by the course raters from your State Association, you will need to place a marker at the average point of the four permanent cyclical plates. (Note: It is possible that this point may be in the rough.) This will be the starting point on each hole for rating and measuring purposes.

Note: This point is not obtained by finding the mid-point between the two markers which are the furthest apart. For example, if there are three cyclical plates quite close on a forward tee pad, and one cyclical plate 20 metres away on a rear tee pad, the average starting point will be much closer to the forward three plates than it will be to the rear plate.

24. Will our State Association provide guidance regarding the positioning of a new set of permanent plates, or the re-positioning of an existing set of permanent plates?

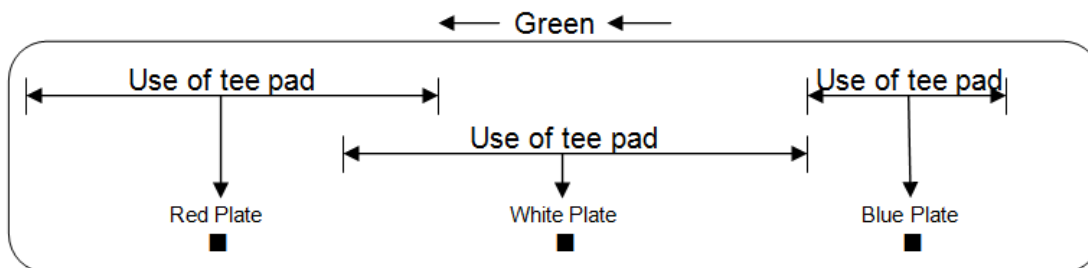
Yes. You may also wish to consult a golf course architect.

25. Who do we contact if we need further clarification on plates and tee markers?

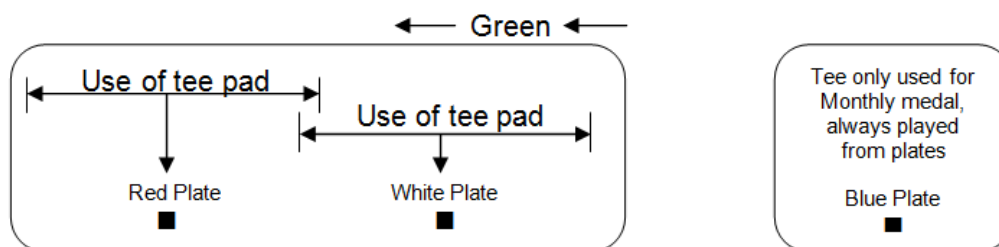
Your State Association or GA.

PERMANENT PLATE PLACEMENT EXAMPLES

Example 1 (1 tee pad, 3 plates):

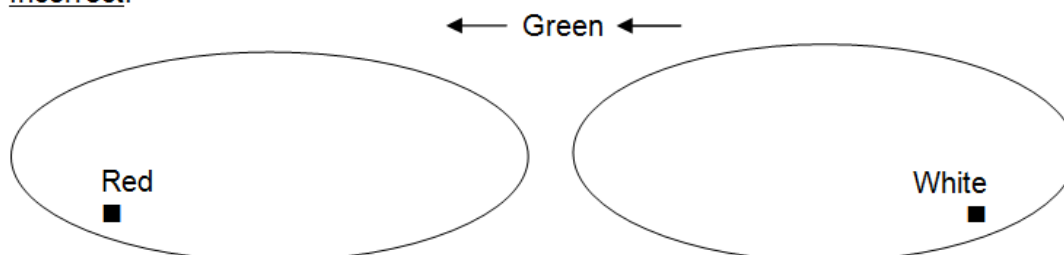


Example 2 (Two tee pads, 3 plates):

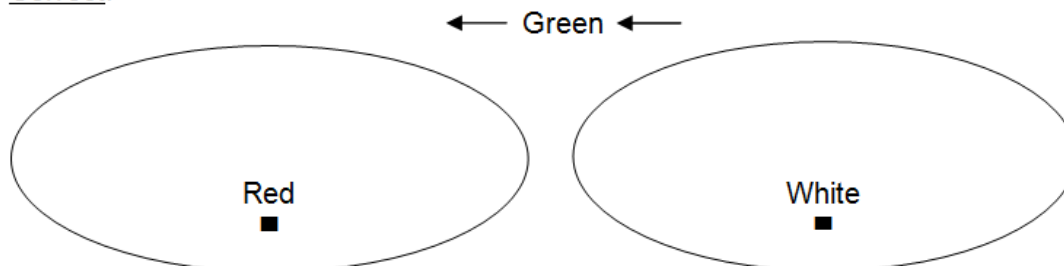


Example 3 (Two tee pads, two plates):

Incorrect:

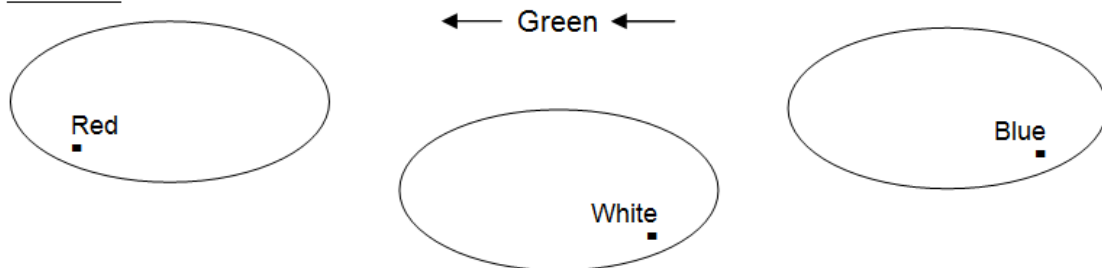


Correct:

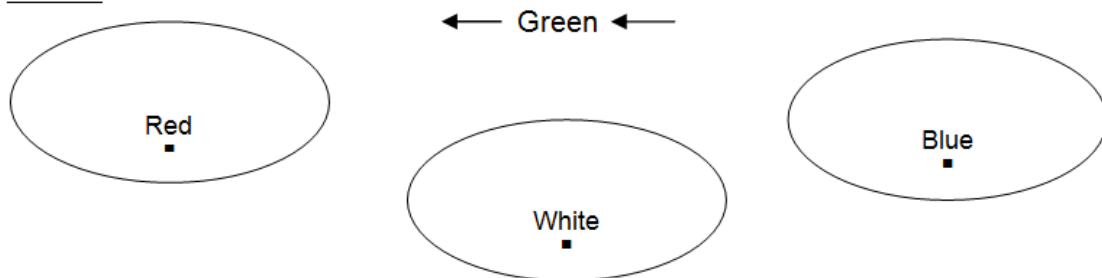


Example 4 (three tee pads, three plates):

Incorrect:

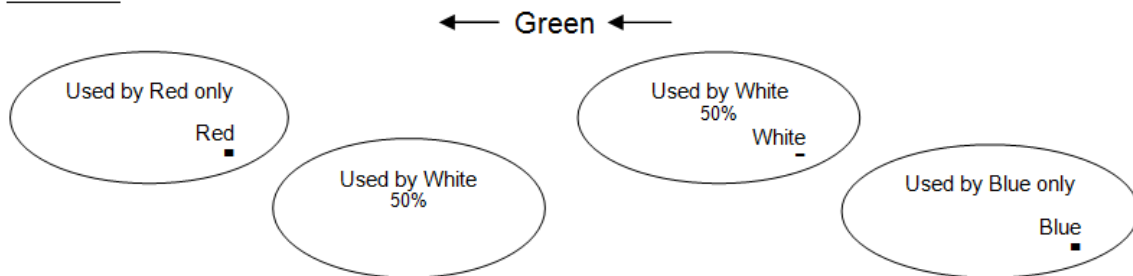


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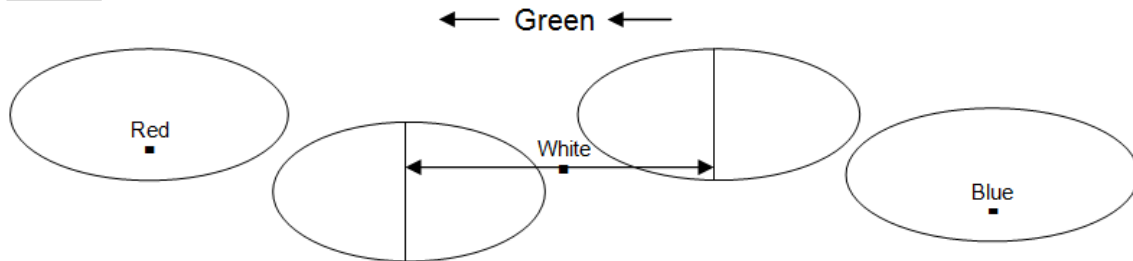


Example 5 (4 tee pads, three plates):

Incorrect:



Correct:



(also refer Item 3, Example 2)