

TOPSOIL



The
**Sustainable
Choice**

from British Sugar



The
essential guide
for the **golf course**
industry

10 top tips when managing your golf course

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10 top tips... when managing your golf course

1 Maintain good drainage

Good drainage performance is essential for **maintaining playability**, **improving the course**, keeping it open for play and extending the playing season. The **best drainage solution** will depend on the particular concern, e.g. a surface problem or subsurface problem, and knowledge of the soil and subsoil characteristics.

2 Manage trees

A tree management plan is important to have in place. Problems can occur from over planting trees, trees planted too close to fine turf areas and the colonisation of self-set trees. **Shade, roots and poor air movement can also create further issues.**

3 Manage wear and tear

Preventative maintenance and management of wear and tear is an essential policy to have in place and will **save you money** in the long-term. Options available include ropes and stakes, hoops and signs, but one of the most effective ways to reduce heavy traffic is the use of **grow-cover/germination sheets.**

4 Winter course set-up

It is beneficial to introduce a **'winter set-up' policy from November to March** so that wear can be minimised on the main tees and other known areas. The use of **temporary grass winter tees** throughout this period can be beneficial, and are usually preferred to synthetic mats by golfers.

5 Golf course policy document

This is an essential document to have as it defines the **aims and objectives for the course**, and how the course will be managed to achieve the **desired standard of quality** and performance agreed by the management. It also helps to create continuity, which is useful at members' clubs where committees regularly change.

6 Maintain consistency on the greens

Consistency between putting speed and performance is an important factor for players. An agronomic plan for greens should aim to tackle the differences between greens, with the aim of making them more consistent as well as **tackling problems, such as drainage, wear, shade, moss, pests and diseases.**

7 Staff training and education

Staff training is key to developing an understanding of what is required and why. **On-the-job practical training** can be supported by knowledge gained from the **internet, industry journals, magazines, peers, regional or national seminars and online courses.**

8 Establish a five-year course improvement plan

As technology changes the way golf is played, **new strategic features can be added to the course, as well as new or improved training facilities.** As golfers' expectations continue to rise, poor quality features, such as unlevel tees, worn-out bunkers and bare areas will need to be improved to raise the standards at any course. It is a good idea to have a financial plan in place to identify what potential improvements are required, their priority, how much they will cost and when they are likely to be carried out.

9 Invest in good machinery and maintenance

At least **50% of a green keeping job is dependent on machinery.** The maintenance and replacement of old machinery is, therefore, an essential requirement at any club and needs to be budgeted for. Where mowing is concerned, **blades should be regularly checked and sharpened**, and tyre pressure should also be regularly checked to ensure good performance.

10 Environmental stewardship and good communication

Many golf courses are **managed and maintained with the environment in mind**, and there are many examples of excellent environmental stewardship at golf courses across the country which has improved wildlife. It is always worth reminding ourselves, golfers and the public of the benefits that golf courses can have on the environment.

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Peter Jones Associates Ltd is an independent golf course and sports turf consultancy company. The firm advises clients on the key components which help to improve playing quality and good all-year-round conditions, including agronomy, design, course management, budgeting, staff training and mentoring.



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