

st andrews old course hole by hole guide

St Andrews Old Course Hole by Hole Guide

The Old Course at St Andrews is not only one of the oldest golf courses in the world, but it is also revered as the "Home of Golf." This iconic course has played host to numerous Open Championships and continues to attract golfers from around the globe. With its unique layout, historical significance, and stunning views, the Old Course presents a challenging yet rewarding golfing experience. This guide will take you through each of the 18 holes, providing insights, tips, and a glimpse into the strategic elements that make this course so special.

Hole 1: The Castle Course

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 368 yards (Blue Tees)

The first hole, known as "The Castle," offers a gentle introduction to the Old Course. The fairway is relatively wide, but players must navigate a series of bunkers, particularly the infamous "Coffin" bunkers, which can easily catch wayward shots. A well-placed tee shot is crucial for a manageable approach to the green, which is slightly elevated and protected by a deep bunker at the front.

Tips for Hole 1

- Aim for the center of the fairway to avoid the bunkers.
- Take note of the wind direction; it can significantly affect your approach shot.

Hole 2: The Eden

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 372 yards (Blue Tees)

Named after the Eden River that runs alongside, the second hole is a slightly dogleg left that requires accuracy off the tee. A well-placed drive can set up a short iron approach to the green, which is well-protected by bunkers. The green itself slopes from back to front, making it essential to land your approach shot in the right spot.

Tips for Hole 2

- Use a club that ensures you can carry the bunkers.
- Pay attention to the pin placement to judge your approach accordingly.

Hole 3: The Corner

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 397 yards (Blue Tees)

The third hole, aptly named "The Corner," is a straight hole that can be deceptively challenging. The fairway narrows as it approaches the green, which is flanked by bunkers. The slope of the green can lead to tricky putts, so be mindful of your approach.

Tips for Hole 3

- Aiming right off the tee will help avoid the left-side bunkers.
- Practice your putting on the green to understand the slopes.

Hole 4: The Road Hole

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 480 yards (Blue Tees)

The fourth hole, known as "The Road Hole," is one of the most famous in golf. With its unique design, players must navigate a challenging tee shot over the corner of the hotel and avoid the infamous Road Hole bunker, which can make for a difficult recovery. The green is elevated and runs parallel to a road, adding to the challenge.

Tips for Hole 4

- Consider laying up to avoid the Road Hole bunker.
- The green is fast; be cautious with your putts, especially downhill.

Hole 5: The Par 3

- Par: 3
- Yardage: 190 yards (Blue Tees)

As a par 3, the fifth hole requires precision. The green is surrounded by deep bunkers, and club selection is crucial due to the wind, which can be unpredictable. The green itself is large but can be difficult to navigate due to its undulating surface.

Tips for Hole 5

- Factor in the wind when choosing your club.
- Aim for the center of the green, as accuracy is key.

Hole 6: The Old Course

- Par: 5
- Yardage: 550 yards (Blue Tees)

The sixth hole is a par 5 that offers an opportunity for birdies. With a wide fairway and minimal bunkering, players can be aggressive with their tee shot. However, the second shot requires caution, as the green is well-protected.

Tips for Hole 6

- Consider going for the green in two if you have a strong drive.
- Be wary of the bunkers around the green on your approach.

Hole 7: The Short Hole

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 410 yards (Blue Tees)

The seventh hole is a straightforward par 4 that offers a slight dogleg to the right. Players must be cautious of the bunkers that line the fairway, particularly on the right side. The green is large but can be tricky due to its slopes.

Tips for Hole 7

- Use a driver or a fairway wood off the tee for a better angle.
- Pay attention to the pin location when putting.

Hole 8: The Spectacular View

- Par: 3
- Yardage: 150 yards (Blue Tees)

The eighth hole is a picturesque par 3 that requires an accurate shot to the green, which is surrounded by bunkers and a stunning backdrop of the West Sands beach. The wind can significantly affect your shot, so club selection is vital.

Tips for Hole 8

- Consider using one extra club if the wind is strong.
- Aim for the middle of the green to avoid the surrounding bunkers.

Hole 9: The Valley of Sin

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 360 yards (Blue Tees)

The ninth hole features the famous "Valley of Sin," a deep swale in front of the green that can lead to challenging putts. The hole also requires a well-placed tee shot that avoids the bunkers on either side.

Tips for Hole 9

- Aim for the left side of the fairway to set up a better angle to the green.
- Be cautious of the swale when putting; it can be deceptive.

Hole 10: The Pans

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 380 yards (Blue Tees)

The tenth hole is a relatively straightforward par 4 that requires a solid drive. Players must navigate around bunkers on the right, and the green is well-protected, making an accurate approach essential.

Tips for Hole 10

- Aiming for the left side of the fairway can help avoid the right-side bunkers.
- Watch for the slope of the green, which can affect your putt.

Hole 11: The Bridge

- Par: 3
- Yardage: 165 yards (Blue Tees)

The eleventh hole is another par 3 that features a stunning view of the surrounding area. The green is elevated and has a steep drop-off on the back side. It's crucial to judge the distance accurately to avoid rolling off the green.

Tips for Hole 11

- Pay attention to the wind; it can be tricky at this elevation.
- Aiming for the center of the green is a safe strategy.

Hole 12: The Claret Jug

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 380 yards (Blue Tees)

The twelfth hole is a challenging par 4 that requires accuracy off the tee. The fairway narrows significantly, and players must avoid the bunkers on both sides. The green is small and can be difficult to hit.

Tips for Hole 12

- Consider using a 3-wood off the tee for better control.
- Pay close attention to pin placements, as the green is quite small.

Hole 13: The Gathering Place

- Par: 5
- Yardage: 550 yards (Blue Tees)

The thirteenth hole is a par 5 that offers a chance for eagle or birdie. The fairway is wide, and players can be aggressive with their second shot. However, the green is well-guarded, and a careful approach is necessary.

Tips for Hole 13

- If you hit a good drive, consider going for the green in two.
- Be cautious of the bunkers surrounding the green.

Hole 14: The Old Course Hotel

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 380 yards (Blue Tees)

The fourteenth hole is a straightaway par 4 that runs parallel to the Old Course Hotel. The fairway is generous, but players need to be careful of the bunkers that line the sides. The green is relatively flat but can be tricky based on pin placement.

Tips for Hole 14

- A solid drive is essential for a good approach.
- Make sure to read the green carefully before putting.

Hole 15: The Home Stretch

- Par: 4
- Yardage: 400 yards (Blue Tees)

The fifteenth hole is a challenging

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the layout of St Andrews Old Course, and how many holes does it have?

The St Andrews Old Course features an 18-hole layout, with a par of 72. It is known for its unique double greens and a layout that includes both natural and man-made hazards.

What are some key features of Hole 1 at St Andrews Old Course?

Hole 1, known as 'Burn', is a par 4 that measures 368 yards. It features a wide fairway and a large green, with the Swilcan Burn running in front of the green, making it a challenging opening hole.

What makes Hole 17, also known as the Road Hole, famous?

Hole 17 is famous for its difficulty and unique design. It is a par 4 that measures 495 yards and includes a narrow fairway, a deep bunker, and the iconic road behind the green, which adds to the challenge.

How does the wind affect play on the Old Course?

The weather, especially the wind, plays a significant role in the Old Course. Players must adapt their strategies as the wind can change direction and intensity, impacting their club selection and shot execution.

What is the significance of the Swilcan Bridge on Hole 18?

The Swilcan Bridge, located on Hole 18, is an iconic landmark of St Andrews. It is often photographed and symbolizes the connection between the past and present in golf, making it a must-see for visitors.

What should players know about the greens at St Andrews Old Course?

The greens at St Andrews are known for their size and undulation. Many holes share large double greens, and players must be adept at reading breaks and slopes to navigate them effectively.

Are there any notable bunkers on the Old Course?

Yes, the Old Course features several famous bunkers, including the 'Hell Bunker' on Hole 14, which is one of the largest and most challenging bunkers in golf, known for its deep face and steep slopes.

What is the best time of year to play the Old Course?

The best time to play the Old Course is typically during the late spring and summer months (May to September) when the weather is milder, and the course conditions are at their best.

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