

Measuring a Golf Course – USGA Course Rating Manual

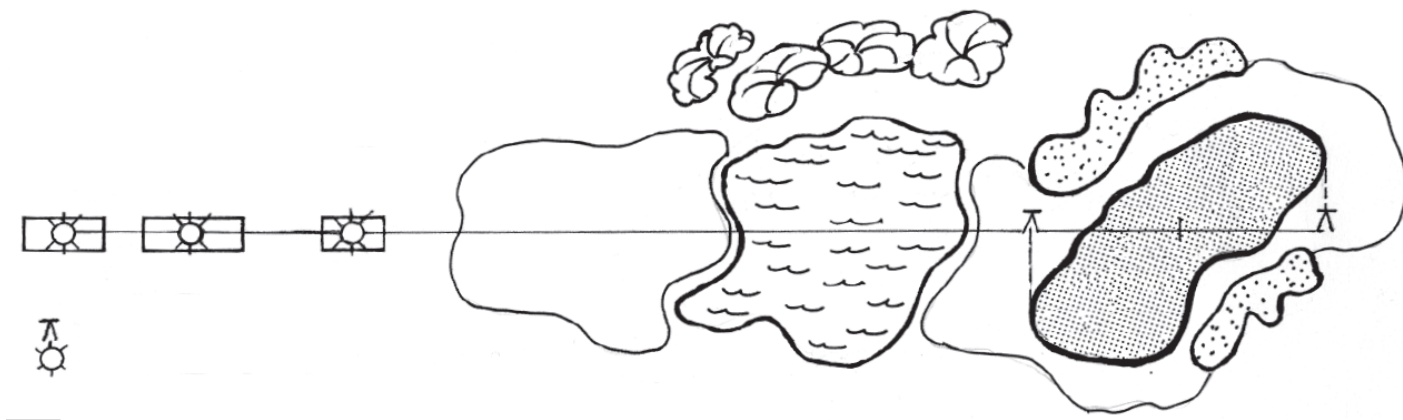
How to measure

Each hole must be measured horizontally (air line) by an EMD, surveying instruments, or GPS from the permanent yardage marker for every teeing area on each hole of the golf course to the center of the green. Yardages on the scorecard should accurately reflect this measurement. Accurate hole measurements to the nearest yard are very important. Any trained individual may perform course measurement, subject to review by the authorized golf association that issues the USGA Course Rating to the golf club. It is very helpful to have the superintendent present to advise on the placement of the equipment or reflector at the teeing ground, and the golf professional can assist in determining the landing zones. A hole with a bend (dogleg) must be measured on a straight line from the tee to the center of the fairway at the bend. If the pivot point is not easily discernable, select a pivot point that is approximately 250 yards for men or 210 yards for women from the set of tees played by the majority of golfers. The measurement must continue from that point on a straight line to the center of the green or the next pivot point, if applicable. If a dogleg causes a hole to play effectively shorter or longer for a scratch or bogey golfer, the rating team should make the appropriate adjustment under Dogleg/ Forced Lay up in the Effective Playing Length Factors.

Par-3 Hole or Straight Par 4/5

In measuring a par-3 hole (*see Example 1*), the EMD is set up at the back center of the green and readings are taken to the reflector at each tee. The EMD is then moved to the front center of the green, and readings to each tee are taken. The two readings to each tee are then averaged to determine the distance from each tee to the center of the green. An alternative is to set the EMD at the front center of the green and measure to all tees, and measure to the back center of the green, then add one-half the green depth to each tee reading. A straight par-4/5 hole is measured using the same procedure, but may require an additional measurement point along the center line of the hole.

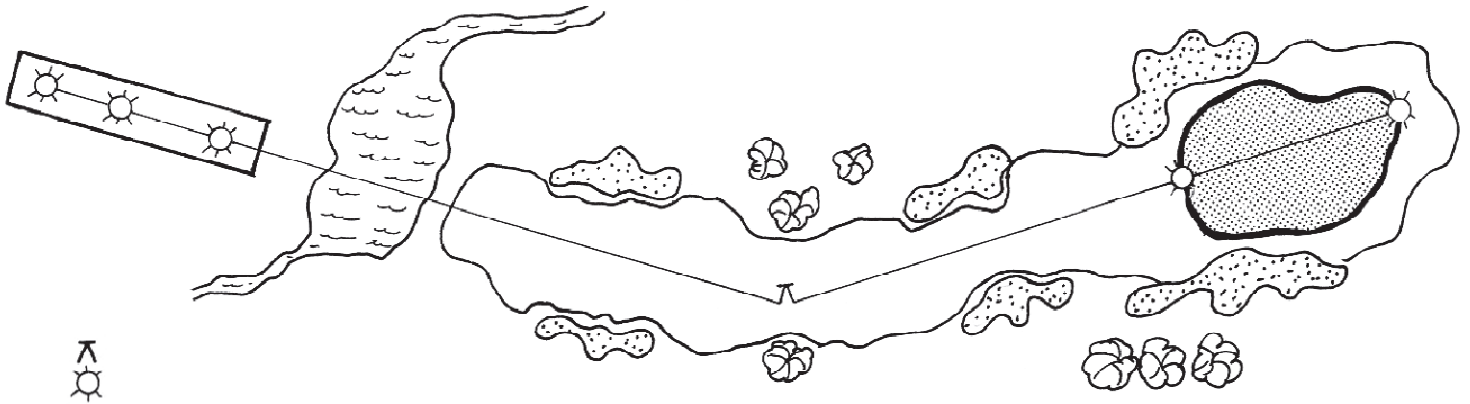
Example 1:



Par-4 Hole

On a par-4 hole (*See Example 2*), the EMD generally should be set up in the fairway at the pivot point. If possible, the setup should be made opposite a sprinkler head, a tree, or the front or back edge of a bunker or some similar object. A measurement should be taken from the setup point to each of the tees. Then measurements should be taken to the front and back edges of the green; these measurements should be averaged to determine the distance from the setup point to the center of the green. The distance from the setup point to the tees should then be added to the distance from the setup point to the center of the green to determine the length of the hole from each tee.

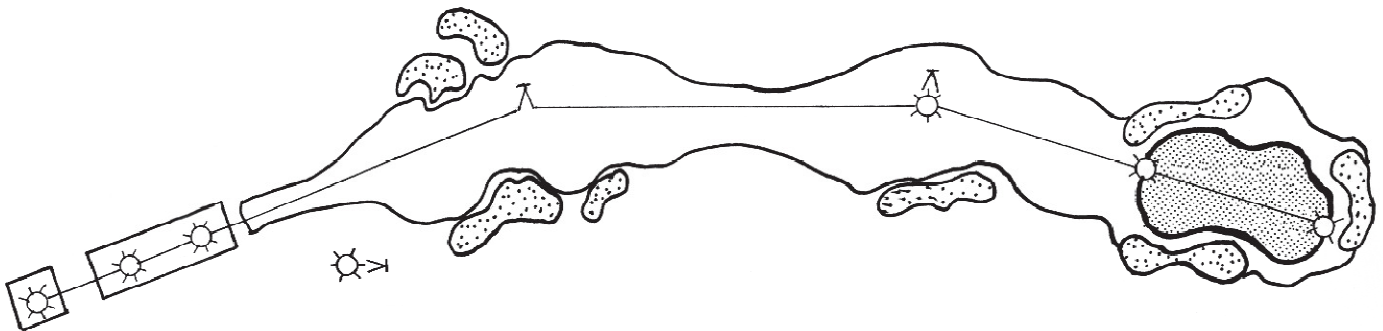
Example 2:



Par-5 Hole

When measuring a par-5 hole (see *Example 3*), two setups are usually required. The first setup should be at the first pivot point, and the second setup should be at the second pivot point. Readings should be taken from the first setup point to the tees and to the setup point of the second pivot point. The instrument should then be moved to the setup point at the second pivot point from which readings to the front and back edges of the green should be taken and then averaged. To determine the length of the hole, add the distances from (1) each tee to the first setup point, (2) the first setup point to the second setup point, and (3) the second setup point to the center of the green.

Example 3 (Par 5 with 3 tees):



Measurements for Course Raters

In addition to measuring hole lengths from all tees, the measuring team can greatly assist the course raters who will follow by determining:

- Width and depth of each putting green;
- Widths of landing zones for scratch and bogey golfers for each hole; and
- Distances required to carry obstacles off the tee or from the various landing zones.