pickwise

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Golf ball guide

From tour balls like the Pro V1 and Chrome Tour to great-value options, we compared the latest golf balls on feel, spin and distance so you can find the right one for your game.

The 10 at a glance

#	Ball	Best for	Cover	Feel	Swing speed
1	Titleist Pro V1	Best overall	Urethane	Soft	Mid to fast
2	Callaway Chrome Tour	Best soft feel	Urethane	Soft	Mid to fast
3	TaylorMade TP5x	Best in the wind	Urethane	Firm	Fast
4	Titleist Pro V1x	Best for high launch	Urethane	Firmer	Fast
5	Srixon Z-Star Diamond	Best for iron control	Urethane	Firm	Fast
6	Wilson Staff Model X	Best value tour ball	Urethane	Firm	Fast
7	TaylorMade Tour Response Stripe	Best for alignment	Urethane	Soft	Slow to mid
8	Titleist Tour Soft	Best soft distance ball	Ionomer	Very soft	Slow to mid
9	Bridgestone e12 Speed	Best value	Ionomer	Medium	Mid to fast
10	Callaway Supersoft	Best budget	Ionomer	Very soft	Slow

Quick answers

What golf ball should a beginner use?

A soft, low-compression ball such as the Callaway Supersoft is a good start. It's cheap, easy to compress and you won't mind losing a few.

Does golf ball compression matter?

Yes, to a point. Lower-compression balls are easier for slower swingers to compress, while faster swingers often get more speed from a firmer ball.

What's the difference between urethane and ionomer covers?

Urethane covers are softer and spin more around the greens, which is why tour balls use them. Ionomer covers spin less, are more durable and usually cost less.

How to choose a golf ball

Quick ball guide

A rough starting point based on your driver swing speed.

Under 85 mph	85 to 100 mph	Over 100 mph	Losing lots of balls
Slower swing	Average club golfer	Faster swing	Any speed
Soft, low compression	Soft tour or 3-piece	Tour urethane ball	Value 2-piece

1 Match the ball to your swing speed

Faster swingers can compress firmer balls and get more speed from them. Slower swingers usually get more distance and a better feel from softer, lower-compression balls.

2 Decide how much short-game spin you need

Urethane-covered balls, like the Pro V1 and Chrome Tour, spin more on chips and pitches, so they stop faster on the green. Ionomer-covered balls spin less but are usually cheaper and more durable.

3 Think about your flight and the wind

If your drives balloon or get knocked down by the wind, a lower-spinning ball like the TP5x or e12 Speed can keep the flight more penetrating. If you struggle to get the ball up, look for a higher-launching option.

4 Pick a feel you like

Feel is personal, but it matters, especially on and around the greens. Hit a few putts and chips with different balls and choose the one that gives you the most confidence.

5 Be honest about how many you lose

If you lose a few balls a round, a premium ball can get expensive fast. A good-value ball you can play without worrying often helps your score more than a tour ball.

6 Test from the green back

Try your shortlist on chips and putts first, then approach shots, then the driver. Most of your shots are played near the green, so that's where a ball makes the biggest difference.

Your checklist

Tick things off as you go.

BEFORE YOU BUY

- [ ] Know your rough driver swing speed
- [ ] Decide how much greenside spin you need
- [ ] Set a budget per dozen
- [ ] Shortlist two or three balls

TEST IN THE AIR

- [ ] Hit 7-irons and compare carry and height
- [ ] Hit drivers and compare dispersion
- [ ] Try them in the wind if you can

TEST ON THE GREEN

- [ ] Putt with each ball from 10 and 30 feet
- [ ] Chip to the same flag with each ball
- [ ] Note which one stops fastest
- [ ] Pick the feel you trust most

THEN COMMIT

- [ ] Play one model for every round
- [ ] Buy in bulk once you've chosen
- [ ] Replace balls with damaged covers

See the full list online

All 10, with pros and cons and who each one suits.

pickwiseguides.com/golf/golf-balls-2026

Open the list