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Introduction

Welcome to *Golf All-in-One For Dummies*, your guide to everything you need to know to be a great golfer. If you're simply thinking about embarking on your journey into the world of golf, you've come to the right place. If you're one of the millions and millions of people who play golf but can't quite master the game, you've also come to the right place. (You folks know who you are — the type who throws clubs and/or tantrums after a bad moment or day on the course.)

Although we've written this book for beginners, we've made sure that the chapters within offer something for golfers at every level. From expert tips on technique and form to anecdotes from veterans such as Gary McCord, this book has something for everyone.

About This Book

Golf All-in-One For Dummies isn't your average book about golf. We go beyond the mechanics of the swing to present the big picture of golf. Read the chapters on fitness to get yourself in shape and not only improve your swing and your score but also keep your body from falling prey to pain and injury. Check out the chapters on gear, lessons, and course choices to save yourself from wasting time and money on clubs, instruction, and green fees you don't need. And because a good portion of the game of golf is played in your head, we offer solid guidance about keeping your nerves calm and your mental game strong.

Of course, the way you swing a club *is* important, so we dissect and highlight the grips, stances, and strokes you need to get started. But we also go farther and cover the finer points of the short game — strokes and strategies that help keep your scores down and your opponents impressed. Plagued by slices, shanks, and hooks? No worries. This book also offers fixes and solutions to those and many of the other common problems faced by frustrated golfers.

The exercises, tips, drills, games, and other tidbits of advice in *Golf All-in-One For Dummies* get you started on the path to great golf and also bring you back for quick refreshers along the way on your journey to golf greatness.

Conventions Used in This Book

To make the text even more accessible, we've used some handy conventions throughout the book:

- ✓ New words or terms are formatted in *italics* and accompanied by a definition.
- ✓ **Bold** text denotes the specific steps of processes that we've spelled out. It also highlights keywords in bulleted lists.
- ✓ We've used `monofont` for web addresses. When this book was printed, some web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that we didn't put in any extra characters (like a hyphen) to indicate the break. When using one of these web addresses, type exactly what you see on the page, pretending that the line break doesn't exist.

What You're Not to Read

We've put this book together with your convenience in mind, including highlighting the stuff you don't have to read to understand golf. These sidebars, which are shaded boxes of text, are added attractions. We've tried to make them fun and informative, but they aren't crucial to the rest of the book. Feel free to skip them.

Foolish Assumptions

In writing this book, we have made some assumptions about you, the reader:

- ✓ You're interested in golf.
- ✓ You're not already a great golfer.

- ✔ You've played golf before, but you're looking for ways to improve your game.
- ✔ You prefer straight talk over jargon.

If any or all of these statements describe you, keep reading!

How This Book Is Organized

Golf All-in-One For Dummies is organized into six books that lead you through the process of becoming a golfer. Beginners need many questions answered as they navigate through the steps of preparing for and learning the game. These divisions help you take those steps one at a time and let you flip to them anytime for quick reference. Here are the books and what you can find in them.

Book 1: Getting Started with Golf

You say you're ready for tee time? Stop and think about that for a minute. First you need clubs and gear. Then you need to know how to swing those clubs. You may want to take a lesson to see whether you really like the game and then find golf clubs that fit you. In this book, we sort through the choices in clubs and give you helpful tips on the questions to ask before you make a purchase. We also give you the lowdown on the types of golf courses and ways to save money on green fees. If you're embarking on your golf journey, this book is a good place to start.

Book 11: Focusing on Fairway Fitness

This book explains how to tune your most important piece of golf equipment: your body. In this book, we cover the keys to getting into shape for golf, with chapters on stretching, core strength, and weight training. Whether you're a fitness freak, a bit out of shape, or a lot out of shape, this book is an important stop along your journey. In it, you find exercises that improve your swing, help prevent injury, and may help you avoid the aches and pains that come when you're hitting the course.

Golfers are crazy about golf, but a bad day on the course can also make a golfer crazy. This book also covers some exercises, visualization methods, and breathing tips to help with your mental game.

Book III: Playing Golf: The Swing and the Short Game

This book gets right to the point: We present you with a close look at the workings of the golf swing: the grip, the strokes, the stance, all of it. You also get a good look at the *short game* (everything within 70 yards of the hole), where most of your scoring takes place. We show you how to refine your pitch shot and your chip shot. We outline techniques for blasting your way out of bunkers, and we show you how to develop a sound putting stroke.

Book IV: Rules and Etiquette

In this book, we offer some great insider information about the rules of the game. You discover how to conduct yourself on the golf course, cope with penalty shots, and handle the fine art of betting. You even get the do's and don'ts of golf-course etiquette, both for players and for fans. With the info in this book under your belt, you can walk onto any golf course and look like you know what you're doing — because you do.

Book V: Hitting the Course

Okay, now you're ready to hit the course. Get started on the right foot by following our routine for limbering up before that first swing. Check out tactics for teeing off like a pro, and do it all without losing your composure along the way. Think you don't need to practice? Think again. This book outlines the importance of practicing; we even provide you with some great games that make practicing less of a chore.

Book VI: Easy Fixes for Common Faults

In this book, we tackle the tough shots — the terrible tees, slices, hooks, and more — and offer advice to help you deal with bad luck, bad moods, and bad weather. You'll develop many faults during your golfing life, and this book tells you how to fix most of them. You also find a glossary of golf terms in this book to help you decipher any jargon you may not be familiar with yet.