

**Making Everything Easier!™**

**4th Edition**

# **Golf**

FOR

# **DUMMIES®**

## **Learn to:**

- Master your grip, stance, and swing
- Improve your game with tips from the pros
- Overcome the game's mental challenges with tricks and exercises

**Gary McCord**

*CBS golf analyst and Champions Tour winner*



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# Golf For Dummies<sup>®</sup>, 4th Edition

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# ***Golf For Dummies***<sup>®</sup>

**by Gary McCord**



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## About the Author

“Life is full of ups and downs, and it wouldn’t be fun any other way.” Living by this optimistic philosophy, **Gary McCord** persisted through years of mediocrity before finding success. An outstanding player, television announcer, instructor, author, speaker, and even movie actor, he has become a golf celebrity.

McCord is well known for enduring 23 years and 422 tournaments on the PGA Tour without nabbing a single victory. A man of good humor, he sported a “NO WINS” license plate for years to poke fun at his less-than-glamorous work as a professional golfer.

“Trapped in the headlights of bankruptcy,” as he liked to put it, McCord pursued other avenues in golf and found himself launching a broadcasting career. He scored big when a CBS Sports executive tossed him a headset and asked him to do golf commentary — giving him only 15 minutes to prepare. McCord jumped in with no fear and impressed CBS with his performance. Twenty-five years later, he’s still providing color



commentary for CBS golf events. Fans and critics praise him for his knowledgeable perspective, refreshing humor, and sometimes irreverent wit toward a game known for taking itself too seriously.

Broadcasting changed his perspective on golf. Realizing that a better understanding of the golf swing would help his TV work, McCord studied the swing for two years. He emerged with knowledge, confidence, and an improved golf game.

McCord's own golf really came together as he began his career on the Champions Tour after his 50th birthday. In 1999, his first full season on that tour, he won two events — the Toshiba Senior Classic and the Ingersoll-Rand Senior Tour Championship — to finish 17th on the official money list with nearly \$1 million in prize money. Since then, he has often finished in the top 30 on the money list while playing a limited schedule of 10 to 15 events per year.

When he isn't broadcasting or playing golf, McCord keeps busy with myriad other projects. He portrayed himself in and served as technical director for the golf movie *Tin Cup*, starring Kevin Costner, Rene Russo, and Don Johnson. He's also a writer. In addition to writing *Golf For Dummies*, he's the author of a collection of essays about his life on tour, *Just a Range Ball in a Box of Titleists*. His bestselling *Golf For Dummies* was released in DVD form in 2004.

McCord and his friend and CBS Sports colleague David Feherty became known to millions of golf fans and gamers as the voices of EA Sports' Tiger Woods PGA Tour video games. McCord also instructs and consults with more than 20 PGA Tour players.

Gary brings a sense of fun to everything he does and never takes himself too seriously. He and his wife, Diane, share the

“ups and downs” of a busy life together at their homes in Scottsdale and Denver.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this book to spike marks, the wind just came up from the other direction, bad bounces, wrong yardage, rising barometric pressure, solar storms, dirt got in my eyes, yin and yang, the big bang theory, Brownian motion, dark energy, escape velocity, entropy, Newton’s laws of motion, and a bad caddie. All the things we golfers can blame our erratic play on instead of ourselves, providing peace of mind in the unstable environment of this maniacal endeavor.

## **Author’s Acknowledgments**

To the game itself, golf. It’s a clever game worthy of perspective. I’m not astute enough to unravel it all, but if you can get a good author, bingo, the game is easy. Thanks Kevin Cook for the time and effort he put into this 4th edition.

To my wife Diane, my mom Ruth, my sister Karen and her late husband Chris, my daughter Krista and her husband Mike, and my four granddaughters Breanne, Kayla, Jenae, and Terra: See what you can do with spell check!

And many thanks to the great golf team Wiley put together: Acquisitions Editor Stacy Kennedy; Senior Project Editor Chrissy Guthrie; Copy Editor Megan Knoll; photographers Erick Rasco and Matt Bowen; models Clayton Allen, Robin Anderson, Robert Gaier, and Swati Gunale; Technical Editor Emily Hallberg;

and all the folks in Composition Services who processed the art and laid out the book like champions.

## **Publisher's Acknowledgments**

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# Introduction

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I can't believe this book is the 4th edition of *Golf For Dummies*! If it's the first golf book you've ever held in your hands, don't worry. I've read more of them than I can count, and this one's a particular favorite. To bring you this edition, I've gone back through everything I wrote in the first three, updating some material, writing a bunch more to keep up with this fast-changing game, and making everything even clearer and easier to follow.

Not to mention funnier!

Because golf, like life itself, can be hard but is ultimately enjoyable. Please remember that as you begin your adventure in the most maddening and wondrous game of all: Golf is fun. And the fun starts here.

## About This Book

I've written this book for the rankest beginner, although I like to think that I have something to offer golfers at every level, even the pros. (Of course, my buddies on the professional tours will probably read this book just to see whether I can write a coherent sentence.) The guys I grew up with at San Luis Rey golf course in Southern California will check out *Golf For Dummies*, 4th Edition, to see whether I've used any of their funniest lines.

What you have here is no ordinary golf-instruction book. Most of the golf books you find in your local bookstore (or, increasingly, online) are written by professional players or teachers. As such, they focus solely on the golf swing. *Golf For Dummies*, 4th Edition, covers a lot more than the swing. This

book ought to be the only one you need as you develop a golf dependency. (Feel free to consult a physician when you feel the first symptoms coming on — grinding your teeth, talking to yourself after missing a shot, punching the air after making one. These are the warning signs. But remember: This book is cheaper than a visit to the doctor.)

When I started out on the PGA Tour in 1974, I was full of fight and enthusiasm but lacked a basic knowledge of golf-swing mechanics. A warm panic would start to rise in me about ten minutes before I was due to tee off. My old friends Doubt and Dread would join me at the first tee. My brain would be racing, trying to figure out what *swing thought* (that one aspect of the swing that you meditate on to keep focused) to use that day. Most of the time, I'd be left with a thought like, "Keep the left elbow toward magnetic north on the downswing." Usually, that action resulted in a silly-looking slice into uncharted territory.

I swung the club that way for most of my career. So I know what it's like to play without knowledge or a solid foundation. Believe me, I'm a lot happier — and having a lot more fun — now that I know what I'm doing.

The reason I'm qualified to help you is that I have made a serious effort to become a student of the game. When I started working on golf telecasts for CBS, I didn't know much about the inner workings of the swing. But my new job forced me to learn. My odyssey led me to seek advice from some of the world's greatest teachers.

One of them was Mac O'Grady, a golfer I grew up with in Southern California. O'Grady had researched his method with passion since 1983. The result was a swing model that worked. I was lucky to study under O'Grady, and I can't thank him enough. But I don't cover Mac's model in this book; it's for