



## First Tee – Sandhills | Program Levels and Progression Requirements

First Tee – Sandhills offers curriculum level experiences three times per year:  
Spring (March – May), Summer (May – August), Fall (September - October)

### Advancing through the Program

From age 7 through 18, youth progress through distinct levels by demonstrating First Tee Nine Core Values, life and golf skills, as well as passing an assessment. All new participants ages 7 and up begin at the PLAYer level. The pinnacle of First Tee is completing Ace. Each child will complete 2 - 6 sessions, or meet minimum exposure hours, and pass a written and playing assessment to enter the following program levels.

### Program Levels

#### TARGET

- Open to 5 and 6 year olds
- TARGET is a fun introduction to the game of golf. There is no certification process to advance from Target to PLAYer and no prior golf experience is necessary.

#### PLAYer

- Required minimum age is 7
- Life Skills: Tee up for the first time and learn the game of golf and First Tee's Code of Conduct
- Golf Fundamentals:
  - Distance Response (Size Length of Motion)
  - Target Awareness (Target Selection)
  - Preparing to Swing (Hold, Set-Up, Aim & Alignment)

#### Certification Requirements to advance from PLAYer to PAR

- **Child must have reached their 9th birthday**
- **Core Lesson Exposure:** 27 hours of exposure
- **Life Skill Knowledge (Learn):** Correctly answered 10 -12 written (or verbal) questions
- **Golf Knowledge (Appreciate):** Correctly answered 8 -10 written (or verbal) questions
- **Playing Requirement:**
  - **Putting:** Complete 9 holes with a maximum score of 34
  - **Short Game:** Complete 3 holes with a maximum score of 15
- **Observable Behaviors:** In addition to the certification requirements, coaches look for certain behaviors during classes. At the PLAYer Level, those behaviors are: showing respect, courtesy towards others, responsibility for the course, showing honesty, modeling sportsmanship, developing confidence, using good judgment, playing with perseverance, and living with integrity. PLAYer must demonstrate they can play fast, safe, and courteous. They must record their score accurately (Honesty) but no specific score is required

## Par

- Recommended minimum age is 9
- Life Skills: Focus on interpersonal and self-management skills on and off the course
- Golf Fundamentals:
  - Club Selection
  - Distance to Target
  - Balanced Finish
  - Clubface Direction at Contact

## Certification Requirements to advance from Par to Birdie

- **Child must have reached their 11th Birthday**
- **Core Lesson Exposure:** 36 hours of exposure
- **Life Skill Knowledge:** Correctly answered 15 -18 written (or verbal) questions
- **Golf Knowledge:** Correctly answered 12 -15 written (or verbal) questions
- **Playing Requirement:** One 9-hole round. Par participants must demonstrate they can play fast, safe, and courteous. They must record their score accurately (Honesty) and score under 72 strokes
  - **Putting:** Complete 9 holes with a maximum score of 27
  - **Short Game:** Complete 3 holes with a maximum score of 12

## National Opportunities

Available to apply for when a participant assesses to Birdie Level. Basic requirements include volunteer hours, school and activities charts, personal essays, and a letter of recommendation. These events take place with other First Tee chapters throughout the country.

- **Leadership & Life Skills Academies:** Teen participants can develop and hone skills to become leaders in their chapters, schools, and communities while experiencing championship golf, career exploration, and dorm living.
- **Tour Event Attendance:** Participants may apply to attend specific Tour events.
- **First Tee College Scholarship Program:** We believe in encouraging youth to pursue their dreams and further their education. This program awards participants who excel in academics, leadership, character development, and chapter and community involvement. Thanks to our generous donors, First Tee is proud to offer up to a \$20,000 scholarship, mentoring throughout the college experience, professional development workshops and assistance in securing internships and jobs through the First Tee College Scholarship Program.

## Birdie

- Recommended minimum age is 11
- Life Skills: Emphasis on setting goals and making them a reality
- Golf Fundamentals:
  - Pre & Post Shot Routines
  - Swing Rhythm
  - Ball Flight
  - On-Course Strategies

## Certification Requirements to advance from Birdie to Eagle

- **PLAYer must have reached their 14th Birthday**
- **Core Lesson Exposure:** 48 hours of exposure
- **Life Skill Knowledge:** Correctly answered 20 -24 written (or verbal) questions
- **Golf Knowledge:** Correctly answered 16 -20 written (or verbal) questions

- **Playing Requirement:** (5) Five 9-hole rounds. Birdie participants must demonstrate they can play fast, safe, and courteous. They must record their score accurately (Honesty) and score under 63 strokes. Distance requirement: 1,900 - 2,500 yards
  - **Putting:** Complete 9 holes with a maximum score of 23
  - **Short Game:** Complete 6 holes with a maximum score of 21
  - **Full Swing (Fairways):** Must hit 3 out of 6 fairways
  - **Full Swing (Greens):** Must hit 3 out of 6 greens from 55 -75 yards away from the green

## Eagle

- Recommended minimum age is 14
- Life Skills: Learn resilience, conflict resolution, and future planning
- Golf Fundamentals:
  - Ball Flight
  - On-Course Strategies

## Certification Requirements to advance from Eagle to ACE

- **PLAYer must have reached their 14th Birthday or be entering 9th grade**
- **Core Lesson Exposure:** 60 hours of exposure
- **Life Skill Knowledge:** Correctly answered 25 -30 written (or verbal) questions
- **Golf Knowledge:** Correctly answered 20 -25 written (or verbal) questions
- **Playing Requirement:** (10) Ten 18-hole rounds. Eagle participants must demonstrate they can play fast, safe, and courteous. They must record their score accurately (Honesty) and score under 108 strokes. Distance requirement 5,000 - 6,000 yards
  - **Putting:** Complete 9 holes with a maximum score of 18
  - **Short Game:** Complete 9 holes with a maximum score of 27
  - **Full Swing (Fairways):** Must hit 3 out of 6 fairways
  - **Full Swing (Greens):** Must hit 3 out of 6 greens from 80 -100 yards away from the green
  - **Volunteering:** Complete 25 total hours of volunteering with First Tee – Sandhills

## ACE

- Required minimum age is 14 or rising 9th grader
- Life Skills: Goal setting skills, career education and giving back to the community.
- Golf Fundamentals:
  - Accuracy & Tracking
  - On-Course Management

## Certification Requirements to Achieve Ace Recognition

- At the Ace Level, participants put it all together and hone in on setting goals, career education, and giving back to the community.