

Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001 Strategy Guide By "Big Bertha"

This is, I hope, a comprehensive online guide to enhance your enjoyment and skills at playing EA SPORTS *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001*. In writing this, I will keep in mind the wide variety of skills of the various types of players who may play this game. Hopefully beginners to seasoned veterans will find this guide useful.

If you're new to the game, I recommend starting with your favorite of the available golfers. I also highly recommend setting your difficulty level at "novice" or "amateur" until you get comfortable with the swing meter and the overall "feel" of the game. The *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2000* veterans or more seasoned players will likely skip right to the very demanding "pro" difficulty.

Once you have selected your golfer, clubs, and difficulty, the next thing I would do is head straight to the practice facility. Choose "driving range" to begin learning how to use the swing meter. It is here where you will spend 50% of your pre-tournament practice time. The other 50% of your time should be split between "chipping area" and "putter green."

At the driving range you can try 7-8 different types of shots/ball lies that you will encounter during game play. The first place I go is the tee box. Here I concentrate on getting my timing down for the swing meter. One thing I used to do was to hit tee shots until I got my rhythm down on the meter. When I discovered that there was a "practice swing" for spacebar users, I quickly stopped hitting every shot. Now, I hold the "shift" button on the keyboard while I am clicking the meter using my spacebar (for mouse clickers, the right mouse button serves this function). Now I can get used to the meter much faster using practice swings, rather than watching every shot being rendered. After all, everybody would rather get to the tournament play as soon as possible, right? Well, not just yet. We still need to sharpen our skills!

When you feel you have your timing down, move to all the different lies on the practice range and hit a few shots from these. This is also critical during tournament play. Why? If you are not familiar with how most clubs react in rough, deep rough, buried, sand, buried in sand, side hill, uphill, and downhill lies, then you will have a pretty rough time scoring well. A big part of this is just playing the game round after round. You will experience some frustrations along the way, just like in "real" golf! So practicing these various shots is crucial to understanding "how" to play *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001*. Hit enough shots in these lies with various clubs to learn what the potential distances are and the various risks of each type shot. I have noticed that many new players jump right into the game on Pro difficulty, with little or practical time. Their results are almost 100% frustration because they did not take the time to learn the "basics" of the game.

On the chipping area, apply the same principles here as you did for the driving range. Practice every conceivable lie and shot you can imagine! You never know when you will come across a certain kind of shot. If you have never practiced this, will you know how to execute the shot in a tournament? If you have practiced the shot, your anxiety level will be much lower and your confidence much higher! This game is very much like the real game of golf: the more you practice, the more confident you become, and, therefore, the better you play. It's that simple!

On the practice green, try as many of the various distances that are available. The best way to practice is to make sure in your "course conditions" to select FAST greens. Why? FAST is *the* most demanding setting. If you can become a skilled putter on fast greens, you can putt any green. If you want to play *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001* online at "EA SPORTS Net" then you better have practiced fast greens. Currently this is the only speed of green available online.

When practicing putting, as with any other type of shot, I recommend using a few practice swings until the shot "feels right" to you. One reason for this is there are different tempos to different shot setups. The tempo when using a driver is faster than when using a putter, for instance. So use the practice swing judiciously. If you are playing a match online, as a courtesy to the competition, be sure *not* to take a lot of practice swings at any EA SPORTS official event

without a shot clock. Do, however, take your time and play at your own pace. Of course, EA SPORTS Tournaments *with* the shot clock do not afford very much practice swing time!

Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001 Tournament Play

Ok, so are we practiced out and ready for some competition? Good, now let's go have some fun!

First off, decide if you want to play any of the offline modes, or if you want to challenge the best of the best online. Let's start with offline mode. My favorite is Season mode. First you must qualify for the TOUR through Q-school. This is the ultimate challenge! Unfortunately, if you aren't quite ready to move beyond the Novice or Amateur difficulty levels, then Season mode is probably not for you: Pro difficulty is the only available level in Season mode.

The key to scoring well in Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001 is practicing not only at the practice facility at Sawgrass, but also selecting Practice mode from the Main menu. Choose the course you want to practice on. Before you tee off, go to Golfers and click your golfer's name. Then click EDIT. Look for Mulligans and click YES (just for practice mode on the course). Now go back to the main screen and select the course you want to practice. At the next screen, choose ALL 18 HOLES, then click TEE OFF. At the tee, use a few practice swings to get your timing down. Use the targeting arc to determine the optimum shot path. Check your wind speed and direction and adjust accordingly. Aim the tee shot with landing in the fairway as the ultimate goal. Be sure to look at all the hazards that might be near the landing area. It can be a painful experience if you don't hit fairways consistently. I like to aim my shots at the largest landing area available with the fewest hazard risks. I also like to execute the shot with the least amount of wind, assuming it is coming straight at me or left to right. After your last of three clicks when executing a shot, hit the spacebar or left click again immediately. The purpose of this is that when the shot is finished on the screen, a dialogue box will open and ask if you want to proceed, hit a Mulligan, replay the shot, or save the shot. Select MULLIGAN to attempt the shot again. You can re-take a shot in this manner over and over until you hit the kind of shot you originally envisioned. This feature of the game is how I prepare for every single EA Internet Event. This feature is best used, however, for approach shots to the green. To me, this is where you can win or lose a tournament. Knowing how the approach shot is going to react is *the* key to getting those very valuable 4-5' birdie putts!

For example, let's take a look at Sawgrass, hole #2, par 5. This hole is a bit over 500 yards, dogleg left with water on the far right, and bunkers protecting both the left and right sides of the green. The green slopes back to front with a slope in the middle. The wind is usually blowing over your right shoulder towards the green. My first thought is to put my tee shot in the middle of the fairway. No time to get cute here! I take a few practice swings and when the wind is at its highest (going with the ball—I want that precious roll!), I execute the shot. On most shots, I work very hard to click at 12 o'clock (green line) to 6 o'clock (green line). The farther into the *red*, the more unpredictable your swing meter timing and your shot results. Stay out of the "red zone" unless absolutely necessary! It is not worth the added risk!

Another issue worth mentioning is the application of backspin, forward spin, draw and fade. I try to play as many shots as I can *without* applying these effects! Why? Every time you add one of the effects, it makes your shot more risky and harder to execute perfectly. The more you apply, the higher the risk (the risk meter is on the right of the swing meter). The lower the risk meter (in green), the easier the shot is to execute and the lower the likelihood of a poor result if your swing meter does not stop at 6 o'clock in the green line. Conversely, if your default shot is yellow or red on the risk meter *without* applying these effects, you have a very difficult shot to start with! Don't make it worse by adding more difficulty! There are also times you can choose another club to possibly reduce the shot's risk factor.

OK, so you're in the fairway about 225 yards from the pin. The pin is uphill about 7-8 feet and the wind is moving towards the pin at about 8-15 mph. Now is when "course management"

and experience from many practice rounds come into play. I am going to choose a club that the targeting arc says is about 30-35 yards short of the pin. Why? Well, we have a tailwind. Next we have an uphill target. The ball normally rolls more under these conditions than with a headwind and downhill target. Since the wind is moving to the pin, but slightly right to left, I need to aim a bit right so the shot will stay consistent with the pin. I also look at my lie and see I have a slight right to left angle. So I compensate a bit more to the right with the aiming arc—you'll get a feel for how much compensation you need the more you practice and play. My goal for this shot is to get the ball in position to attempt an eagle putt! But I also do not want to aim the shot to a point where I risk missing the opportunity for a sure-fire birdie. No time to get greedy here! A perfect shot is possible, but not probable. Make sure and leave yourself an out! Par is better than a double or triple bogey any day!

Now we are sitting on the green with a 20' eagle putt! The putt is below the hole about 2 inches and breaks right to left. If I miss, I only want to miss by 3' or less, preferably past the pin. I read the break and determine I need a 20' putter to hit the putt with about 18' of power. Just enough to get there, but not so much as to leave myself a difficult birdie putt. If I don't get it there, it surely won't go in!

The putt lips out and goes about 4' past the pin. I line up the 4-footer and make the birdie. Beautiful.

What I hope I have left here gives you a good starting point in achieving success playing *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001*. Most of all, I hope you have *fun* playing, because this is why most people buy and play games!

In summation, here are my keys to learning and having fun with the *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001*:

1. Practice, practice, practice! Especially at the practice facility. Just like real golf!
2. Find a difficulty level you feel comfortable with, then work your way up to Pro (if you're not there already). Just like real golf!
3. Spend time on the course of your choice in Practice mode with Mulligans turned ON. This way you can practice the shots you need to make as many times as you want, so that when tournament time rolls around your confidence level will be sky-high! Just like real golf!
4. When setting up a shot, always use "Course Management" to eliminate the possibility of errant shots being too penal. In other words, going for the flag over a water and/or bunker is not always the best choice, especially if you create a swing meter mis-hit. Go for the pin when you have a clear shot. Play conservatively when you have hazards in play. Remember that par is a good score on many holes in *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001*! And it sure beats those double and triple bogeys any day! Just like real golf!
5. Make practice swings a part of your pre-shot routine. It never hurts to hit the shot right after "green lining" two or three practice swings! Just like real golf!
6. I feel the "short game" is *the* most crucial aspect of *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001* or the real game of golf. Spend as much time as you can at the "chipping area" and "putting greens". If you can become proficient at getting up and down in two strokes from *any lie*, you will find great enjoyment and fun with this game! Heck, you may even find you have become a top player in *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001*. I can say from experience, that the time I have spent learning TW2000 has been very rewarding and fun! If you enjoy competition, *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2001* will give you all the competition you can handle! Have fun and enjoy yourself!

Big Bertha

Tips from the Testers:

1. Whether you are shooting from the fairway, sand, or rough, consider your shot type and check the direction the wind is blowing.
2. When on the green, consult the green reader. It can help you see dips and breaks that could otherwise ruin a good put.
3. When playing online tournaments, make sure you check the settings. If you are still a beginner, you might find the competition in a Pro match a bit too advanced.
4. Put in a lot of practice time at Sawgrass. This is your entry into the PGA TOUR Season.
5. A good way to get used to the swing meter is to practice on the Driving Range. This helps get your timing down on your swing.
6. Beginners should use the Course Management option to understand the distance and shot types of each club.
7. Heron Bay and Scottsdale are great courses for beginners.
8. Always consult the risk meter—the riskier the shot, the uglier the results when you miss.
9. When putting, there are different green grid options. Cycle through them to find the one that best helps you read the break.