

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR COURSE DESIGN OVERVIEW

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What is Course Design all about?

EA Sports Tiger Woods PGA Tour for PC allows users to design realistic high quality, detailed custom courses that can be used in game play and shared with other players. These courses range from imaginative fantasy courses to very realistic recreations of actual real-life courses. The ability to create custom courses has without doubt extended interest in the Tiger Woods series. Custom courses can even be used in on-line play. One internet-based group even goes so far as to simulate the entire real-world PGA tour schedule each year! Literally thousands of courses have been designed and shared since the introduction of the Tiger Woods Course Architect program in 1999.

Brief History

In 1999, EA Sports included the first version of Course Architect (CA) with Tiger Woods PGA Tour 99 for PC. Course Architect worked hand-in hand with the game, and these user-designed courses automatically integrated into game play. The 2005 and 2006 releases of the game included an updated CA and manual. In recent years, dedicated and industrious programmers have created "Caddie" programs that allow users to easily install custom courses into more current versions of the game.

Over the years a small but thriving internet-based community has evolved around the art of course design. Many contributors from around the globe have provided not only course designs, but also support, advice, and tutorials. Designers have also contributed structures, textures, sounds, course life systems, and many other elements used in the creative process of course design.

Getting Started

In order to begin as a course designer, you will need desire, some creativity, patience, and especially a willingness to study and learn. Course design is fun, but can also be quite a challenge. The CA program and the associated software that are necessary for course design are quite powerful, but they are not necessarily intuitive to learn and use without some study. That is to say that you cannot simply start CA and just dive in. There are concepts used in CA that most certainly require that you study the manual thoroughly before attempting a design.

Ideas and inspiration can come from many sources. You can build a course around a theme or idea. Choosing a real or imagined geographical location is a good place to start. Perhaps you would like to combine several holes from multiple courses into one design. Whatever your idea, course design is a fun and creative hobby. Your only budget is your time and patience.

Consider starting with something fairly simple for your first effort. For example, use relatively moderate elevation changes, rather than trying to design a course over very rough terrain. Be prepared to work on your design for an extended period of time. Depending on how many free hours you have to spend on your design, it could take several weeks or even months to complete.

On the following pages, you will find an outline of some important course design concepts for the beginner. This overview is intended to familiarize you with key concepts, so that you may avoid some confusion, delays and setbacks.

System Requirements

PC Hardware and OS requirements for Tiger Woods 08 apply to the various programs used for course design, with the exception that a video card upgrade may be advisable (see below)

Minimum PC System Requirements:

- ✓ **PC Processor Speed:** 1.6GHz or better
- ✓ **Operating System:** Windows XP, Windows Vista
- ✓ **System Memory:** 256MB RAM or better
- ✓ **Hard Drive Space:** 3GB or better
- ✓ **Video:** 64MB ATI RADEON 8500 or NVIDIA GeForce 3 DirectX 9.0c-compatible video card or better
- ✓ **PC Sound Card:** DirectX 9.0c-compatible sound card
- ✓ **PC Drive Type and Speed:** DVD-ROM 8x or better

Video Requirements

If you have had trouble with the display of downloadable custom courses, you may want to consider a video card and or system RAM upgrade. A video card with 512MB of memory is advisable.

Generally custom courses require more system resources (RAM and video memory) than stock courses. A video card with 256MB of video RAM might be considered a reasonable minimum; 512MB or better will improve display quality noticeably.

Software Installation

- Download and refer to the [Course Design Software List](#)
- **NOTE:** Be sure to take note of the Virtual PC installation for Windows Vista if applicable. If you are running Vista, set up your Virtual PC and see the guide [Virtual Machine Tutorial for Vista](#)
- Install all programs noted as “required” on the Course Design Software List.
- Install all programs noted as “optional / recommended” on the Course Design Software List at your discretion.

Manuals, Help Files, and Tutorials

The use of the various programs will become quite natural and intuitive after you use them for a while. *However, it will be to your advantage to read and digest the available program manuals and help files thoroughly before you attempt to use the programs.* The Course Architect manual should be your first study project. Follow this with the help files for CLsetup and Caddie 08.

Go to coursedownloads.com and download and study as many tutorials as you can before attempting a design. Smiling Goat's video tutorials and the various design techniques tutorials by Homeboy are very informative. Learning about libraries and how they are used in design is also essential. See [Intro to Library Use for Course Design](#) for more on selecting, installing and managing libraries. Tutorial can be found in both the Tutorials and Utilities page of the current site.

Using the Forums

Read the forums on coursedownloads.com frequently. Familiarize yourself with commonly asked questions and the responses given. If you have a particular question, use the form search and/or site search to try to find the answer before posting. Chances are someone else has experienced the same problem, and the question and several responses are already in the forum. If you do not find the answer, then feel free to ask.

Play to Learn

Take the time to play as many stock and custom courses as you can. Make note of proportions, plantings, hazards, textures, structures, and land shapes. Try the Practice Mode, which allows you to move from hole to hole and place to place on the course freely.

Real or Fantasy?

You can choose between recreating a real-life course and using your imagination to create a fantasy course. As a beginner, it is probably best to try a fantasy course as your first effort or two. Creating an accurate replica of a real course involves a great deal more effort and additional skills and resources. Even teams of experienced designers may require months of collaborative effort and hundreds of hours to execute a real course design.

Testing

Testing is a very important part of course design. You should be prepared to set aside time to test your course yourself many times. Make a checklist of important details and review each hole. Always test with the conditions set to Very Dry. This helps simulate more difficult levels of play if you are testing on the Novice or Intermediate levels.

Practice Mode is also a great way to test your design, due to the freedom to move around the course play from any point of any hole in any order.

Learn to use the camera commands in the game to move around and check details from several perspectives. Take lots of detailed notes and screenshots to refer to when you are ready to make the corrections to your design. When you feel your design is ready to release, submit it to Golfcart's Testing, or post a request for testers in the coursedownloads.com forum.

Graphics Files

Each course design for TW08 must include two graphics files. One is a course logo; the other is a splash screen. Each uses a different file format. Tutorials and template files for each are available at coursedownloads.com. A third graphics file for a custom flag can also be added, but it is not required. Refer to the *Course Design Software List* for recommendation on programs for graphics work. If graphics work is not something you are comfortable with, you may consider soliciting the forums for some help in creating these items.

Structures

Buildings and other structures add realism, interest, and character to your design. There are many custom designed structures and objects in library files available for download. You can find everything from luxurious clubhouses to rustic barns and sheds; there are tee markers, ball-washers, park benches, and much more. Tutorials and a free software program (GMax) are also available, if you are adventurous enough to try creating your own original structures to compliment your design.

Need-to-Know List

Here is a list of some key topics that you should try to look for and learn as you develop your design skills. You can learn a great deal about these topics in the various manuals and tutorials, as well as in the forums:

- ✓ Required and recommended software
- ✓ Required files for installation (course, libraries, text, logo, splash)
- ✓ Logo, splash, & flag graphics creation
- ✓ Libraries and library installation
- ✓ Course installation
- ✓ Buffer shapes
- ✓ Two-shape method
- ✓ Tee construction
- ✓ Bunker detail
- ✓ Green detail
- ✓ Flat water
- ✓ Cart Paths
- ✓ Structures
- ✓ Pano (panoramic background) and perimeter
- ✓ Point Count & Optimization
- ✓ Testing

Have Fun!

So now you are ready to begin. Don't forget - study those tutorials and manuals. New tutorials and resources are being developed all the time, so keep an eye out for new opportunities to learn.