The Starting Point
People who have never played golf often have misconceptions about the game. Combating these can bring more people to the game.

Head Professional at Meltham Golf Club Simon Race and his team set out to attract more people to the sport and the club. They wanted to develop a pathway that would meet the needs of new players.

It was crucial to create a relaxed environment for new members. Focusing on the social side of the sport was also important. Simon wanted to show people that you don’t have to be a good golfer to join a golf club.

He also wanted to promote the health benefits to people who had previously played other sports, promoting golf as a way to be active without putting as much strain on their bodies.

Making golf affordable was another challenge Simon and his team addressed. Delivering a Get into Golf programme was the obvious solution.

Getting more people into golf
Planning is essential

Simon started with a clear plan. This supported the development of a beginner pathway into membership. England Golf’s Club Support Officers provided a valuable sounding board, especially in the early stages.

Get into Golf sessions were carefully planned to meet the needs of different groups. The club offered 12 sessions each week. These include early morning, evening and weekend sessions on Saturdays and Sundays.

Communication is key. A club needs to listen to what people want to ensure it tailors the offer correctly.

Sharing the offer with existing members is also important to encourage them to promote and become advocates.
Meltham Golf Club
West Yorkshire

The Offer

- 5 weeks beginner coaching at £25 (1 hour lessons)
- 5 weeks improver coaching at £35 (1 hour lessons)
- Get into Golf Bitesize Sessions at £20 (quick 30-minute fixes)
- 3 months trial membership at £135
- 9 months trial membership at £375
- One year membership at £650

The cost of the sessions is low with equipment provided. This enables people to try first, with follow-on offers available. At Meltham, members want mixed golf and social competitions and these appeal to new players and members too. Getting involved makes them feel like part of the club.

The club hosts a regular Friday Fours competition, which has an average of 60 participants. Its Sunday Roll Up competition brings in 92 mixed golfers. It’s run by New Member Ambassadors and provides a positive and supportive environment where new players can enjoy a competition without worrying about making mistakes.

Different ways of promoting Get into Golf

The club reached out to current members using newsletters and promotional banners which are placed inside and outside of the club. This encourages them to promote the sessions. External promotion through social media is also used to raise awareness of the offer.

Referrals are an important part of the mix. By providing high-quality sessions they receive referrals, with bookings taken in advance for the following year.

Using the Get into Golf brand and marketing materials also created real traction as well as saving time and resources.

The results since 2015/16

- 275 people have taken part in the Get into Golf programme
- Generating over £100,000 from lessons & membership
- Full members joining increased to 41
- ANNUAL INCOME FROM SESSIONS & MEMBERSHIP TREBLED IN 2018/19 £36,470

Making the sessions affordable helps new people try the sport. Providing an improver course helps the transition rate, 25% of those who move to an improver course convert to the next step, which is a three-month trial membership.

Equipment sales at the club’s shop have also increased, with one family spending over £6,000 on equipment in one year. Food and drink sales are up and the social events it hosts are better attended, increasing function revenue.

Wide-reaching benefits

- Encouraging people to wear relaxed clothing to sessions has helped challenge perceptions about golf and the club.
- The programme has proved popular with those aged 45 to 65.
- Running mid-week classes has attracted more women to the club.

WHAT THE CLUB SAID

"Meltham's Get into Golf programme has been developed to meet the needs of the new players with a range of appealing and affordable offers as part of the pathway. New players are welcomed and integrated into the club and it is great to see that two of the major board competitions have been won by ladies that have gone through the Get into Golf programme, showing that quality coaching and a progressive player pathway works.

Simon Race, Head Professional at Meltham Golf Club"