

Custom-Fitted Clubs vs. "Off The Rack" Clubs

What are Custom-Fitted Clubs?

Clubmakers like to compare custom clubs to buying a tailored suit. Many people have been through the frustration of shopping for clothes, "off the rack." You can spend hours trying on clothes only to get more and more aggravated when the top fits but the bottom doesn't or vice versa. People are shaped differently.

An outfit that looks fabulous on one person can look completely different (and sometimes frightening) on someone else. The tailor will take the time to take the necessary measurements, determine your wants, needs, and make a suit that is custom fit especially for you. Anyone who has taken advantage of this opportunity knows the difference in the way the suit fits him or her. The finished product is made exactly for you and it fits perfectly!

The same is true for custom fit clubs. They are made to fit your unique swing characteristics. The process for custom fit clubs is very similar to that of the fitting for a tailored suit. The clubmaker will start by sitting down with you to discuss your current equipment, your game, your problems, concerns, your goals and whether you have taken lessons or plan to do so. The clubmaker will measure and evaluate your current clubs. You will then be asked to swing a club to determine your swing speed, tempo and transition, among other things.

The clubmaker will determine the appropriate shaft based on these findings and will offer you a selection of clubheads and grips that will match your needs. After you have chosen the clubs you would like, they will take ten or so additional measurements. The entire fitting process takes anywhere from ½ - 1 hour.

Your new set of clubs will be made to your specifications and will fit your game "to a tee." Usually a clubmaker will request that you report back after several weeks to make any "fine-tuning" adjustments. Your clubmaker keeps records of the specifications for each club and can replace or repair a club to exactly match any club in your bag.

Why Are "Custom Fit" Golf Clubs made by a Professional Clubmaker Better than "Custom Fit" clubs made by the Major Brand Name Manufacturers?

Very simply put...the same person who has seen your swing, determined your specifications and selected the components that work best with your swing is THE SAME person who will assemble and fine-tune your clubs. Any further fine-tuning can be done right then or weeks later by returning to see THE SAME person who fit and built your clubs for you! Nothing is lost in the translation! If a club is ever lost or broken, THE SAME person can exactly duplicate the original club based on their detailed specification sheet that was generated throughout the entire process.

I've Never Heard of the Brand Names of Some of the Heads used by a Professional Clubmaker. Are They as Good as the Major Name Brands?

Heads

The major brand name companies use the same manufacturers of heads, grips and shafts as the professional clubmakers. These manufacturers sell to two markets: the OEM's (original equipment manufacturers) and the After Market (component suppliers). Component suppliers (the "big three" are Golfsmith, Dynacraft and GolfWorks) decide on the name to be placed on the head as do the OEM's (Ping, Callaway etc). The quality of the heads are all the same, however, the After Market requires tighter tolerances on the heads because they know that clubmakers weigh each head and will return heads that are not within the needed specifications.

Shafts

Again, the same manufacturers will different color paint and screening of logos to meet the requests of the customers. As with heads, component suppliers require tighter tolerances to meet the discriminating eye of their clubmaking customers.

Grips

Same drill. Many of the same grips are available with different graphics to both OEM and After Market customers.

Is there any difference?

Yes, the quality of assembly. A professional clubmaker is a clubmaker because he or she loves making a perfect club. Assembly line workers stick and glue all day long, never see the finished club, nor do they have any idea who it is for, in fact, they probably don't even play golf !!!

Yes, in the selection of the combination of head, shaft and grip they will all work together to maximize the benefits of each swing. OEM's could never inventory all the shafts needed to truly custom-fit a golfer. Most clubmakers, even though they may not have a shaft in-store at that time WILL be able to get you just about ANY shaft on the market.