

USGA turns to GPS trackers in effort to shorten golf rounds

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Hundreds of thousands of golfers quit the sport last year, and it might be because the average game takes nearly 4 1/2 hours to play.

To speed up the pace of play, the United States Golf Association has begun tracking golfers across the country with pocket-sized GPS devices. The USGA hopes all of the data it collects will help the organization pinpoint strategies that [golf courses](#) can adopt to speed up the average 18-hole round of golf.

The "About Our GAME Project," as it is called, began last month and will run until the end of August. Eight USGA research interns who are spread across the country are conducting the project by each visiting about three or four golf courses a week. By the end of the project, the USGA expects to have gathered data from more than 200 courses and at least 20,000 rounds of golf, said Hunki Yun, the USGA's director of strategic projects. The research [project](#) will not involve professional [golfers](#).

"The time that it takes to play golf is a big problem. It's a barrier to participation," Yun said. "We're trying to reduce the time it takes to play [golf](#) and to improve the golfer experience on the course."

Golfers do not have to worry about an invasion of privacy as they will have a choice to wear the GPS devices. These devices will not collect any personal information or transmit data in real time. Instead, they will only track users' movements around courses and record data so that can

later be analyzed by the USGA.

"We need to collect data and research before we can develop solutions and implement tools that facilities can use to improve pace of play," Yun said.

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