

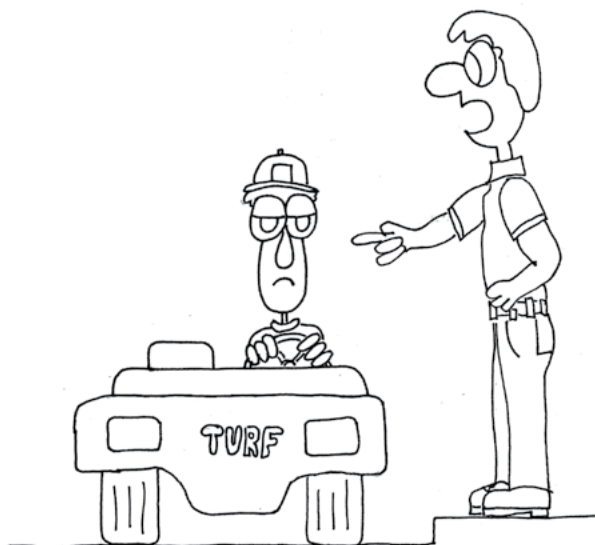
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Universal Translator

By Doug Breen, Superintendent,

I have always dreamed of having a device which could translate to and from any language, such that I could communicate with anyone, anywhere, anytime. In the wide world of science fiction, several solutions have been proposed. In *Star Trek*, they had handheld Universal Translators which did it in real time. When an alien was talking, everyone in the room heard the speaker's words simultaneously in the listener's native tongue. In the Douglas Adams classic, *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, there was a similar thing called a Babel Fish – a tiny fish which you placed in your ear to translate for you. Not my first choice. In *Star Wars*, they didn't bother to explain how everyone could understand everyone else (including the squeaks, squawks, and whistles emanating from R2D2) – because they had light sabers and nifty special effects, which distracted us from thinking about continuity, or the fact that every plot line is stolen from Greek Mythology. Naturally the humans in science fiction don't require such things to communicate among themselves; because in the future, everyone speaks English for some unknown reason. The villains usually have some type of vague European accent.

But here on present day Earth, not only do we need assistance to speak to humans from other places (they actually make devices and apps to do this now) – we often need translators to comprehend the utterings of those around us who speak the King's English perfectly well. Partially, it stems from the imprecise nature of our language. Partially, it stems from two decades of social media hobbling our ability to communicate with anybody face to face. Mostly, it stems from the fact that people seldom say what they really mean.



I scored very poorly today. Actually, I shot the exact same score that I always do. To be honest, my handicap went down half a stroke. **HOWEVER;** I will now explain to you why course conditions were to blame, and how it's **ALL YOUR FAULT.**

The result is the same – we often need help to understand what is truly being said to us in our everyday lives. In the Superintendent's case, what do golfers really mean when they say things? In the interest of crystal-clear communication – I have created the following compendium of common golfer complaints, coupled with their literal translation:

If a golfer complains that the “sand in the bunkers is too soft” – it means that he's been hitting it fat all day.

Similarly, if the criticism is that “the bunker sand is too hard” – then he's been hitting it thin. They probably bladed one or two over the back of the green.

The same will be said of hard or soft fairways.

If putts are consistently being made from below the hole – they will say that the greens are “slow.”

If a golfer tells you that the greens are “so fast that they are unplayable” – that golfer was quite likely putting downhill all day, because they kept leaving the ball above the hole every time.

When an amateur architect complains about the length of a forced carry over a hazard – they are really admitting that they are playing from the wrong tee deck but are too proud to move forward.

If one never learned to shape a shot left, or right, or both – the complaint will be that there are “unfair bunker or tree positions on the course.”

When a customer complains that the “cart paths are too rough” – chances are high, that they are driving too fast.

“I haven't seen the beer cart all day” – is an indication of poor planning, and possibly alcoholism

“The Marshall is a jerk” – you are probably a jerk. Funny how people who are unpleasant, always seem to be surrounded by other unpleasant people.

“The Marshall is harassing me” – you are probably too slow.

“The Marshall isn't doing anything to speed up play” – you are probably behind the group that thinks they are being harassed.

“The rough is too long and thick to play out of” – means “I can't hit a fairway.”

If someone says, “On my brother-in-law's course, the Superintendent does it differently” – get your resume up to date, they are looking to replace you.

I hope this list of common golfer phrases and their translation, will help to clarify things. ■