

RUNNING YOUR OPTIMIST QUALIFIER

Revised: 2/10/2026



Set your Tournament date and location by the end of January.

- **Complete the District Tournament Logistics form by January 31 and RETURN to the Optimist Junior Golf Department.**
- **Communicate with the Junior Golf staff if you are having trouble securing a date or course.**

If your District does not have a qualifier, junior golfers must go through the at-large application process or travel to another District to advance to the Championship.

If your District sponsors pre-qualifying tournaments, careful coordination and planning of these tournament dates is a must. It is also advisable to arrange an alternate date in case of postponement due to weather or unforeseeable conditions. The following factors should also be considered:

- Competing junior golf events.
- Religious or national holidays.
- School events, such as prom or graduation.
- High school golf schedules.

Choosing a Tournament location

Since most junior tournaments schedule their course arrangements months in advance, the question of where to hold your tournament must be answered as early as possible. As a rule, the more prestigious the golf course that is secured for the District tournament, the more golfers the event will attract. Holding the District qualifying tournament in the middle of your area's heaviest populated areas is also very important.

Recommended number of tournament days

District qualifying tournaments must be conducted using stroke play. "Stroke" play simply means negotiating the entire course using the fewest strokes.

All qualifiers can consist of 18 or 36 holes. **A one day 18-hole tournament is highly recommended as junior golfers play in several tournaments a year. Because of cost and their schedules, most golfers would rather play in a one-day 18-hole tournament.**

Ways to Register your Golfers for Your Qualifier

You can have your golfers register online or by an entry form. **Most golfers prefer online payment can set up through PayPal, givebutter or Venmo.** If you need help in setting up online registration, please contact the Junior Golf Department for assistance. Refer to the sample entry form in the appendix.

Promoting Your Event

Optimist Junior Golf Videos

A promotional video is available to help promote the Optimist Junior Golf program.

[Five Reasons to attend](#)

Qualifying Tournament Flyer

Publicize your qualifier at high schools, country clubs, newspapers, social media, pro shops, public courses and golf shops. Place qualifying tournament flyers at these locations early. Send out a blast email to your past participants.

Email and Social Media

Capture emails at your tournament and send letters of invite to past participants and high school coaches. Social media is an inexpensive way to promote your qualifier. Also utilize social networking sites i.e. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google+, and Pinterest.

Websites

Each District will have a page on the Optimist International website to use in promoting your event.

These pages are set up by Optimist Junior Golf and maintained by the District Chair.

The website will contain your tournament details, contact information, online registration (if applicable) and entry form.

Golfer Inquiries

Make sure you promote the following

- Advertise how many junior golfers your District will sponsor to the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship,
- What's the value of the golfer attending the Championship registration costs — make sure they are aware it includes golf, housing and meals.

If players have access to this information early, they will be able to plan and budget accordingly for the event.

The Optimist Junior Golf Department receive numerous requests on where local qualifiers are held. It is essential that we receive timely and accurate information about your event, including the date, location and age divisions offered so Optimist Junior Golf Staff can share this information with the person inquiring about your tournament. It is very important for District chairs to return all phone calls and emails in a timely manner.

Press Releases

At least three weeks prior to your entry deadline, send a pre-event news release to the media announcing your tournament. Include the location, date, contact person, entry fee and deadline for entry. Upon completion of your tournament, send a news release to include complete results and photographs. Submit news releases to local newspapers, high schools, church bulletins and other publications. Contact your local Chamber of Commerce to see if they can help in your promotion. Be sure to always follow up with a phone call. Refer to the sample press releases in the appendix.

Volunteers

Running your own junior golf tournament requires a great deal of planning and preparation, as well as volunteer help. It takes a team of dedicated individuals golf-enthusiasts and non-golfers. Volunteers can be recruited at Optimist meetings or by phoning potential helpers. The golf staff at your chosen tournament site may also be able to provide you with the names of possible volunteers. Remember you cannot do all of the work yourself. However, it is suggested that only one person handle all of the paperwork, including letter writing, entrant inquiries, receipt of entry fees, etc.

Rules and Etiquette

The rules of golf, published by the United States Golf Association (USGA) and subject to local modification, should govern play. All golf courses have their local rules printed on scorecards or posted at the starting tee. Your players should know these local rules before play begins.

Awards Ceremony

While your awards ceremony does not need to be elaborate or expensive, it does require careful planning and thoughtful implementation. Don't forget to thank the golfers, parents, golf course hosting the tournament, the volunteers and your sponsors. This is a great time to reach out to your audience about your local Optimist Club. Make a brief presentation about the Championship and how much you will be sponsoring per age division. Also, announce the names of the other golfers who met your District qualifying criteria and are eligible to advance. **After the awards ceremony, gather your winners together to present them with registration material for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship.**

Post-Tournament Responsibilities

After your tournament, remember to send thank you notes to the following individuals who helped you organize and run your event:

- Volunteers,
- Golf course management and staff and Sponsors

Information on the Championship

Prior to your tournament, the Junior Golf Department will mail official Optimist International Junior Golf Championship registration packets to you. Please read up on the information prior to presenting it to the winners so you can help answer their questions and explain what the District will be covering (if anything). **All payments to the golfer should be sent immediately to the Optimist Junior Golf Department.** Checks are to be made out to the Optimist International Youth Programs Foundation. Have them review the material and the online registration prior to calling the International office as that will answer several of their questions.

Member Recruitment

After your District event, send a complete registration list to both your District Governor and your District Membership Chairperson. This list should include the names of all players, along with their complete addresses, phone numbers and parents' names. This list will prove to be a valuable tool in recruiting new Optimist members.

Combining Efforts with Other Junior Tournaments

Districts with little junior golf history may want to contact other junior golf organizations to inquire about the possibility of combining efforts with one of their tournaments.

Explain the program and Optimists' involvement in junior golf. Make sure they are aware of the age divisions, scoring criteria, qualifier fees and what the benefits are for the golfer. Work with them to find out the best way for golfers to register. Also make sure you are a part of the awards ceremony so you can make a brief presentation about the Championship and what it entails.

Optimist Junior Golf logos

ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT

[HTTP://WWW.OPTIMIST.ORG/E/MEMBER/MARKETING6.CFM](http://www.optimist.org/e/member/marketing6.cfm)



Optimist Junior Golf Withdrawal Policy

Category name	Designation	Explanation	Report to <i>Junior Golf Scoreboard</i>
No show before competition begins	--	Those players who do not come to the tournament at all	NO Each organization handles internally
Disqualified	DQ	<i>Reserved for actual USGA rules infraction that occurs without a deliberate or managed intention. NOTE:FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR A TEE TIME AT ALL IS NOT A DQ. SEE "no show" below.</i>	YES + any official scores
Withdrawal – NEW!	WD (After talking to numerous tour officials, everyone agreed a WD is a WD. Relieves the tournament official from determining validity. Very limited JWD's .	<i>Reserved for a deliberate voluntary action or decision not to continue play after having started a competition and turned in a score.</i>	YES + any official scores
No show	NS	<i>Completed one or more rounds – fails to report for tee time and previously has not notified any official</i>	YES + any official scores
No card (worst action by player)	NC	<i>After having begun competition – a deliberate decision not to sign or turn in a card, walks off the course, etc</i>	YES + any official scores



DISTRICT TOURNAMENT LOGISTICS FORM

Submit report by **January 31, 2026.**

District Name _____

District Chair _____

Contact Information (phone and e-mail address):

Date of District Qualifying Tournament: _____

Golf Course: _____

City and State/Province: _____

Registration Fee: _____

Payment Details (i.e. "Make check payable to _____". Do not send cash.)

Registration Deadline: _____

Age Divisions Offered (circle all that apply):

Boys:	10-11	12-13	14-15	16-18
Girls:	10-12	13-14	15-18	

Please list any pre-qualifying tournaments and their dates & locations:

Other information:

Submit by email: golf@optimist.org



SAMPLE ENTRY FORM

Official District Qualifying Tournament for the
2026 Optimist International Junior Golf Championship
ENTRY FORM

TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

District: ABC DISTRICT
Date: JUNE 1, 2026
Location: MAINSTREET GOLF COURSE (ANYTOWN, USA)
Divisions Offered:

Boys 10-11 Boys 12-13 Boys 14-15 Boys16-18 Girls 10-12 Girls 13-14 Girls 15-18

A limited number of golfers in each division will advance to the international championship provided they shoot the minimum qualifying score. Please check with the District Chair for details.

Entry Fee: \$???.00 (Make check payable to "ABC Optimist District." Do not send cash)
Registration Deadline: ???
Contact Person: John Doe -- 555-555-1234 -- abcoptimist@sample.com
Pre-qualifying requirements: None
Notes: <Custom notes can be included here>

cut and return this section

PERSONAL INFORMATION (PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY)

Golfer's name: Birthday (cannot turn 19 on or before July 29, 2025):
Address: City, State, Zip:
Parent(s) Name(s): Home Phone:
Parent Work/Cell Phone: E-mail:

Division Applying For—determined by the golfer's age on (July 19 for Boys 10-11, 12-13 and Girls 10-12); (July 24 14-15 & Girls 13-14)and (July 29 for Boys 16-18 & Girls 15-18 divisions)

Circle one: Boys 10-11 Boys 12-13 Boys 14-15 Boys 16-18 Girls 10-12 Girls 13-14 Girls 15-18

WAIVER STATEMENTS

I certify that I am an amateur player according to the rules of the USGA and that all of the information furnished is true to the best of my knowledge.

Golfer's Signature: Date:

In consideration of my child's participation in the Optimist Junior Golf qualifying tournament, I hereby release the sponsor from any and all liability resulting from any accidents that might occur while he/she is participating.

Parent's Signature: Date:

RETURN INFORMATION

Registration deadline is ??????. Please complete this form in its entirety, enclose a check for \$???.00 (Make check payable to "ABC Optimist District." Do not send cash) and return to:

John Doe, ABC District Jr. Golf | 1234 Main Street | Anytown, USA 12345



SAMPLE
UPDATE TO FIT YOUR QUALIFIER

HOST SITE INFORMATION

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WILL ASSIST IN MAKING YOUR TOURNAMENT
A ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE.

Saturday 11/9, 2026 - **UPDATE**

FORMAT: 18- HOLE INDIVIDUAL STROKE PLAY IN AGE GROUPS:

BOYS 10-11, 12 13, 14-15 AND 16-18
GIRLS 10-12, 13-14 AND 15-18

PAIRINGS: ROUND # 1 STARTING TIMES WILL BE POSTED BY ____ ON

ALL OTHER ROUNDS WILL BE POSTED APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE PREVIOUS ROUND.

COURSES: 18- HOLE INDIVIDUAL STROKE PLAY IN AGE GROUPS:

- BOYS 16-18 DIVISION (_____ COURSE)
- BOYS 14-15 DIVISION (_____ COURSE)
- BOYS 12-13 DIVISION (_____ COURSE)
- BOYS 10-11 DIVISION (_____ COURSE)
- GIRLS 10-12 DIVISION (_____ COURSE)
- GIRLS 13-14 DIVISION (_____ COURSE)
- GIRLS 15-18 DIVISION (_____ COURSE)

PRACTICE FACILITIES: Complimentary Range Balls will be provided from sunrise to the last tee time daily on tournament days. Players wishing to hit balls after these times must arrange in the golf shop.

LOCAL RULES: Each contestant will receive a Notice to Players at their starting tee.

HOLE LOCATIONS: Each contestant will receive a Hole Location sheet for each round at their starting tee.

SCORECARDS: Each contestant will receive an Official Scorecard at their starting tee. Immediately following play please go to _____ with all players in your group for scoring.

- PACE OF PLAY:** It is vitally important that the correct pace be maintained by all players, **PLAY READY GOLF!** Rules Officials will monitor pace and issue Pace of Play Penalties when necessary.
- TIES:** Weather and time permitting, ties for first place will be broken by a sudden death play-off. All other ties will be broken in accordance with the USGA recommendations in Committee procedures 5A (5), Pg 400.
- SUSPENSION OF PLAY:** When play is suspended by the Committee for a dangerous situation, if the players are between the play of two holes, they must not resume play until the Committee has ordered a resumption of play. (Note to Rule 6-8b) If they are in the process of playing a hole, they must discontinue play immediately and not resume play until the Committee has ordered a resumption of play. If a player fails to discontinue play immediately, he is disqualified unless circumstances warrant waiving the penalty as provided in Rule 5.7b. **The signal for suspending play due to a dangerous situation will be one long blast of the horn.** If possible, mark the position of your ball with a tee and proceed to a shelter or clubhouse.
- (NOTE: Final day play will consist of two 9 hole rounds. If play is suspended on the final round and play cannot be completed by dark or because of a dangerous situation, the tournament will revert to the last 9 hole round completed by the entire division.)
- RESUMPTION OF PLAY** Once the Committee has decided to resume play, an announcement will be made to all contestants. The signal to resume play will be two short blasts of the air horn unless otherwise instructed.
- GOLF CARTS:** There are no Player electric carts allowed. Spectator carts are permitted at the discretion of the resort. They may be rented through the golf shop daily (Upon availability).
- PULL CARTS:** Pull carts are permitted in ALL age divisions - Boys and Girls.
- CELL PHONES:** Cell phones may be used to call for a ruling, check on-line scores or in case of emergency. Phones must be off or muted during play.
- CLUB STORAGE:** Any contestant staying on or off property may store their clubs in the _____ room. Make sure your golf bag is marked clearly with your name. **(CHECK WITH GOLF COURSE)**
- HOURS OF OPERATION:**
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Golf Shop: | 6:30 am – 6:00 pm tournament rounds |
| Bag Room | 6:00 am – 6:00 pm daily |
| Practice Range | Sunrise to last tee time daily (tournament round) |
- (CHECK HOURS)**
- TELEPHONE NUMBERS:** GOLF SHOP: (____) _____



Sample

Update to fit your qualifier

Check with Golf Course Pro at facility

Optimist

Location and Course
Date
Notice to Players

(This information supplements the 2025 Optimist Local Rules and Terms of the Competition. Disregard any course rules on scorecards or posted at club).

1. Tees - Each age divisions -- will play from the course color tee markers.
2. Out of Bounds- - **UPDATE** A ball on or beyond any paved public road (holes 8 and 9) or parking lot (hole 7) even if coming to rest on another part of the course.
3. Bunkers/ Natural areas- **UPDATE**
 - a) Bunkers are areas of sand that are prepared/groomed, fully enclosed and encircled by closely mown grassy areas. There may/should be a rake next to or near a bunker.
 - b) Natural areas of sand, prepared or not, without rakes are deemed to be part of the general area and will usually have a BLUE pole or stake in or near the area. You may remove loose impediments, ground your club lightly behind the ball and take practice swings touching the sand in these areas.
4. Penalty Area- - **UPDATE** is defined by the left edge of the card path and identified by RED stakes for the entire length of the hole. Players may play a ball provisionally from the tee on hole 3.
5. Obstructions- **UPDATE** Stairs leading into/out of bunkers are immovable obstructions. Vegetation/plants around irrigation control boxes are deemed to be part of the obstruction. Any decorative material around tee markers, benches, etc. are deemed to be part of the obstruction. Relief under Rule 16.1.
6. Pace of Play- The allotted time to play a hole is approx 15 minutes or 4 hours and 30 minutes for a round. See policy on the Optimist website or posted at Tournament Info Board.

Rules Committee

_____ Phone # _____
_____ Phone # _____

PRE-EVENT RELEASE

Pre-event releases should be typed on District letterhead and mailed two weeks prior to the tournament.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Date)

For More Information: (Contact name and number)

Junior Golfers Invited to Compete in (TOURNAMENT NAME)

CITY, STATE/PROVINCE – Optimist Junior Golf invites local junior golfers to compete in the upcoming **(DISTRICT QUALIFIER NAME)** on **(DATE)** at **(GOLF COURSE)**. The tournament is for BOYS/GIRLS ages **(LIST AGE GROUPS)**.

Top competitors can qualify to move on to compete in the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship at Trump National Doral Resort in Miami, Florida.

Boys 10-11, 12-13 and Girls 10-12 — July 15-20, 2026

Boys 14-15 and Girls 13-14—July 20-25, 2026

Boys 16-18 and Girls 15-18—July 25-30, 2026

(LIST # OF SLOTS PER AGE DIVISION) will be able to advance to the Optimist Championship as long as they meet the scoring requirement.

To register for **(TOURNAMENT NAME)**, junior golfers can visit www.optimist.org/golf and click on the “How to qualify” link.

For more information, please contact **(CONTACT NAME)** at **(CONTACT NUMBER AND E-MAIL)**.

(INSERT HISTORY OF DISTRICT QUALIFIER OR ADDITIONAL INFO HERE)

Each year approximately 600 junior golfers ages 10 to 18 travel from around the world to play in the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship. The tournament brings together some of the world’s most talented young competitors, many of whom have the potential to become leading collegiate and professional golfers in the future. To learn more about the tournament, visit www.optimist.org/golf.

Optimist International is one of the world’s largest service club organizations 2,500 clubs in the United States, Canada and Caribbean and throughout the world. Carrying the motto “Bringing Out the Best in Kids,” Optimists conduct positive service projects that reach more than six million young people each year. The Optimist Junior Golf program is one of the organization’s most prominent projects. To learn more about Optimist International, please call (314) 371-6000 or visit the organization’s website at www.optimist.org.



POST-EVENT RELEASE

Post-event releases should be typed on District letterhead and mailed immediately after the tournament with photographs and a complete list of results.

For Immediate Release

(Date)

For More Information: (Contact name and number)

Junior Golfers Perform Well to Advance to International Tournament

CITY, STATE/PROVINCE – **(NUMBER)** junior golfers scored low to claim top spots at the **(DISTRICT QUALIFIER NAME)** on **(DATE)** at **(GOLF COURSE)**. The young golfers qualify to move on to compete in the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship at Trump National Doral Resort in Miami, Florida.

Boys 10-11, 12-13 and Girls 10-12 — July 15-20, 2026

Boys 14-15 and Girls 13-14—July 20-25, 2026

Boys 16-18 and Girls 15-18—July 25-30, 2026

In the **(BOYS/GIRLS LIST AGE GROUP)** age division, **(1st PLACE PLAYER NAME)** shot a **(SCORE)** to take first place. Coming in second with a score of **(SCORE)** was **(2nd PLACE PLAYER NAME)**. **(3rd PLACE PLAYER NAME)** placed third with a score of **(SCORE)**. The junior golfers competed in a field of **(NUMBER)** players. **(LAST NAME OF PLAYER/PLAYERS)** qualified to move on to compete in the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship.

In the **(BOYS/GIRLS LIST AGE GROUP)** age division, **(1st PLACE PLAYER NAME)** came in first place with a score of **(SCORE)**. **(2nd PLACE PLAYER NAME)** shot a **(SCORE)** to take second place, while **(3rd PLACE PLAYER NAME)** placed third with a score of **(SCORE)**. The junior golfers competed in a field of **(NUMBER)** players. **(LAST NAME OF PLAYER/PLAYERS)** qualified to move on to compete in the international tournament.

FOR MORE AGE DIVISIONS, COPY ONE OF THE PREVIOUS PARAGRAPHS HERE AND FILL IN NEW NAMES AND AGES.

IF DISTRICT COVERS PLAYERS' FINANCES/REGISTRATION/TRAVEL TO INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT, MENTION IT HERE.

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