

INDOOR GOLF ALLIANCE

INDUSTRY STANDARDS

Indoor Golf Commercial Operator - Best Practices & Safety Standards

SAFETY FIRST · A BASELINE REFERENCE STANDARD FOR THE INDOOR GOLF INDUSTRY

Version 1.0

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*For adoption by simulator lounges, teaching studios, golf entertainment venues,
and multi-bay commercial facilities*

Purpose, Scope & How to Use This Standard

This document establishes a baseline set of best-practice and safety standards for commercial indoor golf operators — simulator lounges, teaching academies, golf entertainment venues, and hybrid retail/practice facilities. It is written to be adopted, adapted, and enforced by facility owners, franchise groups, and training organizations as the operating benchmark for the industry.

Safety is the organizing priority of this standard. Every operational, staffing, and facility-design recommendation below is sequenced and weighted with the physical safety of guests, staff, and bystanders as the non-negotiable first consideration — ahead of throughput, revenue, or guest convenience. Where a safety practice and a business convenience are in tension, this standard resolves in favor of safety.

How the requirement levels work

- **MUST** — a minimum requirement. Non-negotiable for any facility open to the public or members.
- **SHOULD** — a strong recommendation reflecting current industry best practice; deviation should be documented and risk-assessed.
- **MAY** — an optional enhancement that raises the safety or service standard beyond the baseline.

This standard does not replace local building codes, fire codes, ADA/accessibility law, OSHA or equivalent workplace-safety regulation, liquor licensing law, or manufacturer specifications for any installed equipment. Where this document and a legal or regulatory requirement conflict, the law governs. Operators should have facility plans reviewed by a licensed contractor, fire marshal, and insurance carrier prior to opening.

1. Facility Design & Physical Safety Standards

The single greatest safety risk in indoor golf is an errant golf shot — a mis-hit ball, a shattered clubhead, or a club itself leaving a player's hands. Facility design exists first to contain that risk.

1.1 Bay Dimensions & Swing Clearance

- **MUST:** minimum ceiling height of 10 ft (3.05 m) at the point of address, and 11–12 ft recommended for taller players and full driver swings.
- **MUST:** minimum bay width of 10–12 ft and depth of 15–16 ft to keep a full swing arc, followers, and any second occupant clear of the club path.
- **MUST:** a clearly marked, physically obstruction-free "swing zone" — no furniture, drink rails, trash cans, or decor within the swing radius.
- **SHOULD:** a visible floor marking or contrasting mat edge denoting where a non-hitting guest must stand or sit while another player is addressing the ball.

1.2 Impact Screens, Netting & Enclosures

- **MUST:** impact screens rated by the manufacturer for the ball speeds generated by the launch monitor/hitting system in use (commercial-grade screens rated ≥ 180 mph impact where driver swings occur).
- **MUST:** side and ceiling netting (barrier netting, not just the projection screen) enclosing the full swing and ball-flight envelope, with no gaps a golf ball could pass through into adjacent bays, walkways, or seating.
- **MUST:** netting and screens inspected for tears, fraying, or slack on a documented schedule (see Section 2.4) — a compromised screen is treated as an equipment failure, not a cosmetic issue.
- **SHOULD:** side-wall padding or protective barriers on any hard surface within realistic mis-hit range.
- **SHOULD:** screens and netting positioned with a minimum standoff distance from the hitting mat per manufacturer guidance, to reduce ball rebound risk toward the player.

1.3 Flooring & Hitting Surfaces

- **MUST:** slip-resistant flooring throughout walkways, especially near entries, spill-prone bar/beverage areas, and bay transitions.
- **MUST:** hitting mats with adequate turf give/rebound to reduce joint impact and rated for the swing volume expected (commercial, not residential, mats).

- SHOULD: mats and surrounding flooring flush-mounted or beveled at edges to eliminate trip hazards.
- SHOULD: a documented mat-replacement interval based on manufacturer wear guidance and observed compression.

1.4 Lighting

- MUST: adequate ambient lighting for safe movement between bays, restrooms, and exits, independent of projector/screen lighting.
- MUST: lighting positioned and shielded so it does not create glare on the screen (which encourages players to misjudge distance/screen proximity) or direct glare into a player's eyes during the swing.
- SHOULD: emergency/egress lighting on backup power per fire code (see Section 6).

1.5 Electrical & Equipment Safety

- MUST: all launch monitors, projectors, simulator PCs, and TVs on properly grounded, code-compliant circuits; no daisy-chained power strips overloading a circuit.
- MUST: cabling (power, HDMI, network) run and secured away from walkways and swing zones — no loose cords crossing a bay floor.
- MUST: equipment mounted (projectors, monitors, launch-monitor overhead units) secured against vibration and impact per manufacturer mounting specification, positioned outside the direct line of an errant shot where the design allows.
- SHOULD: surge protection on all sensitive electronics; annual electrical inspection by a licensed electrician for high-usage commercial circuits.

1.6 Ventilation & Air Quality

- MUST: HVAC sized for occupancy and equipment heat load (simulator PCs, projectors, and multiple bays generate significant heat).
- SHOULD: separate consideration for facilities offering food/beverage or an attached bar, per local health code.

1.7 Fire & Life Safety

- MUST: compliance with local fire code for occupancy load, marked and unobstructed exits, and fire extinguisher placement/service.
- MUST: netting, screens, and any decorative material be flame-retardant / code-compliant for a public assembly occupancy.
- MUST: emergency exit routes never obstructed by bay furniture, golf bags, or storage.

