

FIGMENT 2010 Minigolf Course Construction Guidelines

Disclaimer: This is a work in progress and by no means definitive. It is amazing what 4 months of exposure to the elements can do. This document is an attempt to consolidate and capture the knowledge gained from design pitfalls in years past. When you design your hole, imagine that it will be climbed on by 15 children at a time, kicked, walked on, and possibly hit with a golf club. For 8 hours a day, 3 days a week, for 3 months. That's just the human element. Grass will grow through open areas, and water will gather in low-lying ones. Out of 18 holes from last summer, 4 were still playable at the end of the year. Build for the apocalypse. Consider a modular design. Build it so we can use the piece again next year.

General Guidelines:

- All holes should easily support the weight of at least one adult or multiple children walking on top of them.
- Anticipate and plan for all aspects of your hole being used in unintended ways.
- Modular designs are the easiest to move to the island, install, de-construct and re-use.
- It will rain. Think about and plan where the water will go.

Installation/removal:

- Installation normally happens the weekend prior to the FIGMENT event (so, June 5-6, 2010, as the FIGMENT event is June 11-13, 2010). It will likely be possible to install your hole during the week, as well. Arrangements will need to be made for all installation with the FIGMENT Minigolf team and coordinated with Governors Island staff.
- FIGMENT will rent a truck to pick up and deliver your hole to the island. You are responsible to load and unload your hole from the truck.
- All holes will be on the island by Saturday morning, June 5.
- Think modular design. It is important to consider the transport of your hole in the design. It is ideal to have most of the major construction of the hole completed before bringing it to the island.
- Holes should be created in pieces that are liftable by a maximum of 4-6 people. Contiguous platforms connected with one or two screws work well.
- Electricity is available, but the course is at least 100 ft from the nearest outlet. You will be expected to supply all tools necessary for install and removal of your piece. Sharing of tools, particularly power tools is encouraged and can be facilitated by the artist listserver.
- FIGMENT does have space to store some selected holes indoors over the winter, but the pieces will need to be moved into storage.
- De-installation will occur in October 2010 (dates TBD). You will be responsible for either (1) removing your hole from the island, (2) moving it into a dumpster, or (3) placing the hole in FIGMENT storage. The fate of your hole will be determined in consultation with you depending upon its condition at the end of the season.

Materials:

- 2 x 4s are plenty strong for the base. You will need to build the base like a framed wall, with additional planks every 24 inches to prevent sag in the middle.
- A minimum of 3/4" thick plywood. Some composites are stronger than ply and you can get away with 1/2" thick in those.
- Screws are your friend, especially three inch decking screws. We buy them by the bucketful and will have them available.
- All wood needs to be weather-treated.
- Attach items with screws or long staples, not glue. Caulk will work for at least most of the year.
- FIGMENT will provide the PVC pipe and screens for holes, tees and signs to create uniformity.

Weatherproofing:

- Pressure treated wood is ideal: it is possible to seal the wood with 2 coats of deck paint.
- Drilling small holes in the platform for drainage before attaching the astroturf prevents premature wood rot.
- Platforms composed of 2 x 4s and covered with a minimum of 3/4" thick sealed plywood have been a successful basic model. Other models have worked, but care needs to be taken.

Maintenance:

- Please design your hole for durability. Our staff will inspect the course each weekend it is open throughout the summer (June to October). If your hole is in need of repair, you will be contacted to come out to Governors Island to make repairs.

Playability:

- Mini golf should be fun, not frustrating.
- Please design a hole that you can sink consistently in 2-5 putts.
- Remember that young children still developing motor skills will be playing.
- Highly pitched ramps are really hard—avoid them.
- You need to have a very clear place to start—people are dumber than you think. (We may be buying rubber mats to place at the beginning of each hole.)
- Balls get stuck in tubes. Always. Just say no. Nothing destroys a hole faster than kids pounding on the tubes to get out their ball.

Minigolf-Specific:

- Astro turf (from Home Depot or Lowe's) or outdoor carpeting make decent play surfaces. Plain wood is possible but the ball will skid around.
- It is recommended to attach astroturf with staples and caulk.
- You need to prepare a 4" diameter hole for the PVC pipe and screen to catch the ball. You will need to devise some plan to keep the pipe in place.
- We are considering having uniform tee off areas for each hole this year. We have not chosen the material, yet. We are open to suggestions and will inform you of the decision when it is decided.

Decorations:

- Small and or moving parts are likely to fall off and/or need constant repair.
- Paint will not stick to Astroturf, but works well on wood and other surfaces.

For more information, please write to minigolf@figmentproject.org.

To enter the FIGMENT Minigolf design competition, please submit your proposed design by 3/1/2010. Full details are available at <http://figmentproject.org/minigolf>.