

THE GOLF SIMULATOR BUILD PLANNER

Measure the room first. Price the build second. In that order, or you will buy something that does not fit.

Most golf simulator budgets break for one of two reasons: the ceiling was never measured properly, or the room prep was never priced. These sheets fix both. Work through them with a tape measure and a pen before you spend anything.

WHAT IS INSIDE

- **Sheet 1 — What it costs.** The five build tiers, every component priced, the running costs, and the room-prep money nobody quotes you.
- **Sheet 2 — Will it fit.** The clearance math for ceiling, depth and width, how to measure it properly, and the swing test.
- **Sheet 3 — Your room.** A blank worksheet: your measurements, your minimums, and the verdict they add up to.
- **Sheet 4 — Your budget.** A blank build sheet: line items, your prices, your total, and the running costs underneath it.
- **Sheet 5 — The component checklist.** What each part does, what to buy first, and the questions to ask before you pay.

BEFORE YOU START

- ☐ Get a **tape measure**, a **pen**, and a **club** — a driver, not a wedge
- ☐ Measure the room **where you would actually stand**, not in the middle
- ☐ Measure the ceiling **to the lowest thing in the swing arc** — joists, ducts, lights, garage door tracks
- ☐ Do the **swing test** on Sheet 2 before you believe any number on Sheet 1

Every number in this pack is explained in full, free, at golfsimulatorcost.com — no signup needed. The calculator on the front page prices your build by budget and room size in about ten seconds.

General planning information, not professional construction, electrical, or financial advice. Prices are typical US retail spans as of 2026 and move constantly — verify with the retailer before you buy, and check your own room measurements twice. Electrical work belongs to a licensed electrician.

1 · THE FIVE BUILD TIERS

Pick a tier and shop inside it. Mixing tiers — a cheap screen with an expensive launch monitor — is how people pay twice.

BUILD	TYPICAL COST	WHAT YOU GET
Net and mat	\$700 – \$1,500	Hitting net, mat, entry launch monitor. Numbers on a tablet, no projected picture.
Entry simulator	\$1,000 – \$3,000	Budget short-throw projector, DIY enclosure kit, camera launch monitor. Most land at \$2,000 – \$2,500.
Mid build	\$3,000 – \$8,000	Camera launch monitor, proper enclosure, 4K short-throw projector, better mat, PC. Where most home golfers end up.
Premium room	\$8,000 – \$25,000	Pro-grade launch monitor, pre-built enclosure, laser projector, finished flooring, paid install.
Turnkey	\$25,000 +	A room built by someone else and delivered working. Built-in cabinets start near \$17,500 and climb past \$69,500.

2 · WHERE THE MONEY GOES

COMPONENT	RANGE	WHAT DECIDES WHERE YOU LAND
Launch monitor	\$400 – \$15,000+	40 to 60% of a typical build. Entry radar and phone-camera units \$400–\$700; mid camera units \$1,000–\$2,500; pro-grade \$4,000–\$9,000; tour-level \$15,000 up.
Impact screen	\$250 – \$600	Standard polyester near \$250, silicone-reinforced near \$400, three-layer near \$600. Cheap screens ripple and ruin the picture.
Enclosure or frame	\$80 – \$4,000	DIY pipe frame \$80–\$150 in materials; cut-to-size kit \$400–\$1,500; pre-built cabinet \$3,099–\$3,999.
Hitting net	\$150 – \$300	Cheaper and quieter than a screen. The whole build if the room is tight.
Hitting mat	\$50 – \$950	Budget strips from \$50, popular mid mats \$200–\$350, studio mats near \$949. Your wrists notice this line item most.
Projector	\$400 – \$4,000	1080p short-throw \$700–\$900; 4K short-throw \$1,200–\$1,500; 4K laser \$3,500–\$4,000. Throw ratio matters more than brightness.
PC or tablet	\$0 – \$2,800	An existing gaming PC may be fine. Fresh mid build \$1,100–\$1,200; high-end \$1,900–\$2,800.
Floor turf and padding	\$200 – \$1,200	Basic turf \$300–\$600 for a 10 × 15 area; full turf with padding \$800–\$1,200.

3 · THE ROOM PREP NOBODY QUOTES YOU

Budgeted at \$0 to \$500 by most buyers. Lands at \$1,000 to \$2,000 in practice.

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|--|--|
| ☐ Dedicated circuit for projector and PC — \$300–\$800 installed | ☐ Garage door insulation — \$100–\$200 |
| ☐ Panel upgrade if yours is full — add \$800–\$2,000 | ☐ Acoustic panels or foam — \$200–\$600 |
| ☐ Ceiling finishing to reach a usable 9ft — \$1,000–\$3,000 | ☐ Paint and contrast for camera units — \$100–\$300 |
| ☐ Heat : electric heater \$50–\$150; mini-split \$500–\$2,000 | ☐ Paid install if you are not doing it — \$1,500–\$5,000 |

4 · WHAT IT COSTS EVERY YEAR AFTER

Hardware is a one-time hit. Software is rent. Budget **\$200 to \$750 a year**, every year.

- **Simulator software** — about \$250 a year, \$300–\$600 for wider course libraries. One major platform sells outright near \$1,000.
- **Launch monitor platform plans** — \$99–\$599 a year on some units, before the simulator software starts. Stacking both is how people pass \$1,000 a year in software alone.
- **Marked practice balls** — \$50–\$200 a year, plus club marker stickers at \$30–\$60 a pack on some camera units.

The five-year number. A build that costs \$10,000 on day one realistically costs \$11,500 to \$13,000 over five years. Price the subscription before you pick the launch monitor, not after.

1 · THE THREE MEASUREMENTS

Money cannot buy ceiling height. Measure before you shop, not after.

MEASUREMENT	WORKS	COMFORTABLE	WHAT HAPPENS BELOW IT
Ceiling height	9ft	10ft	Under 8ft 6in you are building an iron-and-wedge room, whether or not that was the plan.
Room depth	12ft	15ft	Radar units watch the ball fly and often want 14 to 18ft. Camera units sit beside the ball and work in tight rooms.
Room width	10ft	12ft	At 10ft you commit to one handedness and an offset stance. At 12ft either handed golfer swings centred.

THE CEILING RULE

YOUR HEIGHT + 2FT 9IN — and never less than **9FT**. A 6ft golfer needs 9ft. A 6ft 4in golfer needs 10ft, and in a 9ft garage will clip the ceiling on driver swings consistently. That is not a close call.

2 · MEASURE IT PROPERLY

- ☐ Measure **where you would stand**, not the middle of the room. A basement that reads 9ft 6in in the corner can be 8ft 10in where the mat goes.
- ☐ Find the **lowest object in the swing arc** — joist, duct, beam, soffit, light fixture, sprinkler head, garage door track. That is your real ceiling.
- ☐ **Subtract the mat**. A hitting mat lifts you 0.5 to 1.5in and comes straight off your clearance.
- ☐ **Subtract hanging gear**. A ceiling-mounted projector takes 6 to 18in depending on the mount. An overhead launch monitor takes a similar bite and usually needs to hang at 9ft or higher, so it is simply unavailable in an 8ft room.
- ☐ Measure **depth in the ball-flight direction**: behind the ball, the hitting area, and the standoff to the screen.

THE SWING TEST — DO THIS BEFORE YOU BUY ANYTHING

- ☐ Stand where the mat will go, holding a **driver**. Add the mat height under your feet if you have it.
- ☐ Make a **slow full swing**. Have someone watch from the side and mark the ceiling at the highest point the clubhead reaches, with painter's tape.
- ☐ Do it again with a **gap wedge**. Most ceiling strikes happen on the steep follow-through, not the backswing — plenty of golfers clear the ceiling with a driver and clip it with a wedge.
- ☐ Measure from the floor to the tape. **Write that number down** on Sheet 3, not the one from the floor plan.

3 · WHAT EACH VERDICT MEANS

IF YOUR ROOM IS	BUILD THIS	TYPICAL COST
Under the short-club minimum	Putting setup, indoor or backyard. A full swing will not clear it and no budget changes that.	\$100 – \$15,000
Too shallow or too narrow	Net-and-mat practice bay. Add a camera launch monitor when you want data.	\$300 – \$2,800
Tight but workable	Compact simulator: camera launch monitor, net or compact screen. Spend the difference on the monitor, not the enclosure.	\$2,400 – \$5,900
Clears every constraint	The full build for your budget tier, Sheet 1.	\$700 – \$25,000+

1 · WRITE YOUR NUMBERS DOWN

Measured, not estimated. Take this sheet to the room.

Room / location (garage, basement, spare room)	Tallest player
Ceiling, floor to lowest object in the swing arc	Minus mat height
Minus hanging projector or overhead unit	Working ceiling
Room depth, ball-flight direction	Room width
Swing-test mark, driver (floor to tape)	Swing-test mark, wedge

2 · WORK OUT YOUR MINIMUM

Tallest player's height	plus 2ft 9in
Your ceiling minimum (that figure, or 9ft, whichever is larger)	Working ceiling from above

Working ceiling is greater than or equal to your minimum? Full swing is on. Below it but above 8ft 6in? Irons and wedges, plan the room around them. Below 8ft 6in? Putting setup.

3 · THE VERDICT

CHECK	YOU NEED	YOU HAVE	PASS?
Ceiling, full swing	Height + 2ft 9in, min 9ft	_____	_____
Ceiling, short clubs	Height + 2ft 3in, min 8ft 6in	_____	_____
Depth, any monitor	15ft	_____	_____
Depth, camera units only	12ft	_____	_____
Width, centred stance	12ft	_____	_____
Width, offset stance	10ft	_____	_____

4 · OBSTRUCTIONS TO DEAL WITH FIRST

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Exposed joists or beams | ☐ Garage door track and opener |
| ☐ Ducting or pipework | ☐ Soffits and bulkheads |
| ☐ Light fixtures in the arc | ☐ Doors that open into the bay |
| ☐ Sprinkler heads | ☐ Power outlets and the panel run |

What it would cost to move or box in the worst one: _____ — carry that figure to Sheet 4, room prep.

1 · YOUR BUILD, LINE BY LINE

Typical ranges on the left, your actual quotes on the right. Fill in only the lines your build needs.

LINE ITEM	TYPICAL	YOUR PRICE
Launch monitor	\$400 – \$15,000+	_____
Impact screen	\$250 – \$600	_____
Enclosure or frame	\$80 – \$4,000	_____
Hitting net (instead of a screen)	\$150 – \$300	_____
Hitting mat	\$50 – \$950	_____
Projector	\$400 – \$4,000	_____
PC or tablet	\$0 – \$2,800	_____
Floor turf and padding	\$200 – \$1,200	_____
Room prep (electrical, ceiling, heat, sound)	\$1,000 – \$2,000	_____
Install, if you are not doing it	\$1,500 – \$5,000	_____
First-year software	\$200 – \$750	_____
Day-one total		_____

2 · THE FIVE-YEAR NUMBER

Day-one total, from above	Yearly running cost (\$200–\$750)
Running cost × 5	Five-year cost
Five-year cost ÷ 5 = cost per year	Your local green fee
Rounds per year to break even (cost per year ÷ green fee)	Rounds you actually play now

A \$7,500 build over five years works out near \$1,500 a year. At a \$60 green fee that is roughly 25 rounds a year to break even. Golfers who hit balls twice a week clear that easily. Golfers who do not, never will — and that is the honest test to run before you spend.

3 · BUY IN THIS ORDER

- ☐ **Measure the room** and finish Sheet 3. Everything else depends on it.
- ☐ **Fix the room** — ceiling, floor level, power, heat. Doing it after the bay is built costs more.
- ☐ **Pick the launch monitor**, one tier above your comfort. Buying entry, using it four times a week and upgrading within six months costs \$500 to \$1,500 net after the resale hit.
- ☐ **Then the screen or net**, sized to the room and the monitor you chose.
- ☐ **Then the projector**, chosen by throw ratio for your depth — the wrong throw puts you in your own shadow.
- ☐ **Mat and flooring last**, but do not cheap out: this is the part your wrists feel.

1 · THE COMPONENT CHECKLIST

Seven parts make a full build. Tick what you have decided, not what you have browsed.

LAUNCH MONITOR

- ☐ Camera or radar decided — **radar needs room behind the ball**, camera units sit beside it
- ☐ Checked it works at **your room depth**, not the marketing minimum
- ☐ Checked whether it needs a **yearly platform plan** on top of simulator software
- ☐ Checked whether it needs **marked balls** or club stickers indoors
- ☐ Checked **overhead units need 9ft+** of hang height

SCREEN, NET AND ENCLOSURE

- ☐ Screen fabric chosen for a **driver**, not a wedge
- ☐ Frame holds the screen **square and tensioned** — a rippling screen ruins the picture
- ☐ **Standoff distance** behind the screen planned in
- ☐ Side and ceiling **netting** for mishits

PROJECTOR, MAT AND FLOOR

- ☐ Projector chosen by **throw ratio** for your depth, then brightness
- ☐ Mount position checked so **you are not in your own shadow**
- ☐ Mat thick enough for **repeat sessions**, and it sits level with the floor turf
- ☐ Floor **levelled** — garages slope for drainage

ROOM AND RUNNING

- ☐ **Dedicated circuit** planned, by a licensed electrician
- ☐ **Heat and air** sorted for a garage or unfinished basement
- ☐ **Sound** considered — a ball hitting a screen at 150 mph carries through the house
- ☐ First-year **software cost** priced before the hardware is chosen

2 · ASK BEFORE YOU PAY

- What is the **total**, with tax, shipping and any install fee?
- What does it need **per year** to keep working — platform plan, software, balls?
- What is the **return window**, and does it survive being set up in a garage?
- What is the **warranty**, and who honours it — the maker or the reseller?
- Does it work in **my measured depth and ceiling**? Ask with your Sheet 3 numbers in front of you.
- If I upgrade the launch monitor in two years, **what else has to change**?

WALK AWAY WHEN

- ☐ The ceiling is under 8ft 6in and someone tells you a full swing is fine
- ☐ The quote leaves out room prep, install, or the first year of software
- ☐ A radar unit is being sold for a room with less than 14ft of depth
- ☐ The package price only makes sense with a subscription you have not priced

Stuck on a number? The full breakdown, the clearance math and the calculator all live at golfsimulatorcost.com. Free, no signup, no email needed.