



**USE OF GOLF CARTS  
AND LOW-SPEED  
VEHICLES IN THE  
TOWN OF DUCK**

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These two vehicles may look alike, but the regulations for their use are quite different.

# Golf Cart

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Statutory Definition: A vehicle designed and manufactured for operation on a golf course for sporting or recreational purposes and that is not capable of exceeding speeds of 20 miles per hour. N.C.G.S. § 20-4.01(12b)

Town of Duck Town Ordinance § 70.04 regulates the operation of golf carts on public streets.

The NC legislature has not granted municipalities the authority to regulate golf carts when operated on a private road.



In the Town of Duck, golf carts may be driven on public streets, where the posted speed limit is 35 MPH or less, except for Duck Road. Provided:

- The driver and passengers are properly seated while the golf cart is in motion.
- The seating capacity, as determined by the number of seats, is not exceeded.
- The golf cart is not operated at a speed greater than 20 MPH.
- The golf cart is operated in accordance with all applicable traffic laws and ordinances, including those pertaining to the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages.



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# Golf Carts in the Town of Duck

- Golf carts are subject to the same parking regulations as traditional motor vehicles and may only be parked in the same manner and in the same places designated for the parking of traditional motor vehicles; provided however, 2 golf carts may be parked in a single parking space.
- Golf carts may only park in handicapped spaces if the driver has a valid handicapped placard and the same is clearly posted or displayed.
- The possession of open containers of alcohol and/or consumption of alcohol by the driver and/or passengers of a golf cart is prohibited.
- The operator of a golf cart shall yield the right-of-way to traditional motor vehicles.
- Suggested Equipment: Two operating front headlights, two operating taillights with brake lights and turn signals, a rearview mirror, at least one reflector per side, a parking brake, seat belts for all seating positions, a windshield, and no more than 3 rows of seats.

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## Golf Carts Prohibitions

- Golf carts may not be used for the purpose of towing any person or object.
- No golf cart may be driven on the shoulder of any public street, road, or highway, or upon any sidewalk, multi-use pedestrian path.
- No golf cart may be operated by any person who is less than 16 years of age; however, the driver is not required to be a licensed driver.



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# Low Speed Vehicle

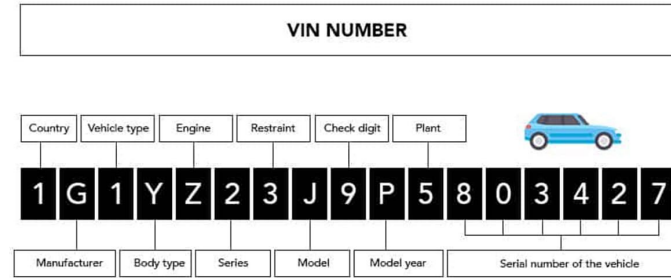
“street legal golf cart”

Statutory Definition: A four-wheeled electric vehicle whose top speed is greater than 20 miles per hour but less than 25 miles per hour. (G.S. § 20-4.01(27)g.

Regulated by North Carolina  
General Statute § 20-121.1.



# A Low-Speed Vehicle Must:



- Be purpose built as a low-speed vehicle, or modified to meet all National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, N.C. General Statute, and N.C. Administrative Code requirements for a low-speed vehicle
- Have a Manufactures Certificate of Origin.
- Have an affixed 17-digit and character vehicle identification number.
- Be equipped with headlamps, stop lamps, turn signal lamps, tail lamps, reflex reflectors, parking brake, rearview mirror, windshield, windshield wiper, speedometer, and seat belts. All safety equipment must comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 218, and 49 C.F.R. § 571.500.
- Be registered with the NC Department of Motor Vehicles, and properly display a valid license plate.
- Be Inspected annually for safety.



# Low Speed Vehicle Regulations

**CANNOT** drive on the sidewalks or multiuse pathways.

**MUST** be operated by a licensed driver (impaired driving laws also apply).

**CANNOT** be driven on streets with a posted limit higher than 35 miles per hour.

**CAN** cross a road or street at an intersection where the road has a 45-mph speed limit.

**MUST** obey all seat belt and children's car seat laws.

**CANNOT** be used to tow a trailer or wagon, unless also registered.



# Most Common Violations

- Low-speed vehicles driver by unlicensed drivers.
- Golf carts driven by underage drivers.
- Operation of low-speed vehicles and golf carts on the multiuse pathway.
- Failure to wear seat belts.
- Children and infants not in child safety seats.
- Golf carts operating on Duck Road.

## Enforcement Challenges

- The similarity between golf carts and low-speed vehicles causes confusion.
- The public often doesn't know which streets are public vs private.
- A seasonal population with continual turnover makes education difficult.
- Differing laws in other states.
- Inability to regulate golf cart operation on private roads.

