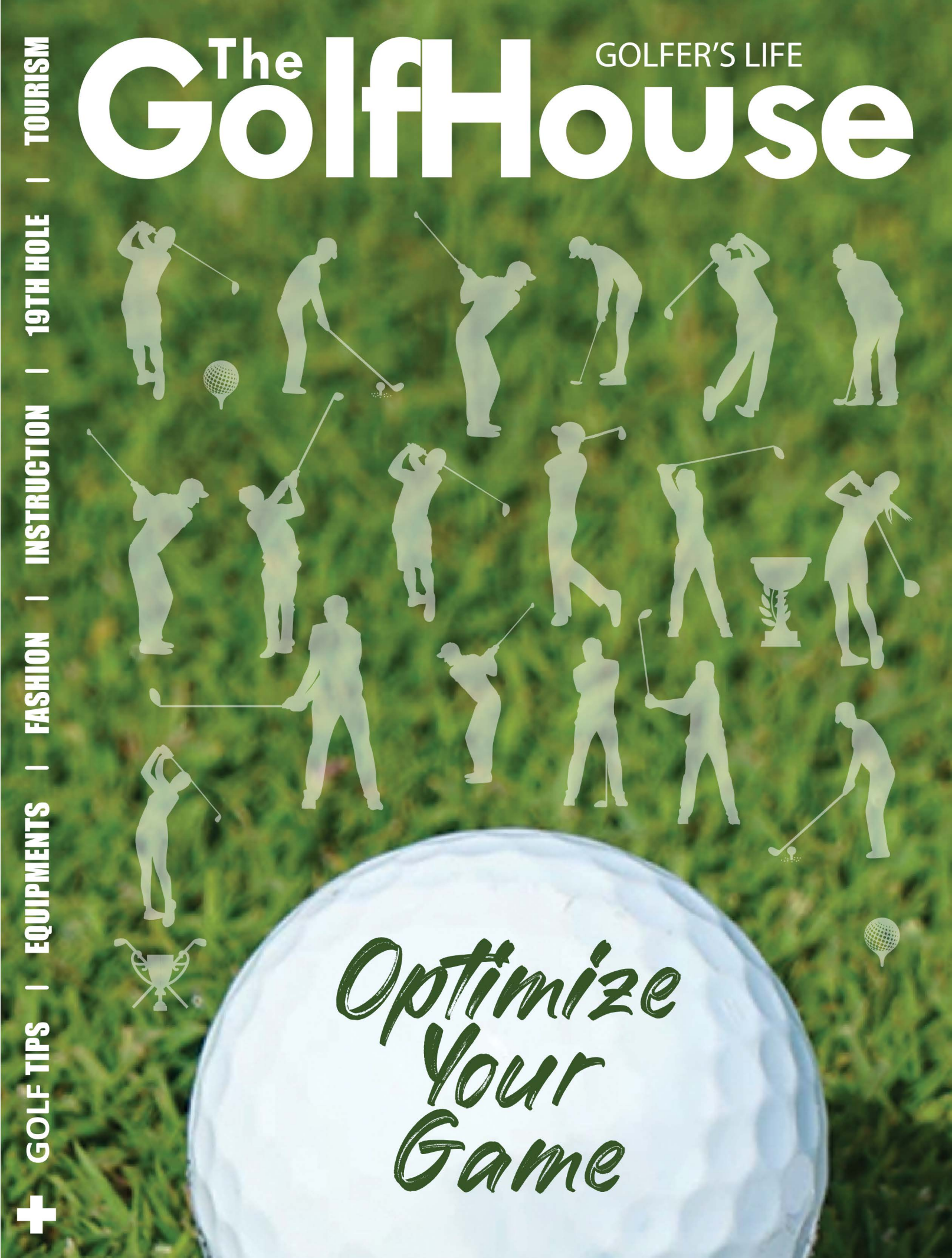
The GolfHouse

GOLFER'S LIFE

GOLF TIPS | EQUIPMENTS | FASHION | INSTRUCTION | 19TH HOLE | TOURISM



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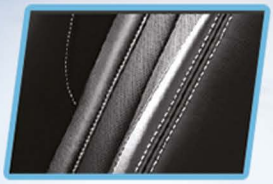

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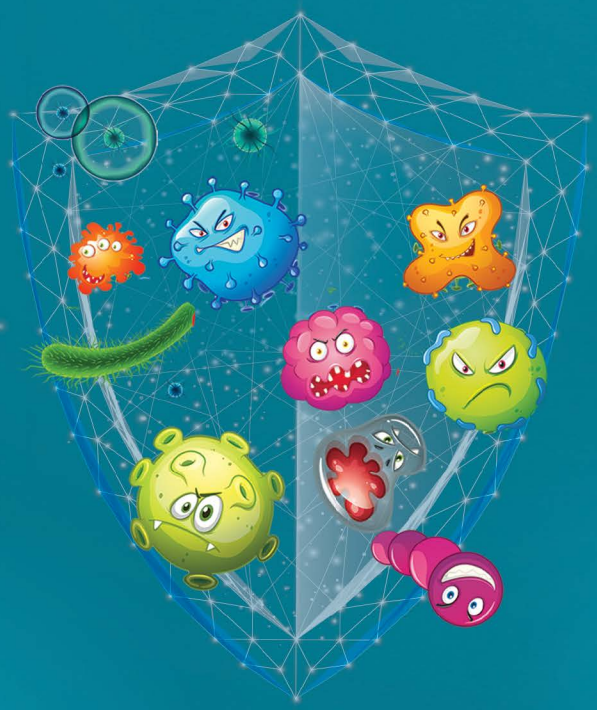

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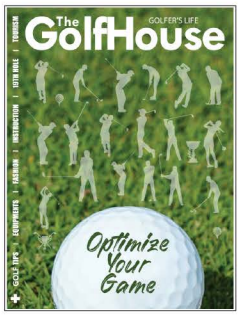

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The GolfHouse
GOLFER'S LIFE

> Whether you recognize it or not, you're always reading on the golf course: your putts, the wind, the lie, your opponent's reactions. Reading is, indeed, fundamental for a golfer on the course, but it should be off it, too



EDITOR'S CHOICE



It all begins with junior athletes undergoing a proper assessment on three levels: Movements Efficiency, Range of Motion, and Recovery and Readiness.

Forward

Golf tips and instructions advice can only take you so far. In order to truly correct a flawed swing, the causes of the problems must be treated, not the symptoms. A bad swing doesn't always mean that you're doing things wrong---it's just that your body isn't letting you do things right. By understanding and changing your body you'll be able to correct your mechanics naturally so you can take your game to the next level.

With the exact workouts used by some of the Tour's best golfers, as well as input and advice straight from the players themselves, this revolutionary golf-fitness book incorporates the latest in biomechanics research to fix swing flaws while strengthening the body's core and improving strength and balance to help golfers of all levels swing more like the pros.

Whether you recognize it or not, you're always reading on the golf course: your putts, the wind, the lie, your opponent's reactions. Reading is, indeed, fundamental for a golfer on the course, but it should be off it, too. If you're not reading any of the more than 10,000 English-language golf books that have been written you may be missing out on the most important reads of all.

But you don't need to read all 10-grand to feel how the majesty of the game has been expressed in elegant prose. TheGolfHouse has narrowed the list to a nifty top 23 articles, standouts that aren't so much the best ever but a well-rounded collection that every golfer should read for the combination of golf knowledge and instructions.

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STAY CONNECTED AND HOLE MORE PUTTS

HOW MANY TIMES IN YOUR GOLFING LIFE HAVE YOU SAID THAT IF YOU PUTTED BETTER OR IF YOU DIDN'T THREE PUTT THEN YOU WOULD HAVE HAD A GREAT ROUND?

I've lost count of the number of times it's happened to me. Unlike driving off the tee, putting makes up the most amounts of shots you score in a single round.

Let me ask you another question, are you guilty of hitting more practice shots on the driving range than focusing on putting before you go out to play?

Me too! We've all done it.

However, it's so important to practice putting before you go out to play, it helps you loosen up your technique, gives you a sense of how fast the greens are rolling at, and will give you confidence after you've rattled a few in the back of the cup. As the famous saying goes, drive for show, and putt for dough!

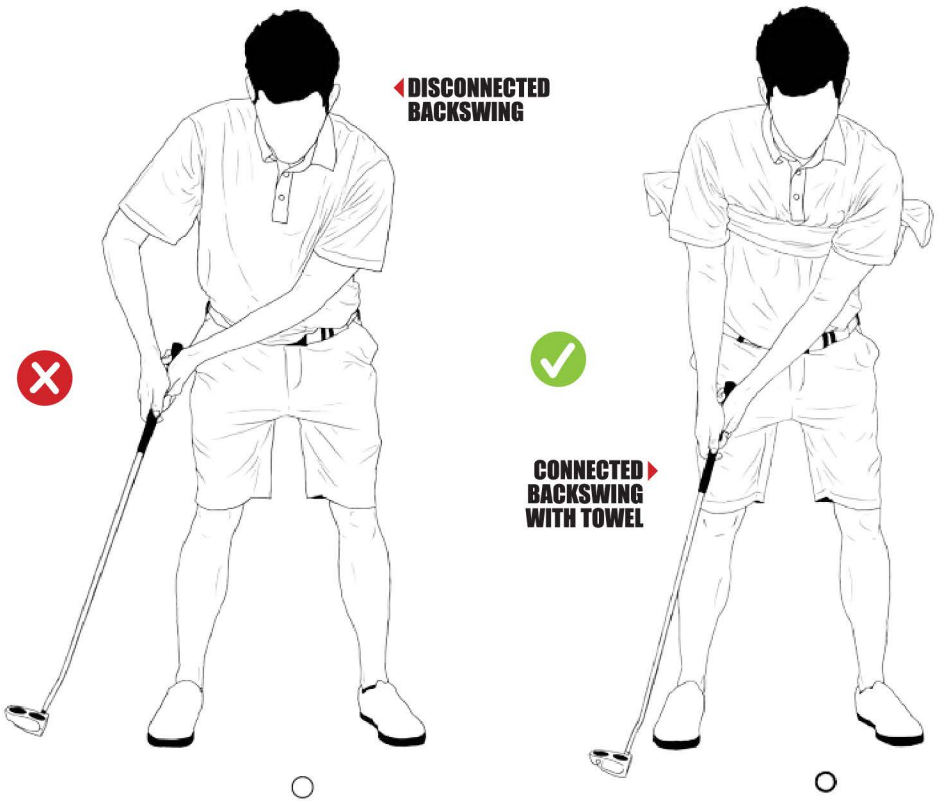
It's important to practice but more important to practice the right things, so here are a few helpful tips to get you started on becoming a better putter:

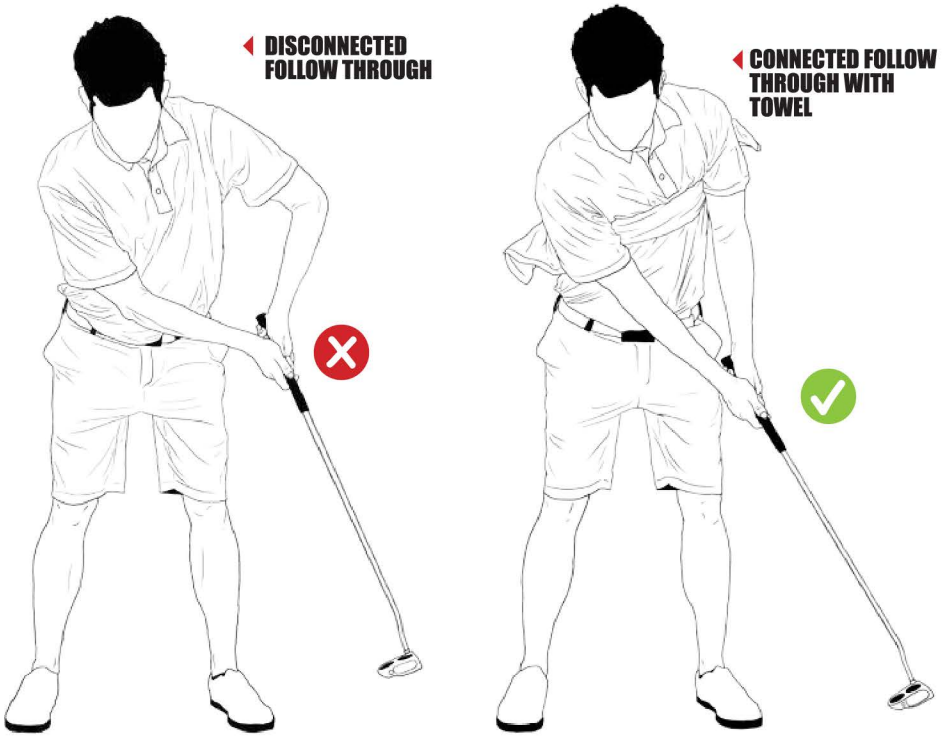


Illustration: Beks

Staying connected with your upper arms to the body is very important when putting, if you get disconnected then you will experience a lack of control of what the putter head is doing and will most likely drift off line resulting in poor direction and contact.

I see a lot of players in these incorrect positions and it will explain why they are inconsistent with their putting. Place a towel under both armpits, or one armpit to start. You should feel like your arms are squeezing against your chest.





"Staying connected with your upper arms to the body is very important when putting."

It's also important to have straight arms, but the forearms should feel relaxed when you're making your backswing, downswing and follow through. The hands should remain relaxed in a fixed position, with no hinging of the wrists. All the movement should come from the shoulders. This will help distance control.

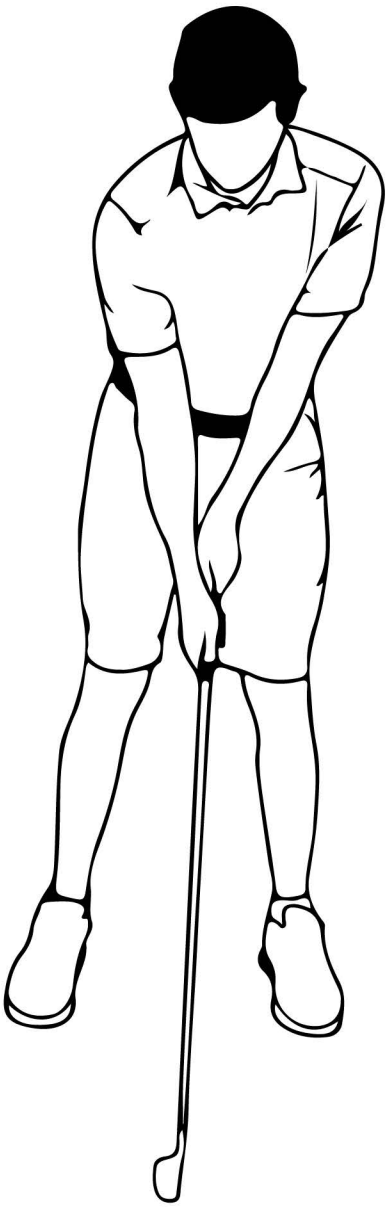
With this new feeling, try and control the putter taking it back and through on a straight line. Having an alignment stick or club will help you focus on keeping the stroke straighter and will help stop it wobbling off course.

Thank you for reading, I hope this advice helps improve your putting.

STRIKE IT PURE, SYNC UP YOUR ARMS!

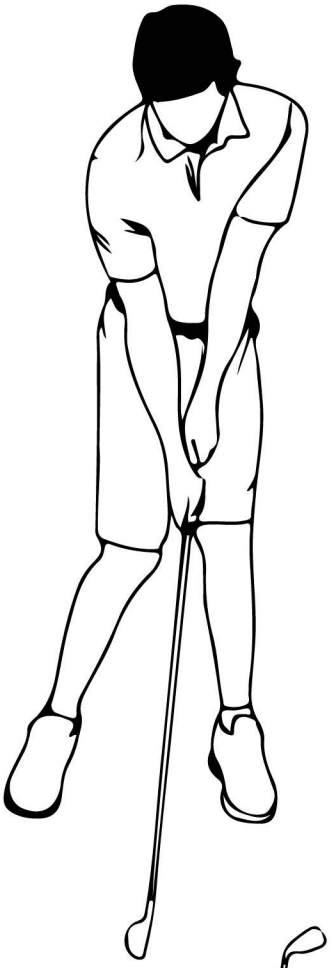
Focusing on improving strike to consistently hit each iron a similar distance and pin high more often, something that the top playing professionals do more often than not.

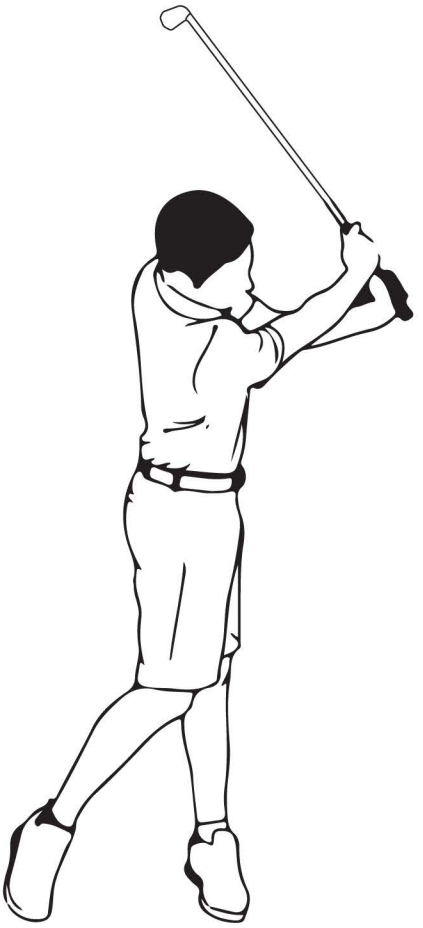
To do this we will be looking at making synchronized movement between arms and torso. Too often in handicap golfers I see poor strikes due to a person's arms working independently and without the torso helping and controlling the movement. Two great examples of inform players who have great arm and torso synchronization would be Francesco Molinari and tommy Fleetwood who have both had a fantastic season. Watching how these players have a very controlled look with their iron swings and how simple they make it seem. That's because the relationship between the torso and arms is almost perfectly together, something we can all learn from! Below I have examples of a couple of drills that you can use the next time you are at the driving range to practice.

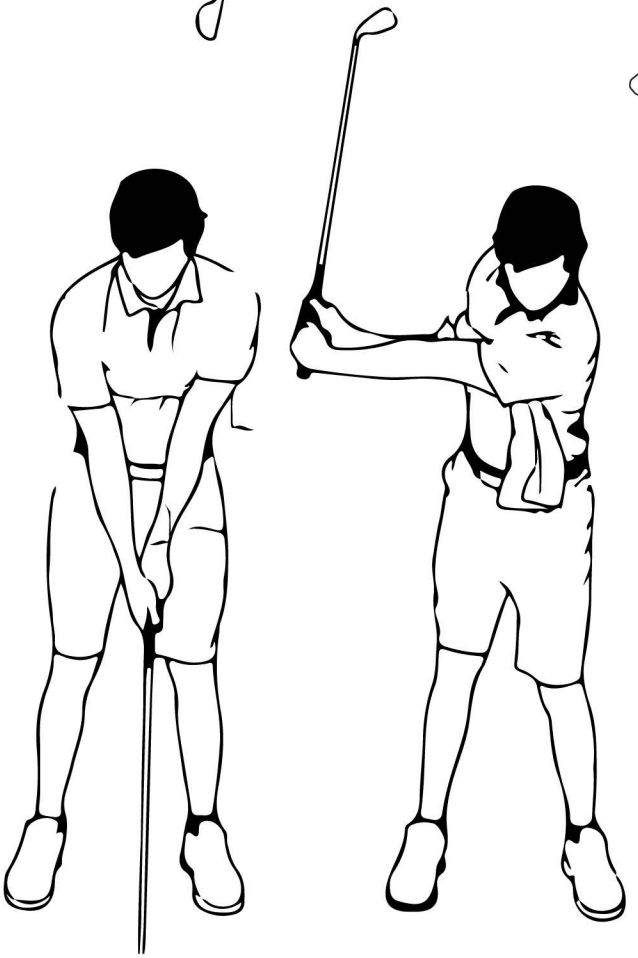


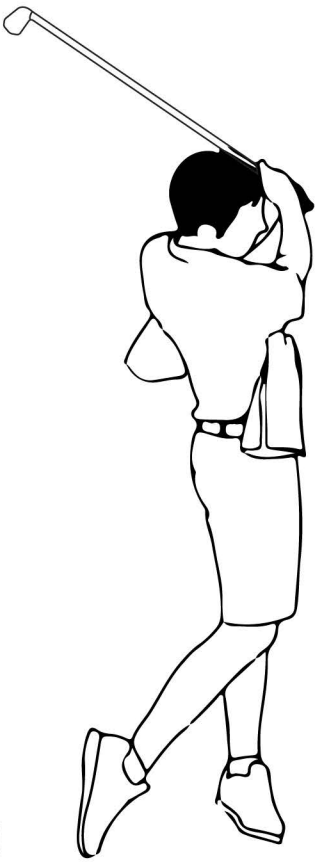


Drill 1 - split hands - separate your hands so there is a gap of 2/3 inches and then make some swings that will feel around 3/4 length.









Drill 2 - towel under your arms - as the photo shows place a small towel across your heat and under the arms. Again, make a 3/4 length swing back and forward keeping the towel in place.

Both these drills you should feel the torso turning and controlling the swing more than usual the arms shouldn't feel involved during these drills. Give it a go!!

A PLUGGED LIE SHOT

ALREADY FRUSTRATED THAT THE PREVIOUS SHOT HAS RESULTED IN YOUR BALL INISHING IN THE BUNKER, TO THEN IND THE BALL IS NOW PLUGGED, ADDS TO THE FRUSTRATION. MOST AMATEURS FEAR THIS SHOT AND DON'T KNOW HOW TO PLAY IT CORRECTLY.



BY: JAMIE



I'm here to give some simple tips to make this difficult shot easier.





NORMAL LIE SETUP

- Clubface open to encourage bounce and loft
- Feet aimed left to counteract the club aiming right and help swing out to in
- Ball position forward
- Wider stance
- Firm grip pressure

NORMAL BACKSWING

- Shallow swing, to promote a shallow angle coming into the sand
- Clubface remains open
- Strike the sand 2 inches behind the ball

AWKWARD LIE SETUP

- Club face closed to promote a more downward blow, helping the ball pop up and out of the hole
- Feet aim parallel to target
- Narrow stance, hands close together
- Soft grip pressure

AWKWARD LIE BACKSWING

- More vertical swing to promote a steep angle coming down
- Clubface remains closed
- Strike sand close to the ball: 0.5 - 1 inch behind ball.





Try to implement these useful tips in your setup and swing and you will see improvements, making this difficult shot look easy.

RESCUE ME!



Shakhawat Hossain Sohel
Professional Golfer, Bangladesh

THE RESCUE CLUB IS BIGGER, MORE FORGIVING, AND EASY TO SWING. IT'S VITAL FOR ANY GOLFER - PROFESSIONAL, AMATEUR, OR BEGINNER - TO HAVE A RESCUE CLUB IN THEIR BAG. A RESCUE CLUB CAN GIVE YOU DISTANCE, BALL FLIGHT, AND CONTROL. YOU CAN ALSO USE IT ANYWHERE ON THE GOLF COURSE.

There is no need for any golfer to try and smash their 3 iron or 4 iron, why smash it when there is an easier way to swing? The rescue is made to replace the 3 iron, for a more forgiving feeling even with a miss hit. Your rescue club will give you a better result compared to your 3 iron, with less margin of error.

People tend to mistake the rescue club as one of their woods. Actually, when using your rescue you should address it as you would for a 5 iron swing. The ball position should be centre left. The rescue needs more of a descending blow than an ascending strike. Making a little divot is normal. Don't be afraid of swinging down on the rescue, its loft will ensure that the ball goes up.

BALL POSITION





BALL POSITION



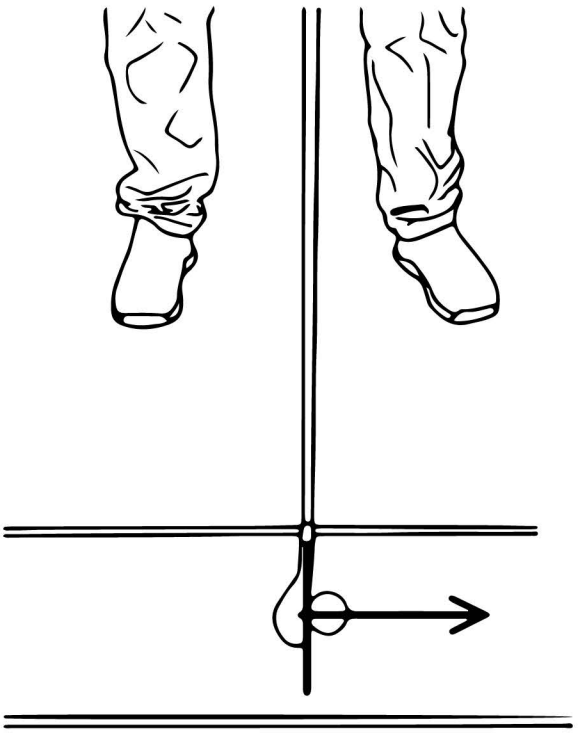


Illustration: Beks

BUILD CONSISTENCY WITH START DIRECTION

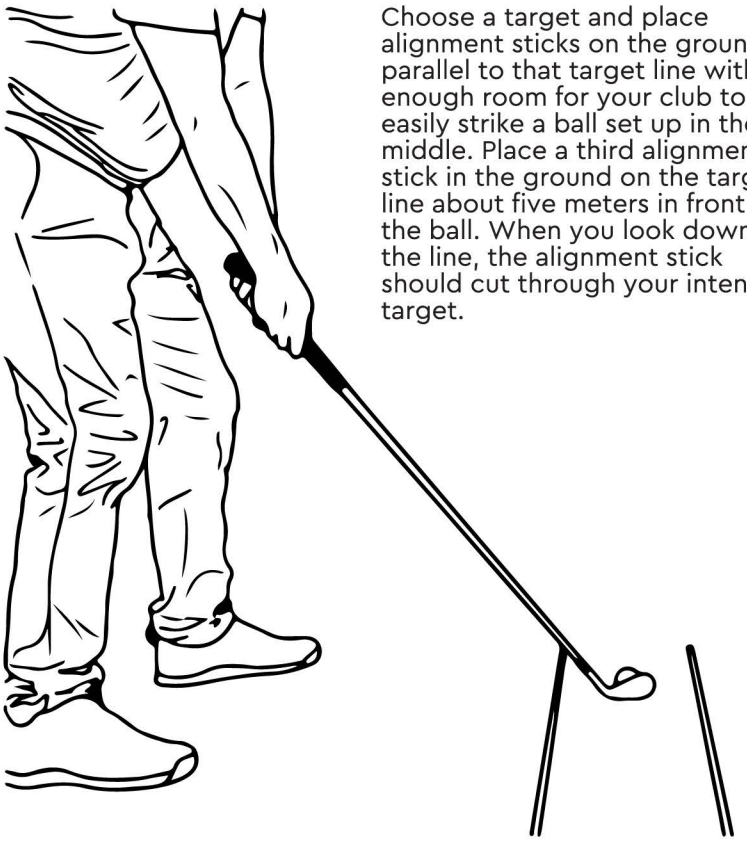
FOR THE MOST PART, GOLFERS WHO STRUGGLE WITH CONSISTENCY DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHY THEIR SHOTS CHANGE SO MUCH IN ONE SINGLE ROUND. MANY PLAYERS OFTEN INCORRECTLY DIAGNOSE THE REASON WHY THEY HIT A WAYWARD SHOT AND MAKE THE MISTAKE OF TRYING TO CORRECT IT DURING THE ROUND.

Let's make it simpler! The first step to understanding consistency is to understand that starting direction is majorly influenced by clubface angle at impact and is usually the culprit for lack of consistency. Today's tip is about a practice drill to help you control you're starting direction and simply diagnose whether your clubface control is causing your problems with consistency



STEP 1 - SETTING UP THE DRILL

Choose a target and place alignment sticks on the ground parallel to that target line with enough room for your club to easily strike a ball set up in the middle. Place a third alignment stick in the ground on the target line about five meters in front of the ball. When you look down the line, the alignment stick should cut through your intended target.



Step 2 - Getting Ready to Hit Balls

Setup square with your intended target, making sure that your clubface is perpendicular. Keep in mind, while the setup is important, this drill is diagnosing what happens at impact.



Step 3 - Hit Five Shots

Take five shots and let your focus for each shot be specifically on keeping the clubface square at impact. If you have success the ball should fly directly over the alignment stick on your target line.

THINK BOX

After hitting your five shots, be honest to yourself about whether your ball started straight. Don't be distracted if your ball curved left or right (this is related to path and not what this drill is focused on). If you were able to maintain a consistent clubface at impact, you probably saw the same ball flight five times in a row. This means it's time to calibrate your alignment.



Step 4 - Remove the Alignment Sticks of the Ground.

If in the previous step you faded the ball, now realign so that you feel like you are setting up left. Start your clubface left of the targetline and your ball should naturally fade back to your target. Do the opposites direction for the same steps if you were drawing the ball in the previous step. For those of you who hit straight bullets, keep yourself Set Square. Continue your practice and you should begin to see consistent shots and learn how to align to your target.

While some people are happy to have consistency in their shots, others have a specific shape in mind. This exercise is designed to cater to your swing, however, if you want to see a specific shape with your shots, come down and see me at the Leadbetter Academy in Bali. With the combination of Trackman technology and the Leadbetter philosophy we will have you producing the shots that you want to see and help you improve your game!

PUSH OR PULL

For many golfers, adding distance is always an important element when trying to improve their game. Different parts of the golf swing can help to add club speed, from the way in which your body rotates and unwinds, to how you hold the club and even the position of the ball.

A very important element is what you do with the club at the start of your downswing. For 90% of my students, they need to feel like they are pulling on the club in transition, this helps them load the club correctly and also helps to shallow the shaft which is required to be able to hit a draw and maximize clubhead speed. For the other 10% of my students, they need to feel like they are pushing the club in transition, these are students who struggle with hitting the ball too low and do not release the club correctly. If you are someone who hits the ball too low, especially with your driver, then this is a great feeling for you.

Hands forward

WHO SHOULD PULL?

Anyone who:

- Needs distance
- Wants to improve compression on impact
- Wants to hit a draw

Feels like this on impact:



Hands Back

Who should push?

Anyone who:

- Wants to hit their driver higher
- Is struggling to release the club on impact
- Juniors whose clubs are too heavy and long for them

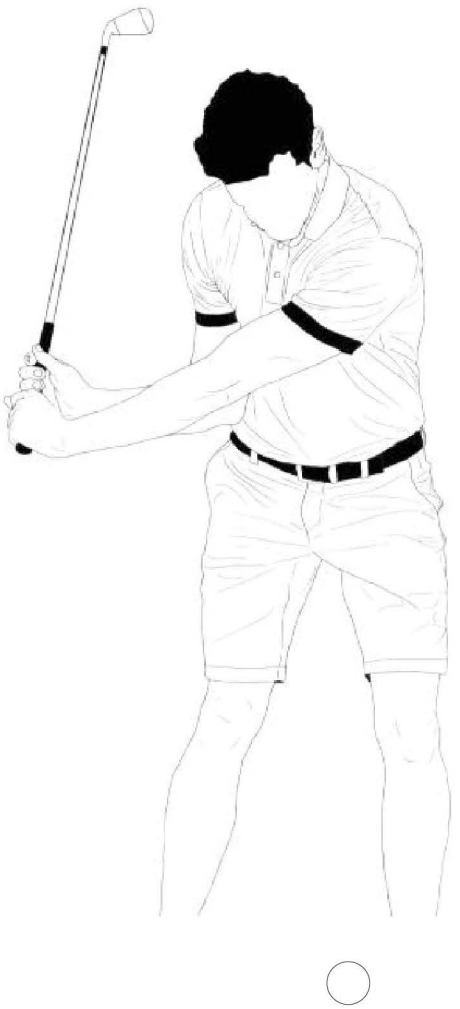
Feels like this on impact:



Take a video of yourself face on and see which image is closer to you at impact. Then, make some practice swings and focus on whether you feel like you pull or push the club in the transition from backswing to downswing.

Here is how you should look at the start of your downswing

Pull



Push



HOW TO HIT SOLID IRON SHOTS

MOST BEGINNERS HAVE DIFFICULTY HITTING THEIR IRONS SOLIDLY, AS A RESULT THEY TEND TO LOSE DISTANCE, TOPPING OR HITTING THE GROUND BEHIND THE BALL. THE ISSUES GET WORSE THE LONGER THE IRON.

First of all, we need to understand that each iron is designed with different lofts and they are designed to make the ball fly up through the air.

The most common fault is we tend to cast the golf club in an effort to make the ball fly up in the air but this will result in a poor impact and reduced distance.



MOVE AT IMPACT

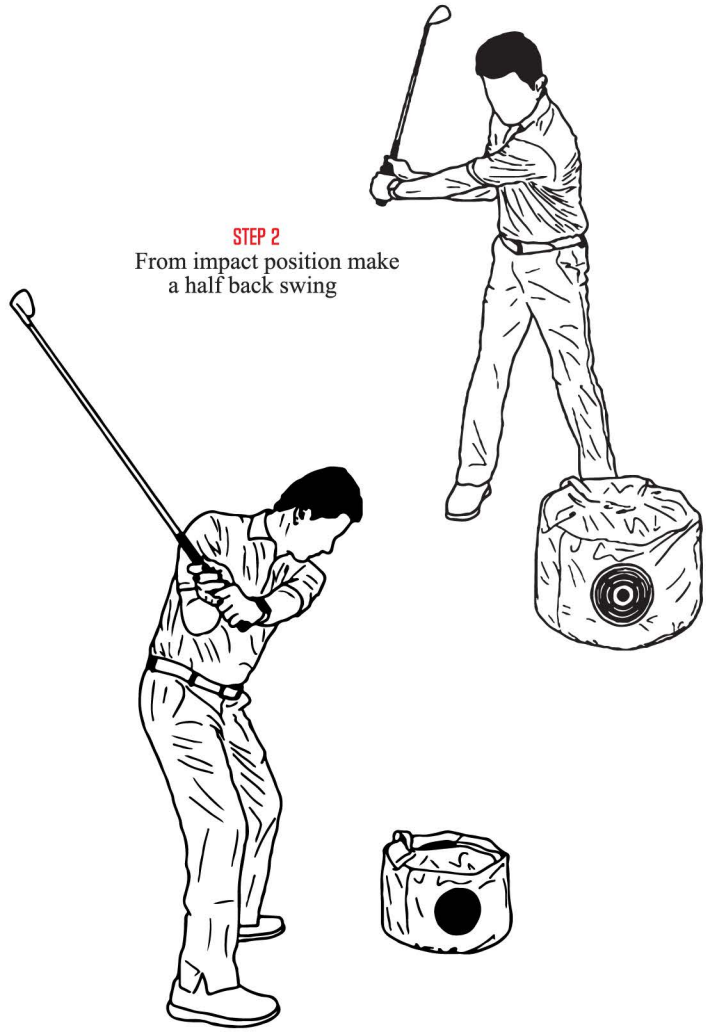
HERE ARE SOME STEPS TO GET IN TO A GOOD IMPACT POSITION WITH THE HELP OF IMPACT BAG.

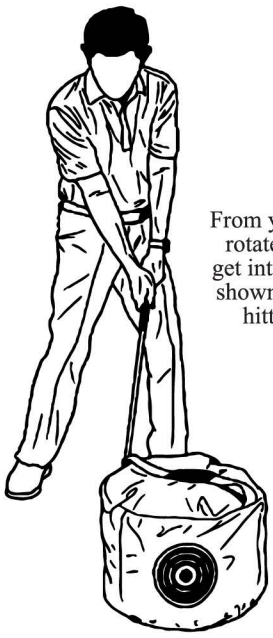


STEP 1
Get into an impact position at the beginning



STEP 2
From impact position make a half back swing





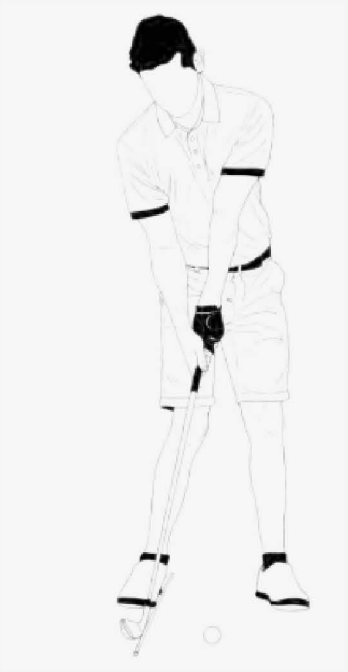
STEP 3
From your half swing position rotate your lower body to get into the impact position as shown on step 1 above while hitting the impact bag.

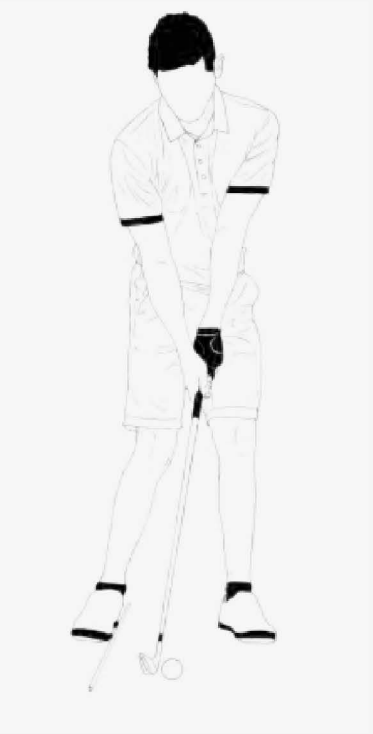


This will train your lower body to start the downswing in the correct position for impact with your hips and shoulders open to the target and shaft leaning forward. Most of your weight is on your lead foot, while your are making contact with the impact bag. Once you get the feeling, try to hit some golf balls with half swing then with a full swing. Happy golfing!

COMPRESSING YOUR IRONS

Are you driving the ball better than ever but struggling with striking your irons and hitting the ball close enough? There are a couple of "go to" check points for your irons. You should evaluate the low point of the club: is the club hitting the ground before the ball? If so, this is one area we can improve right away. The next point is to check is the trajectory of the ball flight: if you are struggling with distance or shots into the wind you will generally see the ball trajectory going too high.



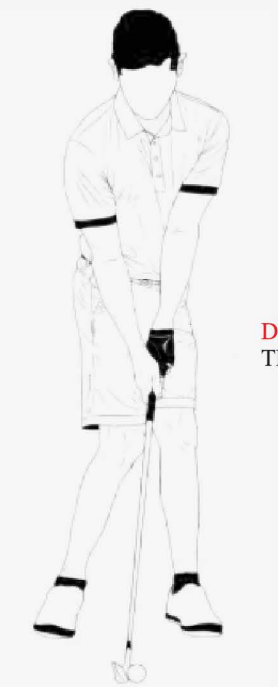


ANGLE OF ATTACK

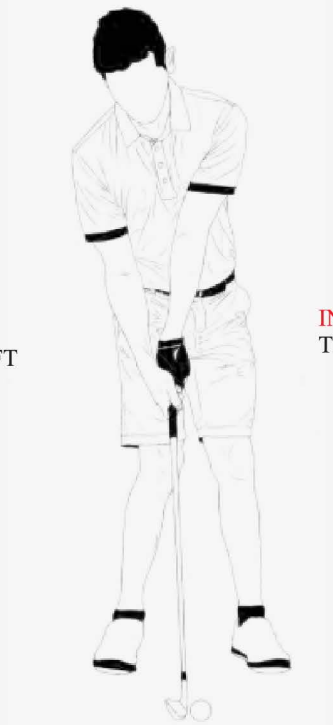
One of the differences between hitting driver and iron shots is the angle of attack. With a driver, you are trying to hit the ball on the upswing, whilst to be a good iron player you need to be able to hit the ball on the down-swing. The club - head should be hitting the ball and then interacting with the ground. It may sound obvious but so many golfers struggle with this concept and fail to strike the ball well to gain the distance they desire. Below is a quick drill you can use next time you are at the driving range.

DYNAMIC LOFT

You may be striking the ball well but still losing distance and struggling against the wind. Ask yourself, are you able to control the loft of the golf club as you hit the ball and can you deloft the club at impact? Dynamic Loft This is an important skill. PGA Tour players de-loft a mid-iron at impact on average around 8 to 10 degrees from the static iron loft. Having the skill to provide less loft onto the club at impact should see you lower the ball flight and be able to control the shots into the wind and side winds.



DECREASING
THE CLUB LOFT



INCREASING
THE CLUB LOFT

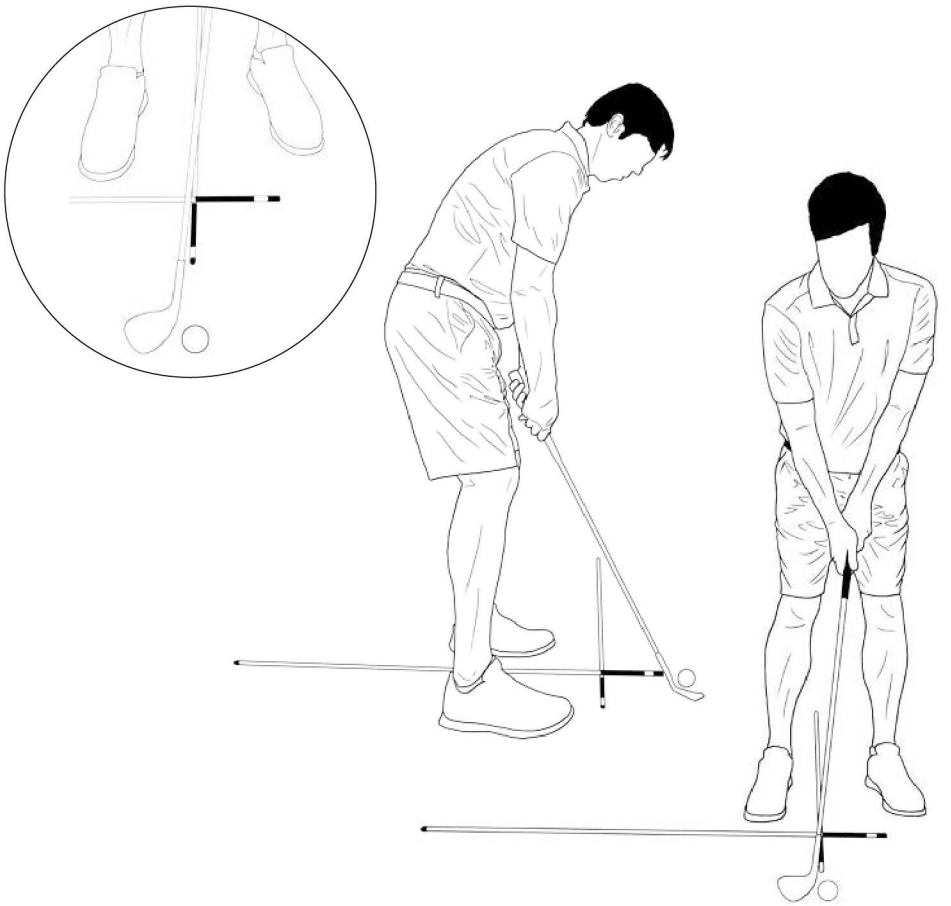
HOW TO PLAY FROM THE ROUGH AROUND THE GREEN

The rough makes the golf course more challenging and more beautiful. But if your ball is in it, it's much less pleasant. Therefore, it's important to know what to do.

Shots from the rough around greens can be difficult, but if you use the correct technique they are manageable

JUDGE THE LIE

How thick is the grass? How far down in the grass is the ball sitting? What's behind the ball? Which way is the grass growing? It's important to first judge the lie of the ball. Take a few practice swings to feel the resistance of the grass.



NESTLED IN ROUGH

When your ball is sitting down in the grass, you have to move the clubface more steeply to the ground and use a club with a lot, or at least enough loft to be able to get the ball out of it. If the angle of attack is too flat, the club will first grab the grass before the ball is hit. The clubface then often closes and the ball will come out left of target, or worst still all the speed will be lost and the ball will stay in the rough.

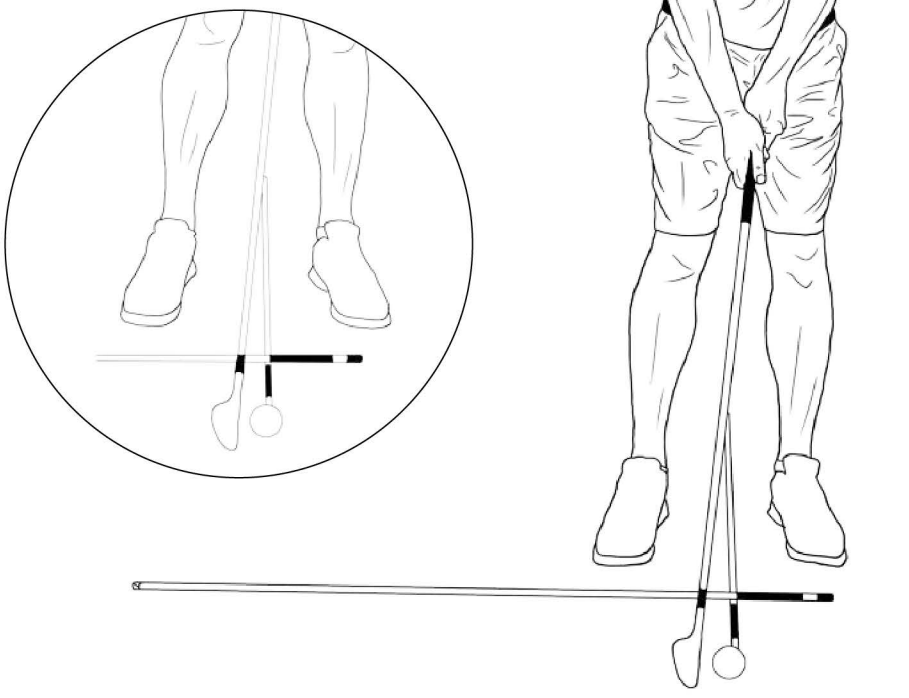
WHAT TO DO FROM THIS POSITION?

- Use a more lofted club
- Setup with the ball further back in your stance to improve ball contact
- Place your weight more to the left to promote a steeper approach
- Open the clubface to add more loft and prevent the clubface from closing
- Position of the body slightly to the left of the target (open)
- Quite a lot of wrist hinge on the way back
- Maintain club speed into impact



SITTING ON TOP OF THE ROUGH
The ball sitting up on the grass might appear easier, however you need to be careful with the way you play it. Because the ball is on top of the rough, chances are that you will go underneath the golf ball. The amount of grass between the club and the ball and the amount of backspin on the ball decreases considerably so there is more role on the ball.

WHAT TO DO FROM THIS POSITION?
- Take a club with sufficient loft
- Stand with a relatively square setup
- Place the ball in the middle of your stand
- Weight more to the left
- Keep the clubface square
- Hands are not too much before the ball
- Less wrist hinge on the way back
- Let the club do the job of hitting the ball (not aggressively)

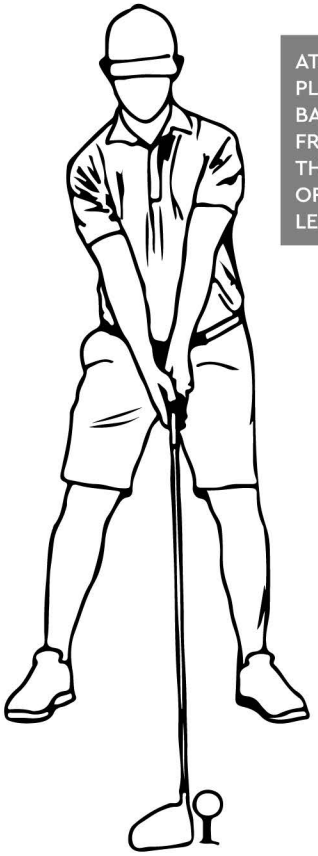


CONCLUSION
If you are in the rough, make the right decision by looking carefully at what your options are and stay calm. The more experience you have, the better you can deal with this type of location. So play a lot and practice more often from the rough.

OPTIMISE YOUR DRIVER DISTANCE

IN THE GAME OF GOLF WE ARE CONSTANTLY LOOKING TO FIND THOSE FEW EXTRA YARDS THAT MIGHT HELP US HAVE A SHORTER DISTANCE IN FOR OUR SECOND SHOTS.

Our driver is the club that brings us joy when it's struck well. It's interesting just how many golfers have a good idea of how to hit the driver yet miss the small details that make it possible to get the little bit of extradistance that we know is possible. You probably know that for driver, the ball position is slightly ahead of the regular position of an iron shot, and due to fact that the ball is resting on a tee, we actually strike the ball more efficiently when we strike with an ascending blow. With that said, I see lots of players place their ball in a good position relative to their stance but they then change their body position and sometimes their hand position in ways that make it very difficult to achieve the correct strike. To fix this, make sure the position of your body and hands are correct at address and use a simple towel drill to build awareness of how to strike the ball in the correct moment of the swing arc.



AT ADDRESS, PLACE THE BALL IN THE FRONT OF THE STANCE OFF THE LEAD FOOT.

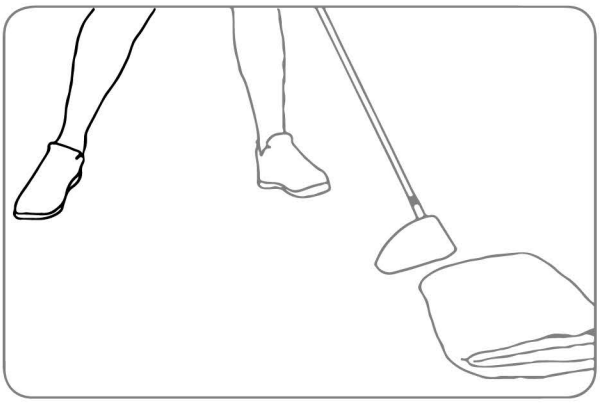


MAKE SURE AT ADDRESS NOT TO ROTATE THE SHOULDERS TO FACE THE BALL AT SETUP.



IF THE BODY IS ALREADY IN THE CORRECT POSITION, BE CAREFUL NOT TO MOVE THE HANDS FORWARD (THIS DEFEATS THE PURPOSE OF HAVING THE BALL POSITIONED FORWARD)





PLACE A FOLDED TOWEL ON THE TARGET LINE AND TRY NOT TO HIT IT WITH THE CLUB AS THE CLUB MOVES THOUGH TO THE FINISH.

This exercise is a great way to build a solid impact with a slightly ascending strike, hitting the ball at the correct moment in the swing arc. Getting good at this is a sure way to gain a few extra yards on your driver and maximize your distance. If you would like to find more ways optimize your game, come and see us at the Leadbetter Golf Academy in Bali or Jakarta - we would love to help you reach your goals.

Embarrassing Golf Shots

We run through seven shots every golfer has almost certainly hit at one point or another

The unmentionable

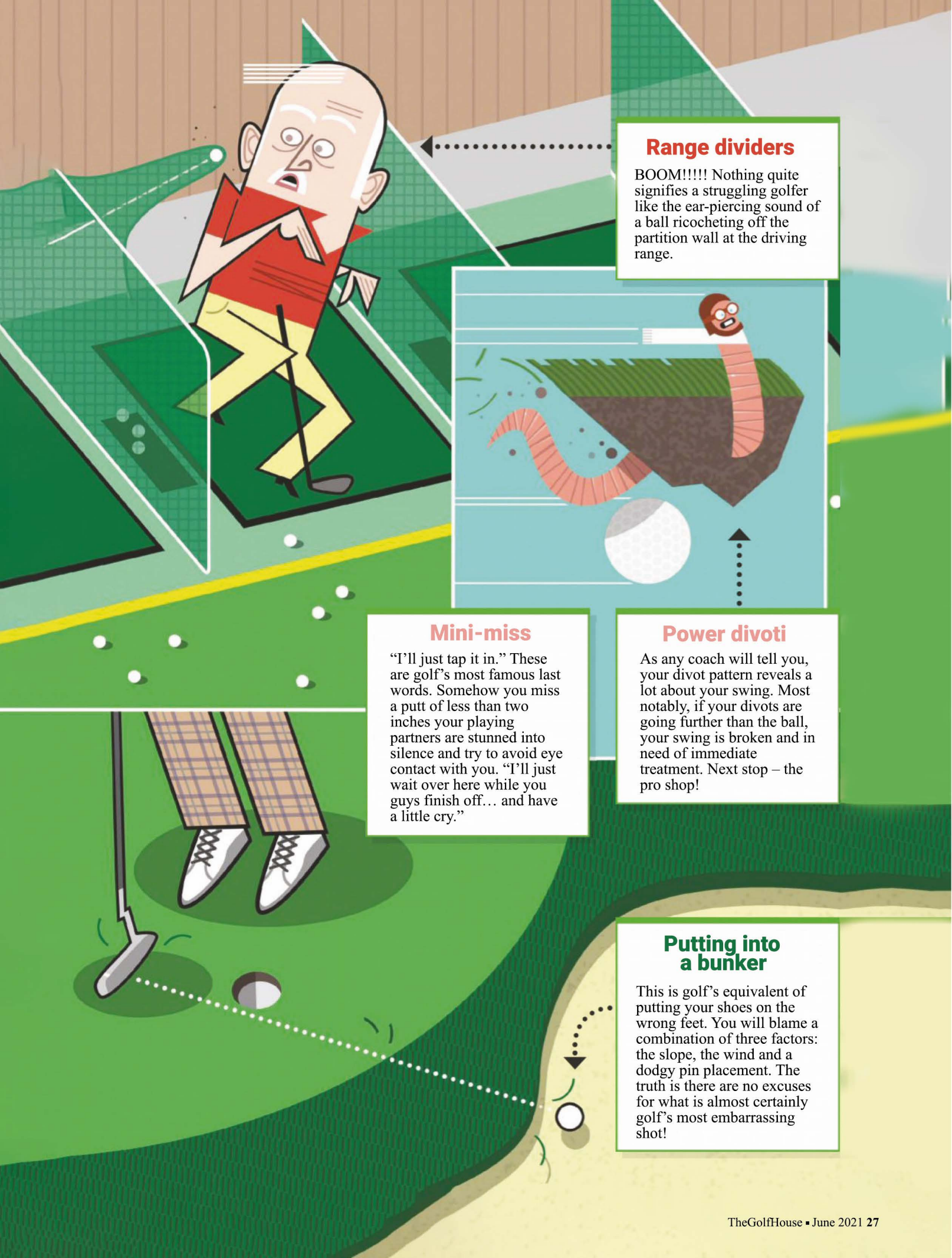
Unmentionable, Lucy Locket, J Arthur it has many names none of which truly capture the horror. No other shot will cause you to question your life choices quite so much as full-blooded shank Watching your ball disappear at right angles is golf's way telling you to consider taking up badminton instead.

Backwards hit

You've hit the fairway on a par 5 and have 240 yards left. A good strike might just get you home in two. Cue a committed swing and a physics-defying result. At least you've entertained your playing partners!

Double hit

Of all these shots, the double hit is the most like a trick shot. People would pay to watch you do this on demand and marvel at your clubhead control. Sadly, your version rears its ugly head as you're grinding to make the buffer zone.



Range dividers

BOOM!!!!! Nothing quite signifies a struggling golfer like the ear-piercing sound of a ball ricocheting off the partition wall at the driving range.

Mini-miss

"I'll just tap it in." These are golf's most famous last words. Somehow you miss a putt of less than two inches your playing partners are stunned into silence and try to avoid eye contact with you. "I'll just wait over here while you guys finish off… and have a little cry."

Power divoti

As any coach will tell you, your divot pattern reveals a lot about your swing. Most notably, if your divots are going further than the ball, your swing is broken and in need of immediate treatment. Next stop – the pro shop!

Putting into a bunker

This is golf's equivalent of putting your shoes on the wrong feet. You will blame a combination of three factors: the slope, the wind and a dodgy pin placement. The truth is there are no excuses for what is almost certainly golf's most embarrassing shot!

GET OUT OF THE BUNKER!

Bunkers are one of the most terrifying things on the course for amateur golfers. Meanwhile, for professional golfers, it's actually a pretty comfortable place to be in.

Greg Norman once said the best way to hit a bunker shot is to avoid the bunker in the first place. Sadly, we don't always have that luxury. We have to learn how to hit a bunker shot!

The difference between professionals and amateurs in the bunker is that the pros use the bounce of the wedge and can get the ball to go high and spin. To use the bounce of the wedge we must position ourselves correctly at address.

So let's learn how to use the bounce!



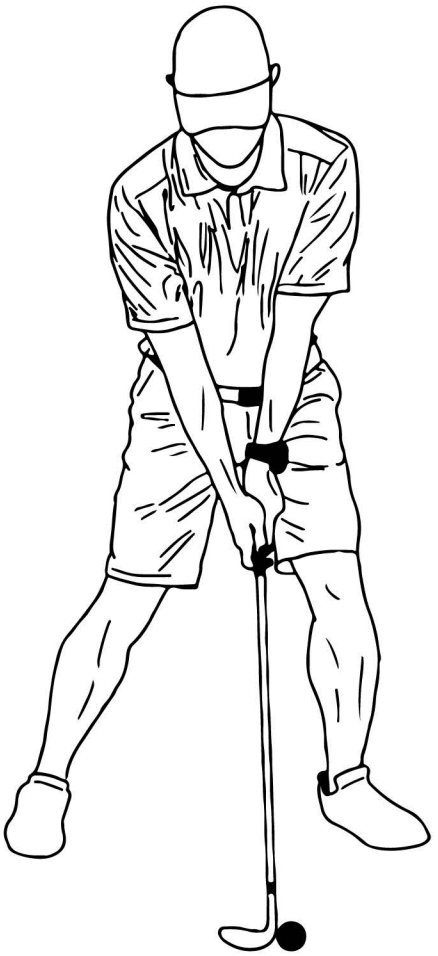
Incorrect bunker shot set up position

1.Ball position is closer to the right foot.
2. Body and clubface are square to the target.
3. Knees are straight and the stance is narrow.
4. Hands are more left than the club.

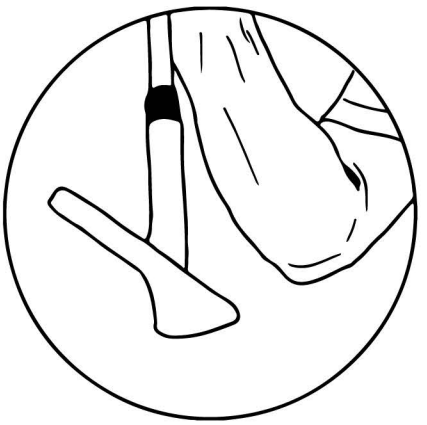
Correct bunker shot set up position

1.Ball position is inside of left heel.
2. Clubface is slightly open and the body is aiming slightly left.
3. Knees are more bent and stance wider.
4. Hands are on the same line as the club.





To use the bounce of the wedge we must position ourselves correctly at address.

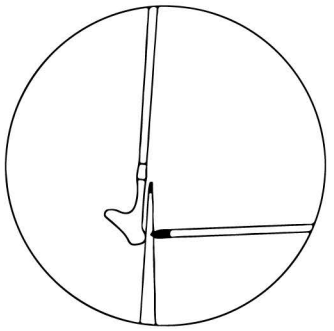


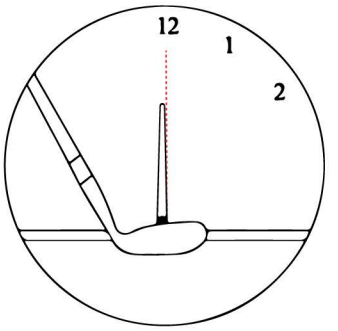
To be a good bunker player, first you have to understand how the bounce of the wedge works and after that, you have to position yourself so you can use the bounce. Simple variations in your set up position will let you use the bounce automatically and set you free from the sand!

Short game hight and roll control

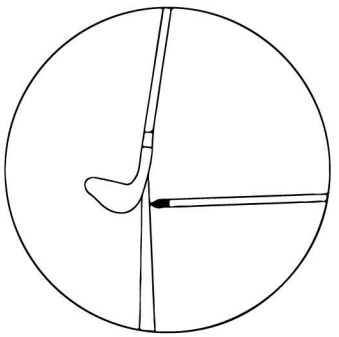
NOT ONE CHIP SHOT IS EVER THE SAME. THIS IS OF ALL THE DIFFERENT CONDITION WE HAVE AND ALL THE FACTORS ON THE GOLF COURSE WHICH DETERMINE THE TYPE OF CHIP WE NEED TO PLAY SUCH AS THE LIE OF THE BALL, THE AMOUNT OF GREEN WE HAVE TO WORK WITH AND VERY IMPOTENTLY THE SPEED OF THE GREEN.

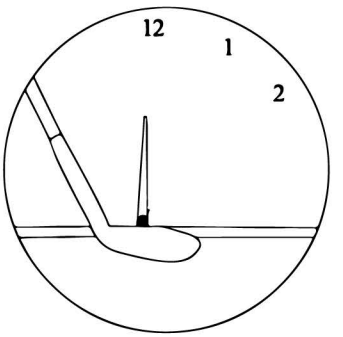
During this drill, keeping the ball position constant.



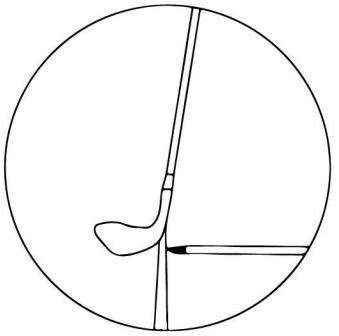


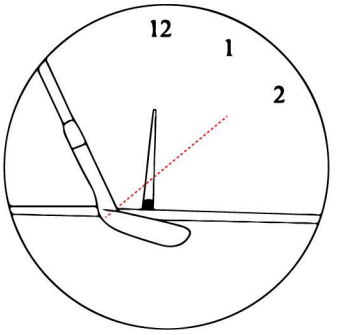
Practice with the clubface at 12 o-clock.





Practice with the clubface at 1 o-clock.

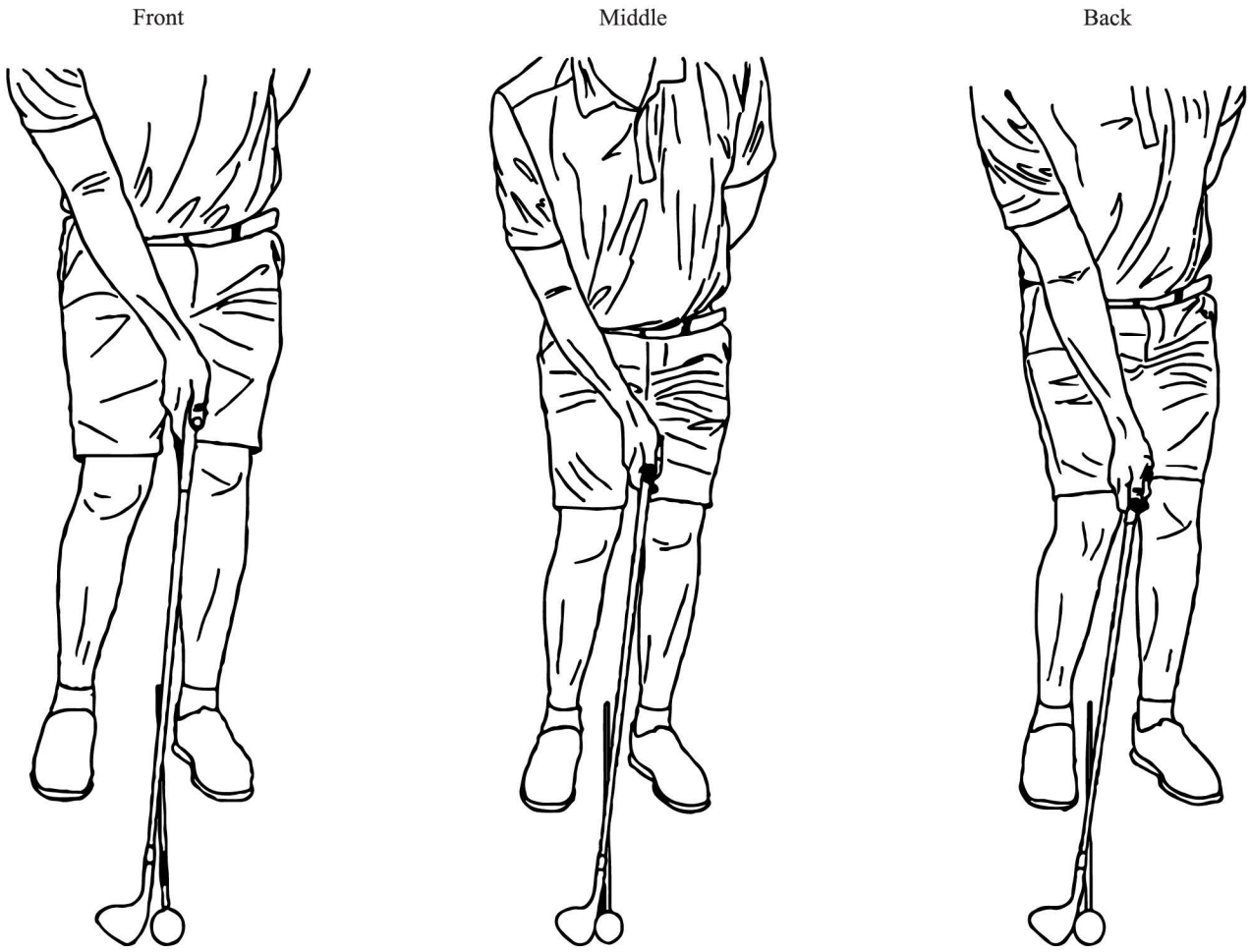




Practice with the clubface at 2 o-clock.

No chip shot is ever the same. This is because of all the different conditions we have and all the factors on the golf course which determine the type of chip we need to play; such as the lie of the ball, the amount of green we have to work with, and very importantly, the speed of the green. When looking at these determining factors, we are always left with two questions. These questions are: How high should we hit the ball and how much is the ball going to roll on the green? Height and roll are undeniably two factors that are linked to each other. In most cases, we can conclude that the higher we chip the ball the less it will release or roll out on the green. This leads to another question: How do we control the height of the chip shot? The answer to this is by controlling the loft of the clubface. If we use the same ball position and same swing on every chip we will most likely play the same shot repeatedly unless we open or close the clubface. Opening means we add loft to the clubface at address and closing the clubface means we are delofting the clubface at address. This leads to one of my favourite exercises that I use to practice chipping called the '12 o-clock, 1 o-clock and 2 o-clock drill'.

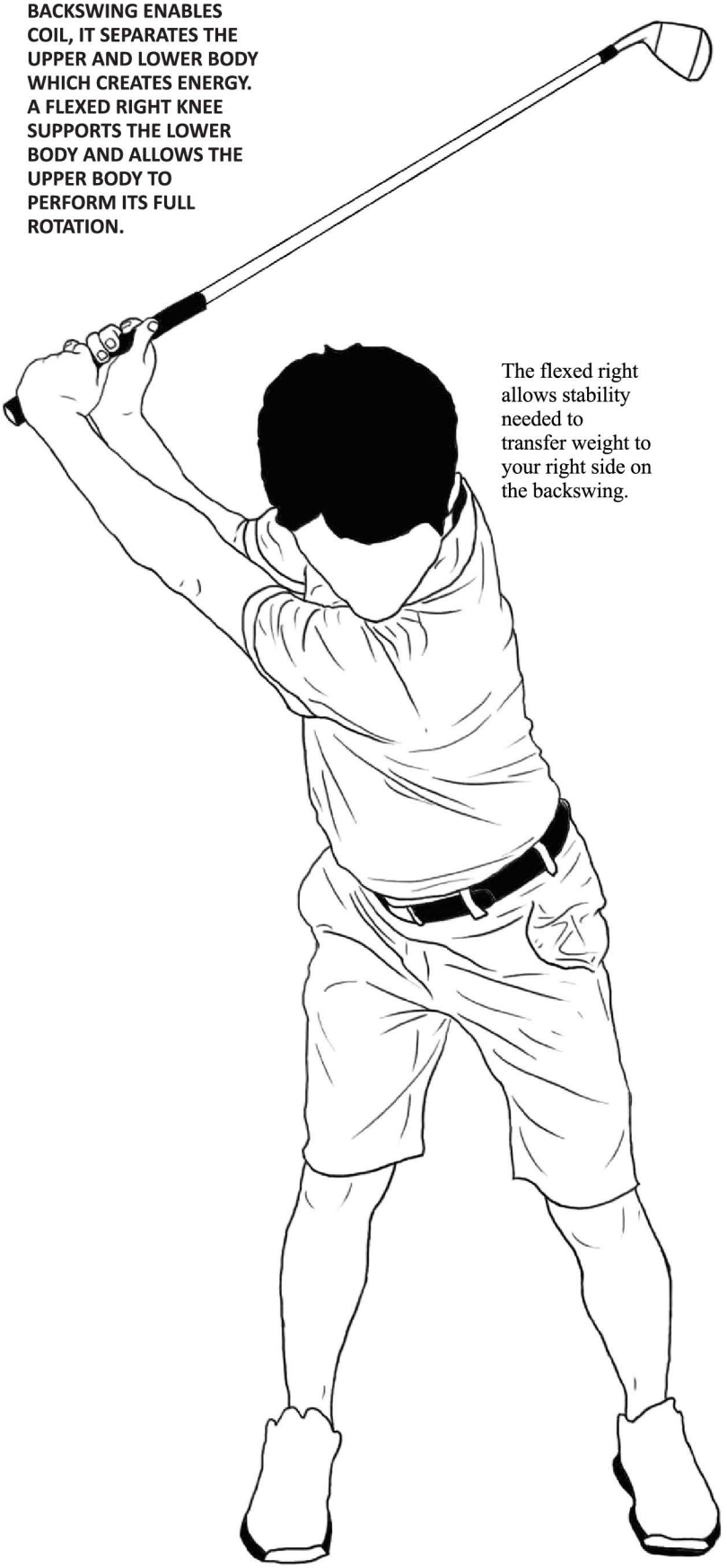
It is during this drill that we learn the relationship between height and release of the ball if our ball position and swing stay constant. It only after this has been mastered we can start moving the ball position forward and back and combine it with the 12 o-clock, 1 o-clock and 2 o-clock drill.



Different ball positions

THE FUNCTION OF THE RIGHT KNEE

A FLEXED RIGHT KNEE THROUGHOUT THE BACKSWING ENABLES COIL, IT SEPARATES THE UPPER AND LOWER BODY WHICH CREATES ENERGY. A FLEXED RIGHT KNEE SUPPORTS THE LOWER BODY AND ALLOWS THE UPPER BODY TO PERFORM ITS FULL ROTATION.



The flexed right allows stability needed to transfer weight to your right side on the backswing.

Illustration : Beks



1 If the right knee flex is lost, which I have seen in so many amateur swings, weight is pushed from the right side back to the left which results in a reverse pivot.



2 Secondly, straightening the knee will cause the backswing to be inside, which can lead to all kinds of downswing faults.



3 Thirdly, losing the flex in your right knee could cause you to over-rotate or create a sway. As a result, you will lose all of your coil in your backswing.

With these faults from the top of the backswing, things can only get worse, for example: with a straight right knee, the only way you can get back to the ball is to slide massively to the target.
We need to load efficiently using the right knee as a support to the backswing weight transfer. Here's a drill to maintain the flex in the right knee:

- Look in the mirror
- Get into your address position
- Draw a smiley face on your right knee cap and note where it is in the mirror
- Keep the smiley face in the same spot throughout the Illustration : Beks backswing

A MISCONCEPTION OF PITCHING

IF PLAYED CORRECTLY, THE PITCH SHOT CAN PROVIDE YOU A HUGE PLATFORM TO RESCUE A HOLE OR INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF MAKING A BIRDIE. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS SURROUNDING PITCHING WHICH LEAD TO INCONSISTENT PITCHING TECHNIQUE.



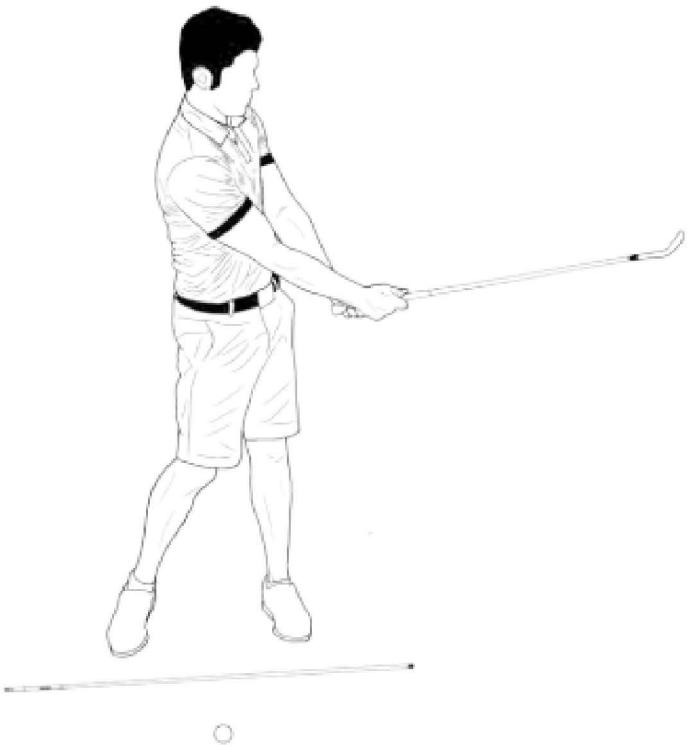


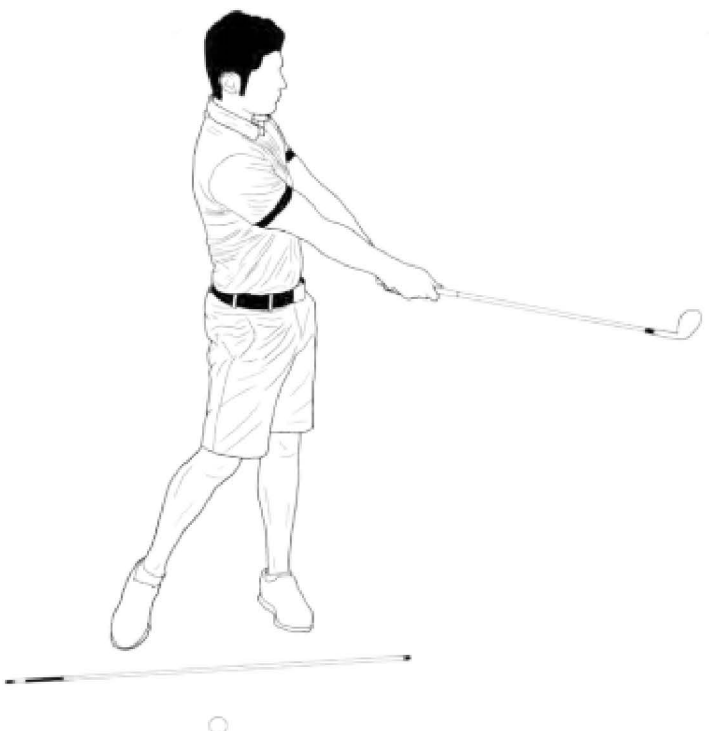
FAULT

As an instructor, one of the most common questions surrounding pitching I'm asked is, "how do I get the ball higher to make it drop and stop when pitching?"

Trying to achieve this has led many golfers to 'flick' their wrists at impact in an attempt to scoop the ball up. This leads to the right hand undertaking the left which in turn fires the club face towards the ball with no control. You can see this in the graphic.

What this leads to is inconsistent distance as we are manipulating the clubface with an uncontrollable speed. Furthermore, and more importantly, when the right hand undertakes the left hand we start to bring the leading edge into the equation which can also cause inconsistency in strike and distance. The result can be thin and fat shots.





FIX

To fix this problem it is important to understand that the wrists should remain passive throughout the pitch shot, especially at impact (graphic 1).

It is important to note that clubs are designed to help the ball up into the air so require no manipulation just good technique. This is achieved by using your body rather than your wrists. By turning the body back and through the pitching movement instead of using your wrists to hit the pitch shot, you will notice a far greater consistency in strike, height, and distance control. If you happen to require more height, just take a higher lofted wedge and make sure you continue to move the club with your body rather than solely your wrists. You can see from the graphics how the clubface is kept square and there is no leading edge.

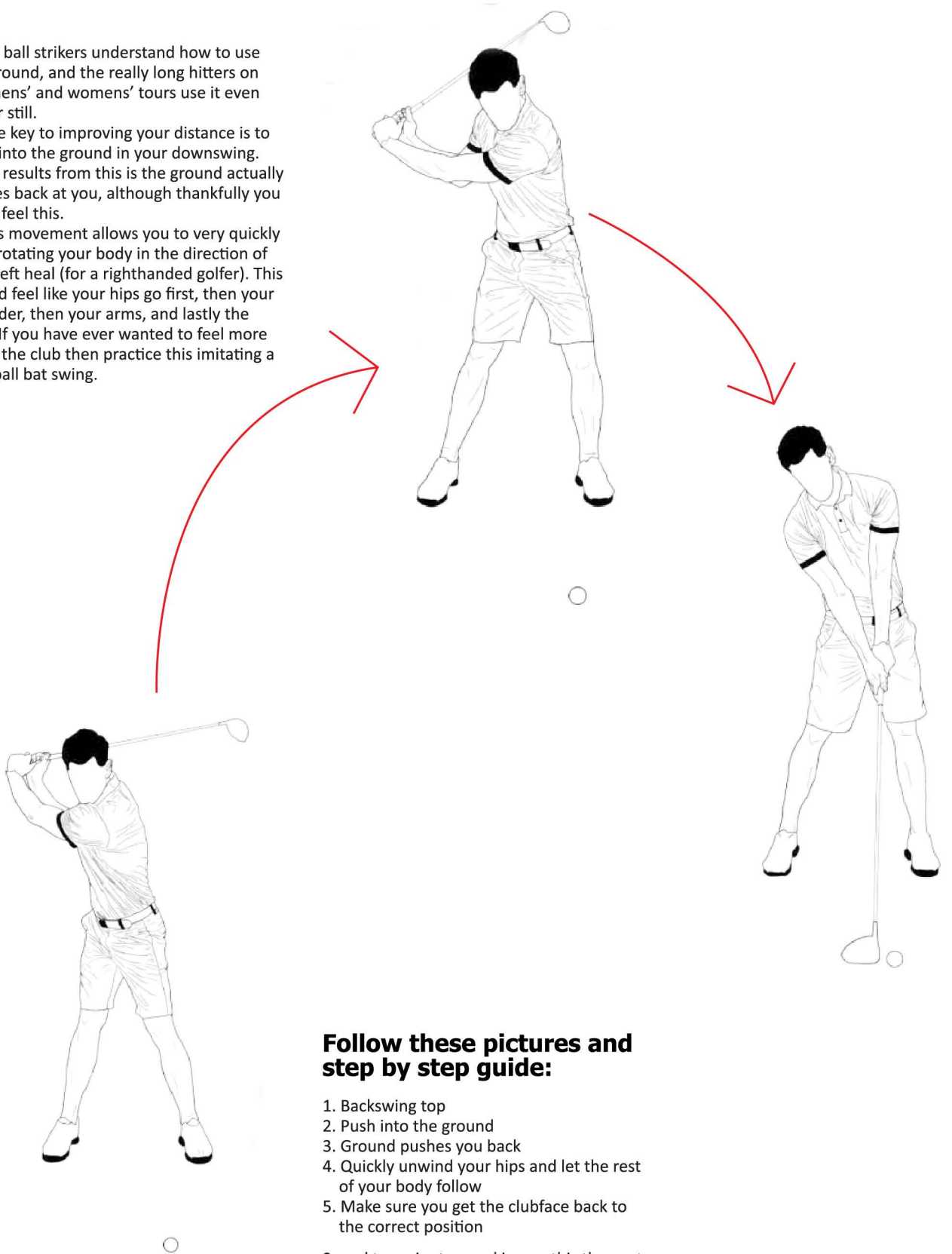
CONCLUSION

Achieving consistent results with your pitching technique does not need to be difficult, but good results will not be achieved using the wrists. Instead, use your body and different loft clubs in your bag. You will be able to achieve a repeatable movement allowing you increase your consistency when pitching and thus giving you the opportunity to lower your score.

Great ball strikers understand how to use the ground, and the really long hitters on the mens' and womens' tours use it even better still.

The key to improving your distance is to push into the ground in your downswing. What results from this is the ground actually pushes back at you, although thankfully you don't feel this.

This movement allows you to very quickly start rotating your body in the direction of your left heal (for a righthanded golfer). This should feel like your hips go first, then your shoulder, then your arms, and lastly the club. If you have ever wanted to feel more lag in the club then practice this imitating a baseball bat swing.



Follow these pictures and step by step guide:

1. Backswing top
2. Push into the ground
3. Ground pushes you back
4. Quickly unwind your hips and let the rest of your body follow
5. Make sure you get the clubface back to the correct position

Spend ten minutes working on this the next time you have a club in your hand and remember to have fun with the expertise and see how quickly you feel you can move the clubhead through impact.

LOAD AND PRESSURE IN THE BACKSWING

How should our body pivot work in the backswing? A vital part of our golf swing is how our body moves. Here are some questions you may ask yourself:

Do you feel it's repetitive?
• Do you feel it's functional over a full round of golf and on different slopes?
• Is the movement efficient?
• Does it create power?

Often when a middle or even high handicap golfer asks themselves those questions the answer is "no" to at least two of them.



How To Improve This

• Address position for pivot exercise



To gain greater load in your backswing and ensure your body is in the best possible position to start your downswing avoid the following two big mistakes:

• A lateral sway/slide with the lower body during the backswing.
• Tilting too much away from the target with your head and torso.

The problem with moving laterally, either with your lower body or upper body, is that you need to make compensations. If you've ever felt like you can't rotate correctly then this could be caused by too much movement from side to side.

• As you can see in the illustration, you should feel the pressure moving into your heel and not feel like it is on the toes or the outside of your trail foot during the backswing.
• Rotate your right hip and open your hips up, you can use an alignment rod to give you guidance as you practice.
• Your head and chest should not be tilting too much away from the target. In the illustration you can see how to use a door frame to give feedback from your start position.

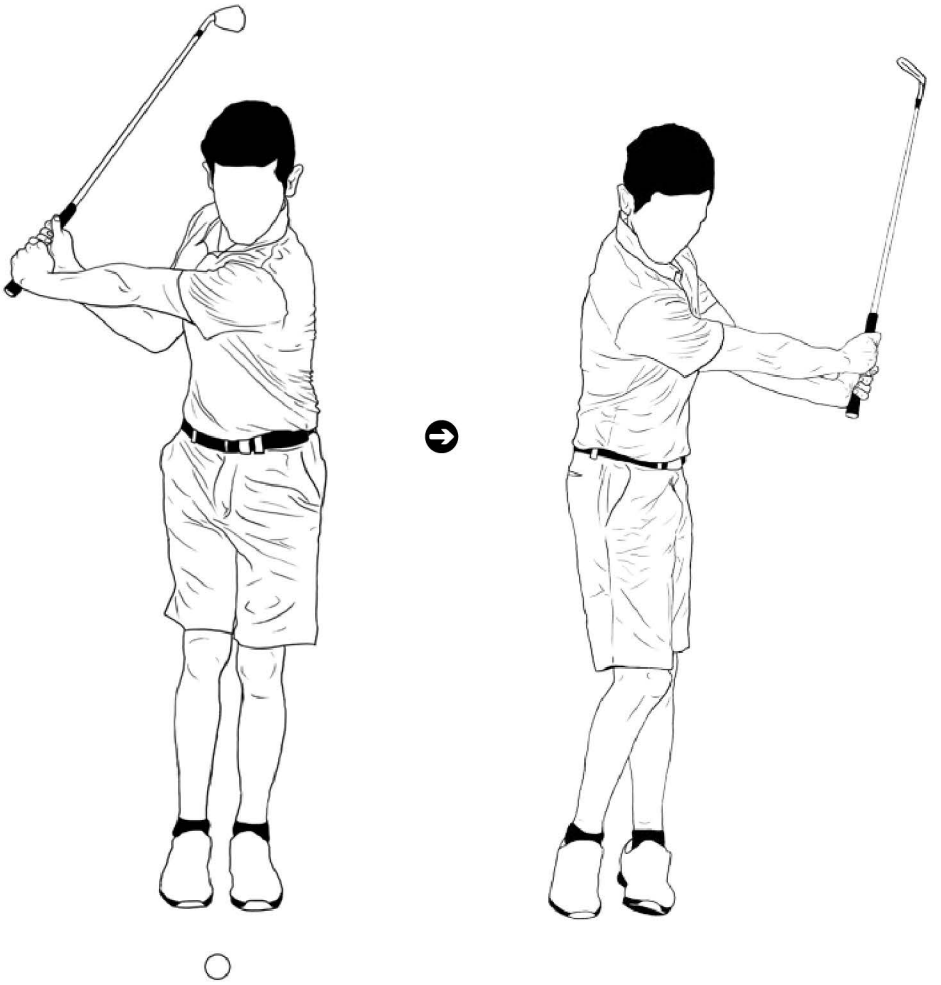
In theory, the more load you can create in your backswing the more opportunity you have to create speed in your down - swing to carry into impact.

LEARN FROM THE GREATS

Who are the greats of the game? Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus, Tom Watson, Nick Faldo, Tiger Woods. And from this generation, who, if any, will become a great... Rory McIlroy, Jason Day, or Dustin Johnson? What is it that they all do so well? What do all these golfers have in common, what was it that made them win, stand out more than their competitors, and what can you learn from them to put into your practice or rounds on the course?

DRILL 1

Hitting pitch shots with your feet together and controlling the club with your body pivot. Put around 60% weight on your lead foot and make small pitch shot swings. Take note of where you are striking the ball. Try to hit three balls a similar distance and then hit further



hen I get asked what makes these golfing legends stand out, and how mid to high handicap golfers can improve, it comes down to ball striking and controlling the distance you hit the ball. If you watch the current generation of golf stars on the Tour, you will notice how their bad shot might be left or right but the distance is somewhat correct each time. They don't leave their shots 30 meters short or overshoot by 30 meters.

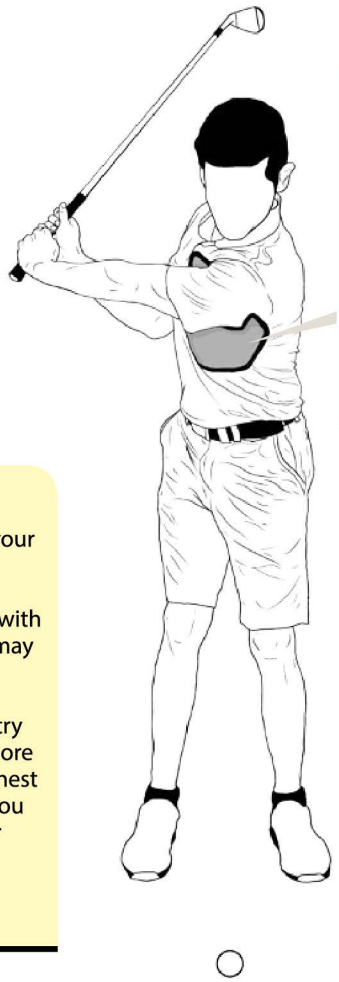
How often do you make an approach shot where you fail to strike the ball well because you ground your club and so you finish 20 meters short? Or do you thin the ball and it goes running through the green?

This is an area of the game where handicap golfers can really learn from the greats; achieving a centered strike and creating closer dispersion between shots when you are practicing.

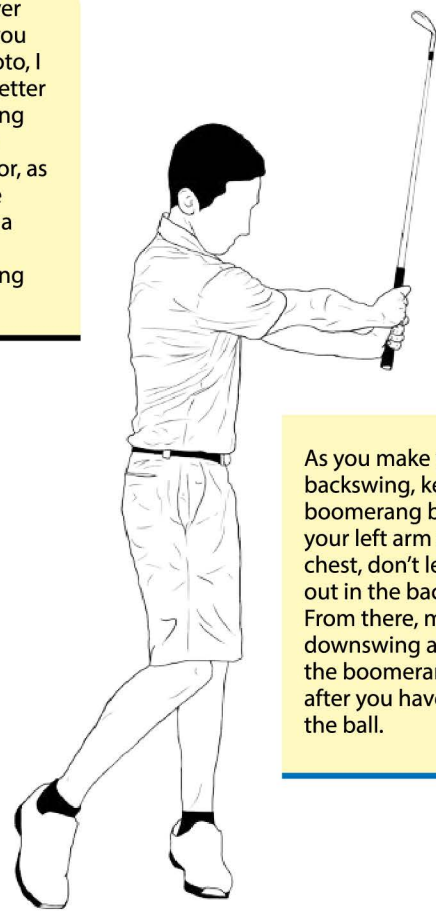
To improve your practice sessions on the driving range, create an imaginary green and hazards around that green. Go through a range of different clubs and try put yourself under the 'on course' pressure. Are you hitting the balls to the desired target? This is not so much about the good shots you hit - everyone's good shots go close to the hole - but it's more about whether your bad shots finish in an acceptable area where they would be playable without making a dreaded double or triple bogey. Can you hit bad shots that are still on the green or the apron?

If you are finding the bad shots are finishing too short or going way over the target, work on some strike drills to help you.

To improve your practice sessions on the driving range, create an imaginary green and hazards around that green. Go through a range of different clubs and try put yourself under the 'on course' pressure.



You can use a driver headcover or, as you can see in the photo, I am using a Leadbetter boomerang training aid. You can use a driver headcover or, as you can see in the photo, I am using a Leadbetter boomerang training aid



As you make your backswing, keep the boomerang between your left arm and your chest, don't let it fall out in the backswing. From there, make a downswing and allow the boomerang to fall after you have hit the ball.

DRILL 2

If you gain some consistency, widen your feet and change to longer clubs. Keep controlling the club with your body pivot - it may feel as if you have a much shorter swing. The aim is to try to keep your arms more connected to your chest which will feel as if you are making a shorter swing.

STOP SLICING BY SHALLOWING YOUR CLUB

Most golfers hit slices, pulls and pull hooks because their downswings are too steep. Golfers with a steep downswing bring the club down with the shaft almost perpendicular to the ground.

The club is moving from outside the target line and cuts across at impact. In most cases, this also creates a chicken wing look. If you think this describes your swing, you can fix it and straighten out your shots by shallowing out your downswing and getting the shaft angle flatter on the downswing so the clubhead approaches the ball from inside the target line at impact.

This is a half-swing drill to get the feel of shallowing your club on your downswing.



C posture

More upright posture

1

Stand taller. A more upright posture makes it easier to turn the shoulder during your backswing.



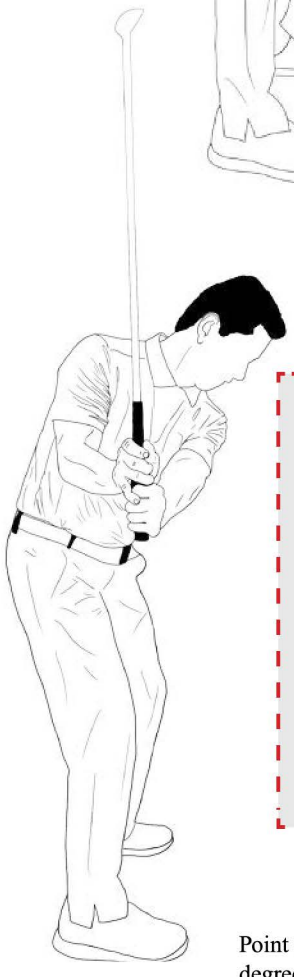
Pull the club inside in a more flat plane

2

At the start of your swing keep the club further in front of your body and closer to the target line. Players with steep downswings tend to pull the club inside in a more flat plane and loop it steeply outside during their downswing.



Club more in front of body, closer to target line



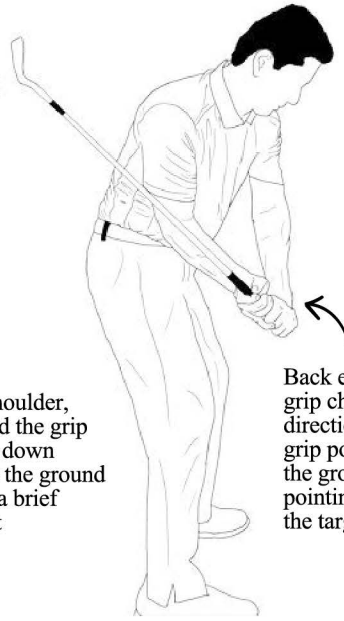
Point the grip of the club 90 degree down towards the ground (it's only a drill)

3

Halfway back, when your lead hand is parallel to the ground, point the grip of the club at a 90-degree angle down towards the ground. This is only a drill to get the feel of shallowing the club later in your downswing. On an actual swing the shaft will be pointing down between your toes and the golf ball, exactly where is dependent on the posture and range of motion of each golfer.



Right shoulder, arms and the grip moving down towards the ground just for a brief moment



Back end of the grip changing direction from grip pointing to the ground, to grip pointing towards the target line

After practicing this drill you will be able to feel the shallowing of the club on the way down. Once you do, then you can try hitting a ball with the feel of an in to out path. At the beginning, you will probably not be able to strike the ball solidly, but keep practicing until you are able to strike the ball Illustration : Vickirio solidly and then apply this to your full swing.

4

When you start your downswing by shifting your weight to the lead foot and turning your hips towards the target, make sure your right shoulder, arms, and grip move down towards the ground, just for a brief moment, before the back end of the grip changes direction from grip pointing to the ground, to grip pointing towards the target line.

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH YOUR PUTTER

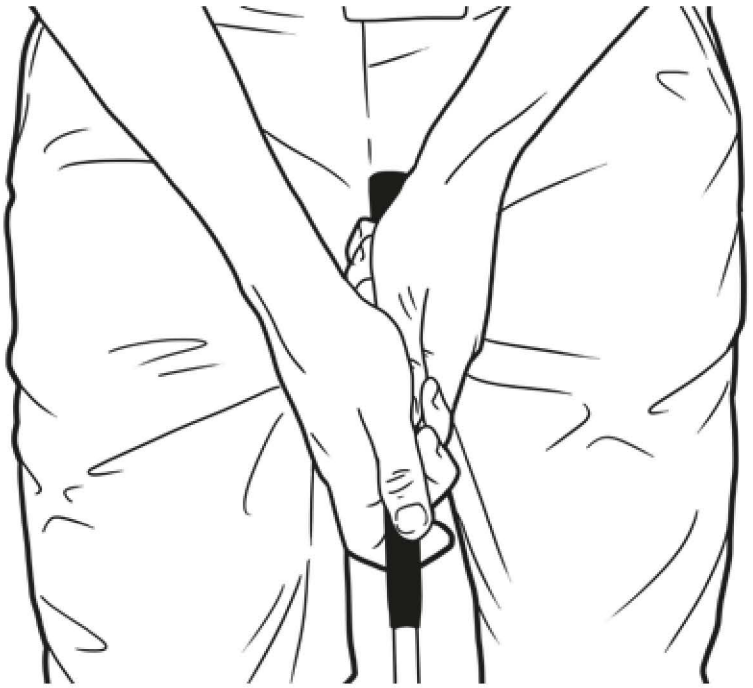
One of the fastest ways to lower your score and reduce your handicap is to dedicate some of your practice time each week to putting. Just like all aspects of golf, consistency is key and having good basics are essential.

WHAT ARE SOME GOOD BASICS OF PUTTING?

It is difficult for amateurs to know what to do as we see professionals using a mixture of different putting styles. From different postures, different stances, different grips and different putter designs. However they are all looking for the same thing, a stroke which is repeatable and a putter face which doesn't rotate much.

WHAT IS A REPEATABLE STROKE?

I prefer when students to have the same backwards and forwards length when putting. There are two major benefits to this, one is that it ensures the student does not decelerate through impact, and the second is that it helps to reduce hand action. The feeling of swinging the putter head the same length on backswing and follow through needs to be control by the bigger muscles of your body. This means that you want to feel like your shoulders are slightly turning which controls your arms and in turn the putter. If the stroke is repeatable we then need to make sure that the putter face doesn't rotate too much, if it does it will result in the putt being pushed and pulled off line. To do this we need to make sure we are gripping the putter correctly. As Coach Stephen said "there are many different ways to grip a putter, the one thing that they all have in common is they eliminate hand action and reduce clubface rotation".



STANDARD GRIP

VERY SIMILAR TO THE GRIP USED FOR YOUR FULL SWING. THE MAIN DIFFERENCE IS THAT THE PUTTER GRIP IS PLACED IN THE PALMS OF THE HANDS RATHER THAN YOUR FINGERS. THIS IS THE GRIP USED BY MOST GOLFERS AND IS GREAT FOR ALL LEVELS. THE KEY IS TO NOT ALLOW ONE HAND TO BE MORE DOMINANT THAN THE OTHER.

CROSS HANDED

THIS IS A GOOD OPTION TO CONSIDER IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE TOO MUCH HAND ACTION. THE LEFT HAND IS PLACED BELOW THE RIGHT HAND. THIS CHANGES THE ROLL OF THE HANDS IN THE STROKE WITH THE RIGHT HAND NOW BECOMING LESS ACTIVE. I WOULD RECOMMEND THIS FOR ANYONE WHO FEELS LIKE THEIR PUTTING IS GOOD BUT NEED A LITTLE MORE CONSISTENCY.

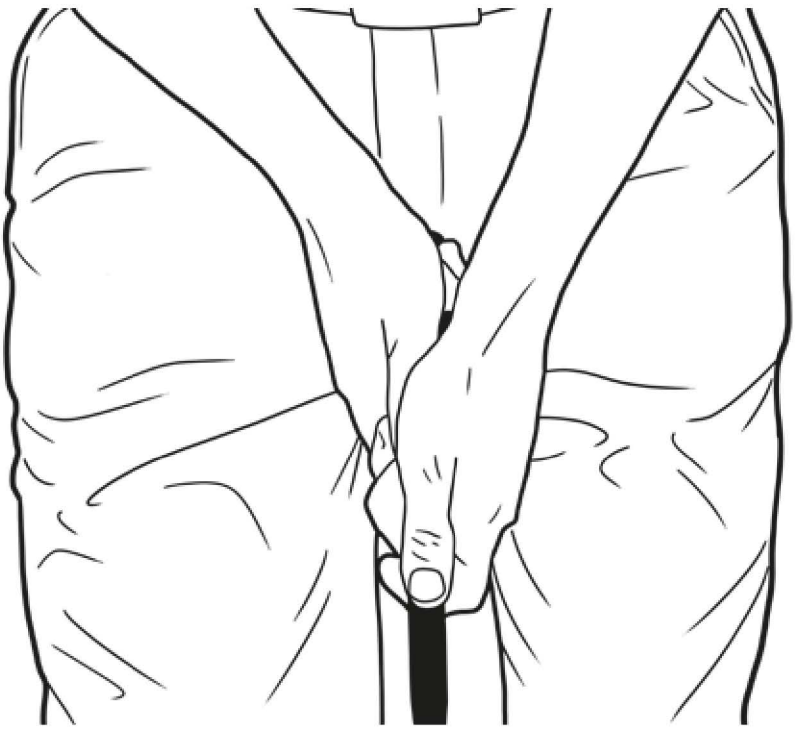
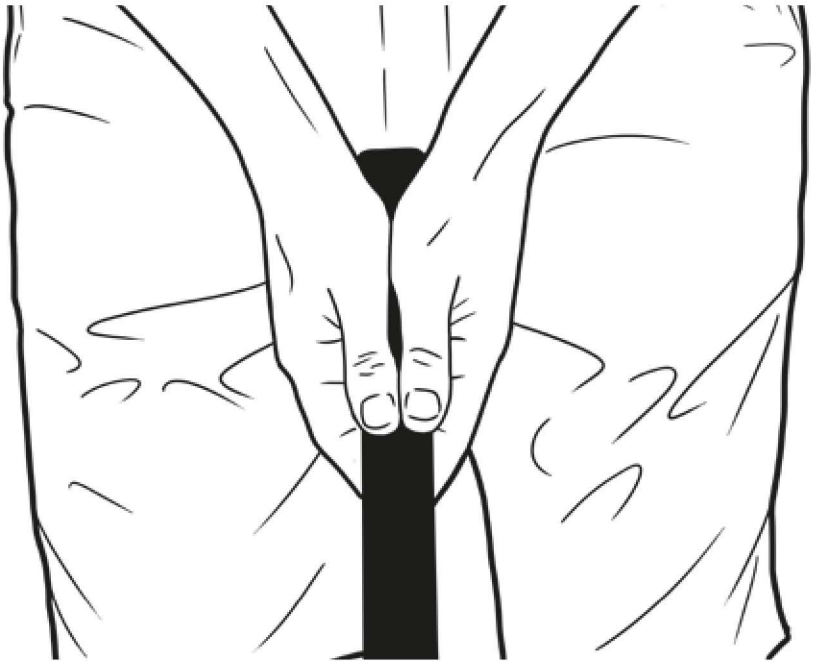


Illustration : Tristan



MODIFIED GRIP

THIS GRIP WAS ORIGINALLY USED WITH LONG PUTTERS, THE RIGHT HAND IS PLACED AGAINST THE SIDE OF THE PUTTER GRIP WITH THE THUMB AND INDEX FINGER SUPPORTING THE GRIP. THE LEFT HAND IS PLACED AT THE TOP OF THE GRIP IN A NEUTRAL POSITION. THIS IS A GREAT OPTION IS YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE UNABLE TO CONTROL YOUR HANDS IN THE STROKE.



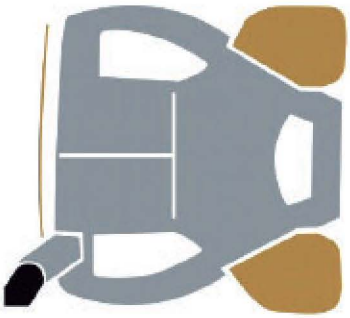
THE OVERSIZED GRIP

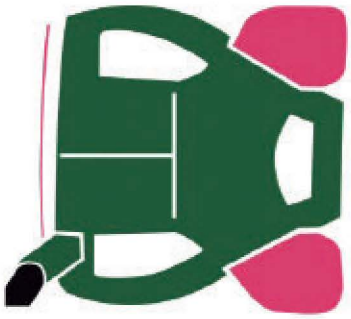
YOU WILL NEED TO PLACE BOTH THUMBS ON THE SHAFT SIDE AS THIS WILL BALANCE YOUR HANDS ON THE PUTTER AND LEVEL YOUR SHOULDER. I RECOMMEND THIS GRIP IF YOU ARE SOMEONE WHO STRUGGLES WITH PUSHING YOUR PUTTS TO THE RIGHT.

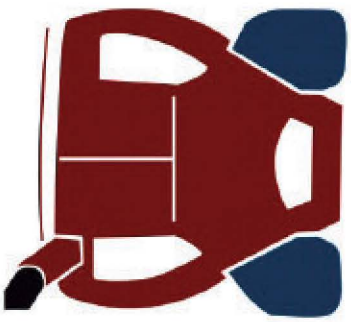
FINALLY, THESE GRIPS CAN BE MODIFIED FURTHER TO HELP YOU ADD STABILITY TO YOUR STROKE BY PLACING THE INDEX FINGER IN A DOWNWARDS POSITION.

Whichever grip you decide is best for you, make sure you spend some time practicing it before heading out to the course. Building confidence in practice is a key to building confidence whilst playing.

Illustration : Tristan







PERSONALISATION

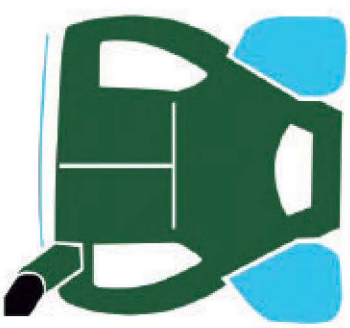
It's never been easier to get a bespoke putter made just for you

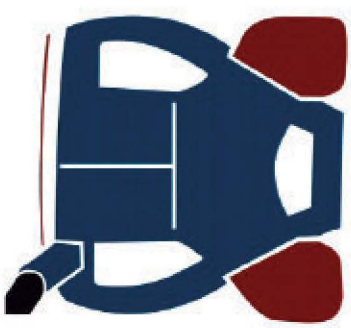


More and more Tour players are tweaking their clubs so they're unique to them – and now you can, too.

Whether that's adding alignment lines or taking them off, changing the colour or changing the grip, there are hardly any "standard" putters on Tour anymore. Now TaylorMade have opened up the opportunity for club golfers to do the same.

Their "MySpider" personalised putter programme was inspired by the customisation of putters seen on Tour, first by Jason Day with his original Spider Tour Red in 2016. Since then, lots more players have personalised their putters to suit their preferences.





THE THINGS YOU CAN PERSONALISE

HOSEL
L-neck (#1) (RH only), Short slant (#3), Double-bend.

SIGHTLINE
No sightline, T-sightline single dot, single line,double line.

HEAD COLOUR
White, black, Tour red, silver, blue, red, gold, dark blue, pink, yellow, light blue, green, orange, purple.

WING COLOUR
White, black, Tour red, silver, blue, red, gold, dark blue, pink, yellow, light blue, green, orange, purple.

SIGHTLINE AND LOGO COLOUR
White, black, Tour red, silver, blue, gold, dark blue, pink, yellow, light blue, green, orange, purple.

WEIGHT COLOUR
Black, Tour red, silver, blue, gold, dark blue, pink, light blue, green, orange, purple.

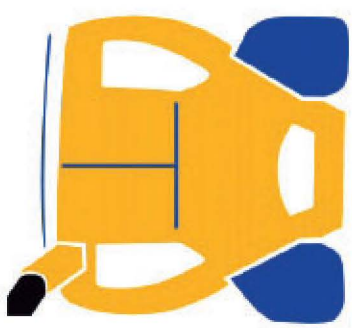
FACE INSERT COLOUR
Black, Tour red, silver, blue, gold, dark blue, pink, light blue, green, orange, purple.

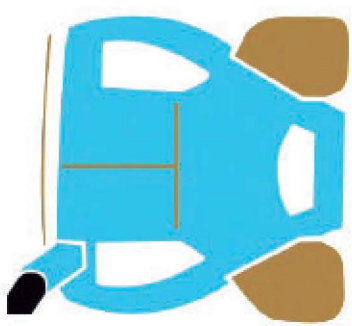
SOLEPLATE COLOUR
Black, Tour red, silver, blue, gold, dark blue, pink, light blue, green, orange, purple.

SHAFT COLOUR
Black or chrome.

SUPERSTROKE PISTOL GTR I.O GRIP
White, black, Tour red, silver, blue, red, gold, dark blue, pink, yellow, light blue, green, orange, purple.

SHAFT LENGTH
Between 32-36in, available in 0.25in increments.





H

HOSEL

How that shaft-head join affects performance



DOUBLE BEND

The traditional shaft/hosel set p for mallets. Like single bends it's shaft that's bent, not the hosel. The ble bend sets the putter's head behind hands and helps designers with face ancing, which usually means doubled models suit straighter strokes. The choice between double and single bends comes down to cosmetics more than performance.

AVAILABLE ON

Spider Mini (Face balanced – ¾ shaft offset); Spider Tour Double Bend

CENTRE SHAFT

Same golfers say centre shaft hosels (which means the shaft joins the head in the middle of the head) are the simplest way to putt. They're really easy to align, and because the shaft joins the head right where you want to hit putts you simply use a pendulum motion to stroke putts into the hole. They usually suit golfers with very little opening or closing in their stroke.

AVAILABLE ON

TP Collection Red Ardmore (face balanced – centre shaft)

There's almost as many different hosel designs nowadays as there are putters. Each offers not only a different look, but alters toe hang and gives varying amounts of offse Here,we use TaylorMade's comprehensive line-up of flatsticks to showcase the most common hosel set-ups you'll find on a putte rack, and explain howthey can influence your performance on the greens.

I

IMPACT

BY SIMON DADDOW

There is no one perfect way to hit a putt – just like drivers and irons, every golfer has their own uniqueway of presenting the putter face to the ball at impact.

Impact though takes a fraction of a second and because 75 percent of where the ball rolls to is determined by the aim of the face at impact, there really isn't much room for error. Thanks to improvements in analysis technology, putter fittings with launch monitors are becoming much more readily available. And we reckon if you're looking at investing in a new flatstick you really should get fitted for it, too. The best putting launch monitors capture thousands of frames a second, and reveal exactly howa putt behaves at impact, aswell as showing howfar it skids before starting to roll across the green's surface. Just like a driver or iron fitting, there are key numbers you really need to be aware of when getting a putter launch monitor fitting.Here's what you need to know.

STRIKE POINT Thanks to launch monitor tech like Foresight Sports' GC Quad, you can now see where every putt impacts the putter face; it's the same technology TaylorMade used on woods when they came up with TwistFace. Knowing where you typically impact putts is crucial; you really want to keep an eye on deviation to maximise consistency.

Self-explanatory; ideally it should be as close as possible to 0°. A square face angle means you're back to pointing the putter blade at the target you aimed at. Over 90 percent of the start direction of a putt is determined by face angle at impact... so it's important to get yours as square to your target as possible.

LAUNCH ANGLE To get the ball rolling smoothly you need to impact putts on the upstroke, but ideally by no more than 1.5°. You defi nitely don't want to hit putts with a downward stroke.

BALL SPEED It's highly likely, like us, you'll see a difference in ball speed switching between insert and non-insert putters, but the fact there's a difference isn't important. What is crucial is looking at deviation. For consistency it wants to be as low as possible. Poor numbers see more than 1mph difference, while an elite player can expect a deviation of less than 0.35mph

LAUNCH SPIN All of our test putters came out with averages of topspin, but some golfers will get backspin (it all depends on your technique), which isn't ideal if you're after true, smooth-running putts. Measured in rpm just like a driver, the higher the forward number you can get the better.

EFFICIENCY OR SMASH FACTOR Just like a driver, each putt is awarded a measure of how effi cient it was hit. What you're looking for here is

'L' NECK

The most used hosel for blade putters over the years; literally hundreds of thousands of different models have been produced with this style of hosel. Most L nacks have a degree of toe hang, meaning this style of putter is more suited to varying degrees of arcing stroke.

AVAILABLE ON

TP Black Copper Collection Juno (36° toe hang – full shaft offset) TP Collection Black Copper Ardmore 3 'L' Neck (12° toe hang – full shaft offset) Spider Tour Diamond 'L' Neck (21° toe hang – full shaft offset)

SMALL CURVE

A very traditional and much loved hosel set-up which lets the eye flow seamlessly from shaft to head. Small curve hosels usually mean plenty of toe hang, which traditionally means they work best in the hands of strong arc putting strokes. Some of the very best putting over the years have used thes style of flatstick

Available on

TP Black Copper Collection Ardmore 3 (42° toe hang – full shaft offset); TP Black Copper Soto (47° toe hang – full shaft offset)



SMALL SLANT

This hosers been key in Tour pros switching from blades to mallet and MOI models. It allows mallet and MOI style putters to have toe hang (traditionally they've been face balanced), opening up more forgiving putters to arcing strokes. Different designs offer varying toe hang and offset.

AVAILABLE ON

Spider X (30° toe hang-34 shaft offset); Spider Tour (32° toe hang - half shaft offset)

SINGLE BEND

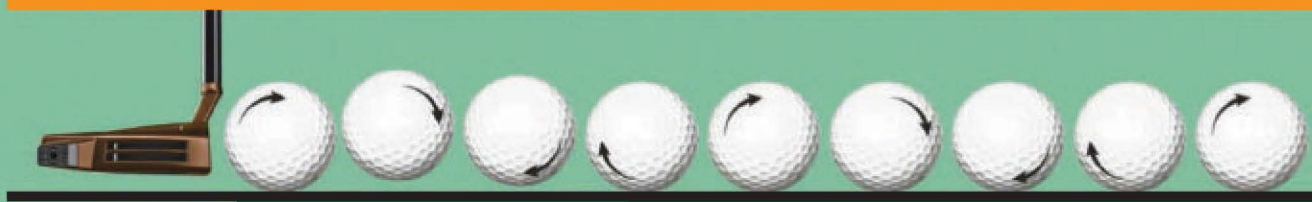
Single bend hosels are a pretty modern addition to putters. It's actually the shaft that's bent not the hosel. The bend puts the putter head behind the hands (so it's offset), and the advantage over double bend models is a cleaner appearance, which is less prone to drawing the eye. Good for straight-back-and-through strokes.

AVAILABLE ON

Spider X (face balanced - full shaft offset); TP Black Copper Ardmore 1 (face balanced — full shaft offset); TP Black Copper Ardmore



FACE ANGLE	LAUNCH ANGLE	BALL SPEED	LAUNCH SPIN	SKID	EFFICIENCY OR SMASH FACTOR	ANGLE OF ATTACK
0.7º OPEN	0.2º	4 MPH	164 F RPM	16.2 IN	1.38	2.4º UP



consistency, and as tight a deviation as you can get your hands on.

SKID When a putt is skidding it's not rolling, and the idea is to get putts rolling as quickly as you can. Look to get skid as low as possible. Deviation is key – where very average club golfers might see a difference of more than 15in in skid (on a 10-12 foot putt) between putts, elite players can reduce skid differential to less then two inches.

ANGLE OF ATTACK As we've mentioned, you ideally want to hit putts on the up to promote lower skid and a smoother roll; this is where you get to see if your stroke is up to it. Downward strokes can jump putts off the turf, causing inconsistency.

DEVIATION The amount of difference between your best and worst (or lowest and highest) numbers in any particular category. It goes without saying the tighter the deviation, the more consistent you are, so pay close attention to bringing down those deviation numbers during a fi tting.

GOOD ROLL

CREATED DURING A SESSION ON FORESIGHT'S GC QUAD, THE FI GURES ABOVE REPRESENT REASONABLE TARGETS FOR A TYPICAL PUTT. NOTE THOUGH THAT A GREAT AVERAGE CAN HIDE PROBLEMS WITH CONSISTENCY, SO CHECK DEVIATION.



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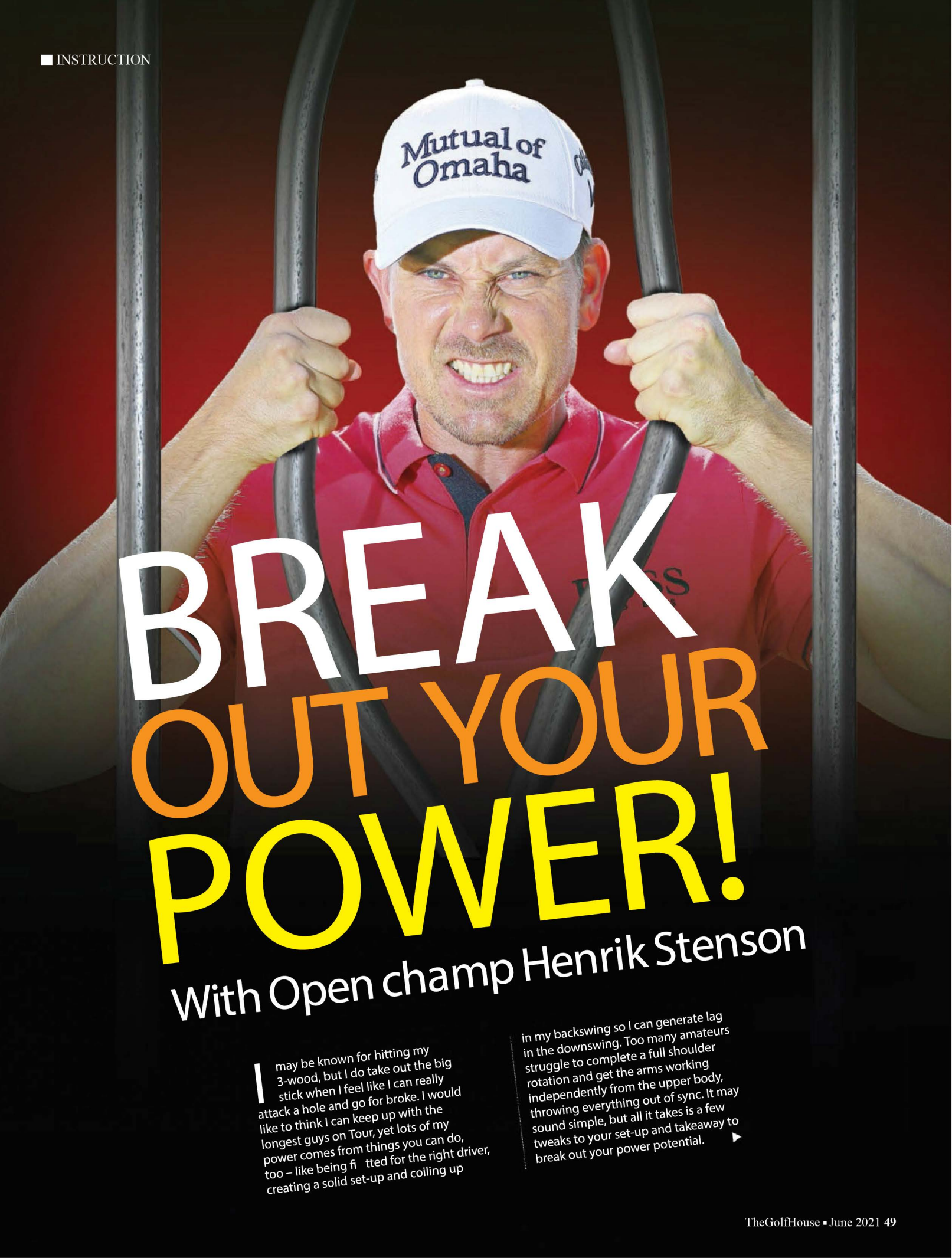

BREAK OUT YOUR POWER!

With Open champ Henrik Stenson

I may be known for hitting my 3-wood, but I do take out the big stick when I feel like I can really attack a hole and go for broke. I would like to think I can keep up with the longest guys on Tour, yet lots of my power comes from things you can do, too – like being fi tted for the right driver, creating a solid set-up and coiling up in my backswing so I can generate lag in the downswing. Too many amateurs struggle to complete a full shoulder rotation and get the arms working independently from the upper body, throwing everything out of sync. It may sound simple, but all it takes is a few tweaks to your set-up and takeaway to break out your power potential. ▶

MY FIVE MOVES FOR POWER!

1 NAIL THE BASICS

Getting the basic set-up right is fundamental to giving yourself the best chance of hitting good shots. I play with a lot of amateurs who seem tense, which can really restrict how far they swing. I probably grip the club tighter than most, but I make sure I soften my elbows and let my hands hang naturally underneath my chest. If you feel like you're reaching for the ball you're probably standing too far from it, which can cause separation between the body and arms and throw the swing off-plane.

2 TURN FROM YOUR SHOULDERS

The worst thing you can do in the takeaway is to let your hands manipulate the face by rolling your wrists. If you do that and either close or open the face, somewhere down the line you are going to have to compensate to get the swing back on plane. Instead, try to get the arms, hands and upper body working together by rotating your shoulders.



KEEP YOURDISTANCE

Standing too far away can flatten the swing plane too much and promote an out-to-in path. Whereas standing too close produces a more upright swing plane and promotes an in-to-out path.

FEEL POISEDANDREAADY

The worst thing you can do is have the weight on your heels. You need to be dynamic and ready to go - just like a goalkeeper – so bend from the hips and stand a little wider than shoulder-width apart to allow for a bigger rotation.

3 UNLEASH THE SPRING

During the backswing I try to feel like I'm coiling up into my right side and 'pushing' pressure into my legs so I can maximise the power. I liken it to a spring. You need to load it up to be able to unload it. And the more stable you are as you do this, the better chance you have of doing that.

4 USE WHAT YOU HAVE

The most important thing is to get the maximum out of your range of movement. If you're not getting the club to a 90° angle in the backswing, there is no point trying to force it. Of course, you can do more stretches, or gym work to improve your flexibility.

But even if you are at 100%, loaded and ready to go, you need to start down by getting the right shoulder and right hip working down at the same time. If your timing is off, you will really struggle to save the shot.

5 UNLOCK HIDDEN POWER

A lot of amateurs don't make use of their bigger muscle groups to transfer energy effectively. You need to use the power in the legs during the downswing and let the natural forces take over for a proper release. Amateurs seem to be reluctant to do that and finish with a hold off position. The clubhead needs to fully accelerate and reach its peak speed at the point ofimpact.



PLANE CHECK

To check you're swinging on plane, stop the backswing when the shaft is pointing parallel to the ground. If you have rotated correctly, the shaft should be parallel to the target line with the toe pointing to the sky.

SYNC ARMSANDBODY

I see a lot of amateurs getting stuck behind the ball because their body outpaces their arms. To get the arms and body working in sync, get in the gym and practise doing some cable wood chops.

POWEROVERLOAD...

I go pretty hard at it most times with my driver. Some players like to take something offit, but I go all out with a full swing. I don't see the need to chip one down there. If I need to hit it shorter, I use a 3-wood!

TEXT & IMAGES: © BAUER CONSUMER MEDIA LIMITED

DEEP IMPACT!

The anatomy of the perfect driver strike

The next time someone tells you hit it like a girl, don't rise to it; they're probably right. According to Trackman, the average male golfer delivers the driver to the ball at 93mph – exactly the same as the typical LPGA pro. The longest tour pros get up to around 125mph and World Long Drive champ Joe Miller reaches a scarcely credible 150. Given the range of speeds here, it won't surprise you to learn that there is not one set of driver impact conditions that work optimally for all. But the launch monitor-derived data detailed here will help you get closer to your own distance potential. If you're still in any doubt, book a session on Flight Scope, GC2 or Trackman; all three have features that let anyone understand what they need to change to reach max power.



Point of impact
0.5in above centre

The vertical roll on your driver makes the higher part of the face more lofted; strike from here and you get a free launch boost, helping carry. A high strike also moderates backspin by triggering vertical gear effect, a phenomenon that sees the ball want to spin in the opposite direction to the way the face deflects. Half-an-inch above centre removes around 450rpm of spin. Some studies also suggest that as the toe moves faster than the heel in a rotating face, a strike slightly into the toe also helps distance.

Spin loft 11º

Think of spin loft as the difference between the club's loft at impact and its attack angle. The closer those two align, the more compression you can generate, and the more you'll reduce spin. "Joe Miller looks for 3-5º of spin loft to find his optimal flight," says his coach Lee Cox. "But as club speed drops you'll need more spin and more spin loft to keep the ball airborne." Trackman generally advise a spin loft of around 11º as ideal for the regular player though, as with all elements of optimising, a driver fitting is essential.



Ball launch angle 16º

Perhaps the best way to grasp launch is the old hosepipe analogy. The less powerful your spurt, so to speak, the higher you have to angle the hose for maximum range. However, this analogy doesn't apply if launch gets too high. TrackMan data shows a 70mph swinger needs to launch the ball at 20º to maximise carry. For the 120mph elite player this goes down to 13º. The average player, at around 95mph, is looking at 15-16º.

Spin rate 2,550rpm

All drives produce backspin, but getting this optimised is a balancing act; too much and the ball balloons and drops; too little and it falls out of the sky. According to launch monitors, the slower swinger, at 70mph, needs to create around 2,800rpm to optimise carry while the tour pro, with his faster speed, needs more like 2,300. For the average male golfer, 2,500-2,600rpm works best at that 93mph speed. But also note that the more downward your attack angle, the more spin you'll need to optimise distance.

Attack angle 5º up

The fastest way to hit the ball further is to raise your attack angle. It allows you to create launch without adding loft, keeping spin down and boosting ball speeds. A 5º-up impact angle is often quoted as a great target; TrackMan figures show that by changing from 5º down to 5º up, a 90mph swinger can add around 30 yards to a 200-yard drive. Despite this, most tour pros and amateurs still strike down by around 1º. One exception is Justin Thomas, whose attack – measured at 4.8º up – contributes to his surprising power.

HOW DO YOUR STATS STACK UP?

	CLUBHEAD SPEED (mph)	LAUNCH ANGLE	SPIN RATE (rpm)	SPIN LOFT	ATTACK ANGLE
JOE MILLER	145	15°	1,700	4.5	9°
JOE PRO	113	10.9°	2,686	14.7°	-1.3°
AVERAGE JOE	93	12.6°	3,275	18.3°	-1.8°



PREPARE, TRAIN, RECOVER
3 PILLARS FOR BUILDING CHAMPIONS

by Damon Goddard

As junior sports have evolved, athletes have been working on getting bigger, faster and stronger. This often happens at the expense of the body's fluidity and the alignment of the muscles and joints. The consequences can be significant, leading to an athlete, who may be bigger, faster and stronger, but lack proper joint mobility/stability and movement control. This is the equivalent of placing a Porsche engine in a Honda frame. It may perform well for a brief moment, but the framework will not be able to handle the torque in the long run. I often tell the parents of my junior golf athletes that we will embark on a performance training journey where the junior athlete will have to earn the right to progress to bigger moves on the training floor.

"Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four hours sharpening my axe."
— Abraham Lincoln

The golf swing is an unnatural, chaotic and violent move that is repeatedly done on one side of the body. Unlike any other sport that is multidirectional, golf athletes are prone to asymmetry (imbalance) in the body. This is the very reason why we need to establish the platform for long-term athletic development. It all begins with our junior athletes undergoing a proper assessment on three levels: Movement Efficiency, Range of Motion, and Recovery and Readiness.

Having the vision to properly gauge our athlete's ability on these three levels will allow us to implement an effective program that will address and correct any inefficiencies found. The ability to minimize the possibilities for potential injury is crucial for maintaining our athlete's performance on the course.

So how can we take what we have applied with advanced, elite level players and utilize it for the junior golfer who might still be in a developmental stage? There are three facts that the elite players will have mastered and that we now have the ability to implement with our juniors: Prepare, Train, and Recover. Consider this as "building the framework" for the Porsche engine. The time for amassing strength, speed and power will come later, but for now we must establish the framework to handle the requirements for such an engine.

It all begins with junior athletes undergoing a proper assessment on three levels: Movement Efficiency, Range of Motion, and Recovery and Readiness.

PREPARE
I highly recommend that you schedule a time with someone who can properly assess movement efficiency as it pertains to being a golf athlete. With this information you will begin an exercise program that is focused on movement efficiency improvement and reducing the risk of injury – in other words, increasing mobility and stability. Fundamental movement patterns like crawling, rolling, balance, sequencing, etc. will build the platform for applying proper progressions.

TRAIN
Integrated performance training will continue to focus on reducing the risk of injury and maximizing athletic performance. Work with a strength coach who understands junior athletic development and can appropriately apply progressions to effectively build an athlete. This pillar is one of the most neglected and requires a large dose of patience, if you are considering long-term performance levels.

RECOVER
Know that improper recovery behaviors will lead to increased fatigue. Fatigue leads to decreased performance and accelerated injury risk. By addressing how well you rest, refuel and recover, you will construct a game plan on how to outlast the competition on a day-to-day basis.

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