



# LADY CHAMPION

A female golfer's guide to playing your best



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# Getting Started

Golf is an individual sport. Your body with all of its uniqueness affects the way that you will hold the golf club and address the golf ball. There is not one way for everyone to follow.

In this book, you will see ways to evaluate yourself in order to put your body in a position that creates **repeatable, efficient movement**.

Whether you are an aspiring collegiate or tour player or a weekend warrior, the fundamentals of the golf swing are imperative to consistent success. The way you hold the golf club, posture, and alignment affects all aspects of the golf swing. Since you have complete control over the set-up (more so than when the club gets moving), it is something to pay attention to.

We will cover all the critical fundamentals of the swing as well as what to do (or go back to) when things go wrong. This includes instruction and drills for common set up issues and swing fault concerns.

And the last thing to keep in mind....when things do go wrong as they often do, it is the result of only two things. It is either a technical issue or physical issue. In other words, if you are not swinging the club the way you want, it is because you are missing some technical knowledge on your execution or your physical constraints are holding you back from achieving it.

So let's keep things simple and find out the best way to improve.

To your game...

# Key Swing Concepts

## GRIP and Your Arm Hang

We are not all built the same. Our arm hang, length of arms, torsos and legs affect the way we hold the golf club and the way we stand to the ball. The “two knuckle” rule is not a standard. As you can see by the three different ways the arms hang below; two knuckles would not be neutral for the person in the first picture or the person in the third picture. Neutral is dependent on your personal arm hang.



With your hands hanging naturally at your side, move your hand to the golf club and place it on the handle at the same angle that it was resting at your side. If your arms are turned in, with your knuckles facing out, you will see more knuckles at address than someone who has their palms at their side when just standing.

If after you place your hands on the grip (and all other things being equal) you are not moving the ball the way you want, you can correct by placing your hands further to the left or to the right to achieve the optimal ball curvature. Starting off in a position other than neutral will promote compensations in the golf swing that have a tendency to compile and thus make the swing less repeatable.

Once you have determined how your left hand should sit on the golf club, your right hand has to “match”. Since your hands are the only connection to the golf club, it is imperative that they work together. So, once you get your left hand on, place your right hand on so that the right hand faces the left. A good check point is if you were to remove your fingers from the golf club your palms should be facing each other.

Furthermore, the lines that are created between your index fingers and thumbs should be running parallel to each other. Again, depending on your arm hang, the lines may point just left of your right shoulder, at your right shoulder or just right of your right shoulder.

### **POSTURE: Athletic and Balanced**

Once you have your hands on, it is important that your posture is athletic. Balance is the key to efficient, repeatable motion and if you are too much on your heels or too much on your toes at address, your club and body will seek balance throughout the entire swing. Depending on where you start, you will either fall back or forward at the finish if you are not grounded from the beginning.

A very easy way to find your “center” is to get set in your current posture in front of a mirror (you want a side view –picture A) With your left hand, take a golf club and place it behind your right shoulder, the shaft should drop down and intersect your knee cap and the middle of your foot.

If the shaft is hanging in front of the knee cap (picture B), you torso is leaning too far forward and you could potentially be on your toes.

Conversely, if the shaft is hanging behind your knee cap (picture C), you are more than like getting too far back on your heels and you will also notice that

your rear-end is sitting outside of your heels. Neither of these positions are “athletic” and don’t promote athletic motion.

Again, neutral is your best friend and neutral is in the center of your feet where your arches are.



## ARM HANG- Revisited

At address, your arms need to hang directly in front of you. The triangle that is created by your shoulders and arms should sit in front of your body (picture A) rather than left (picture B) or right (picture C).

If the triangle is out of position at address, it will be difficult to get it back to the right position at impact. If the triangle is “bowed” and on the right side of the chest at impact, you will have a tendency to hit it heavy, thin, left and right. This is because your right wrist gets flipped underneath in a scooped position. (picture D)



A



B



C



D

If the triangle is bowed past impact with the left arm on top of the right, you will also have the tendency to hit it right, heavy or thin. (picture E)



E



There are other contributing factors to the triangle breaking down, but if you can start with it in front of your body, there will be more of a chance you can return it to a position of consistent impact.

### **ELBOW Position and Arm Hang:**

When you are facing the mirror in your address position, the triangle should hang in front of your body and the inside of your left elbow should be slightly exposed (visible).



Your arms have to rotate in the golf swing and they cannot do it if they are not hanging properly at address. Obviously, if they don't rotate on the way back, they cannot rotate on the way through.

This lack of rotation can cause the club to be closed at the top of the backswing and for the club to work steeply as well. If this happens in the backswing, the downswing will be affected as well as the ball flight. Some ball flights would include heavy, thin and high right shots.

Your body type will affect the way that your arms hang. If you have a large chest, the tendency is to get your arms sitting on the sides of your body. This

encourages your wrists to get involved when moving the club away rather than being able to move the triangle away.

Lastly, with regards to arm hang; your arms should hang naturally from your shoulders and the distance from your body to the butt end of the golf club is generally one hand length.

Depending on your arms; if they are long or short compared to your torso, the butt end will point just below the belt buckle, at the belt buckle or just above. You want to avoid excessive bowing or cupping of the wrists at address. A good frame of reference is that when looking in a mirror from a side view, you want to be able to see to lines; one line from the club head to the butt end and another from your hands to your shoulders. It should not be one line.



YES



NO

## ALIGNMENT

Your feet, knees hips and shoulders should all be going the same way. If you get your body aligned at the target, your club face will be aimed right and more than likely you will hit a pull to get the ball to get back on

line. The peril is that the one time you actually get properly aligned, you will make the same pull swing and end up very far left of your target. Alignment

can affect the plane of the swing. Take the time to pick out an intermediate target (a target that is 12-18" in front of your ball- on the same line as your intended target).

Place your club down first and then step in with your feet. This sequence will promote better alignment and less miss hits due to poor alignment.

The fundamentals, regardless of your level of play are extremely important; aligning yourself slightly left or right can mean the difference between hitting the green or being the in the greenside bunker or hitting the fairway or catching the long rough, hazard or out of bounds. It is one of the simplest ways to eliminate a variable that wreaks havoc with the golf swing.

Finally, mirror work is very helpful. Because you don't have the opportunity to see yourself on the golf course, getting comfortable with your set-up and getting what you are feeling and what is real more closely aligned will promote more efficient, repeatable golf swings that will build confidence and lower your scores the fastest.

## **Understanding Your Ball Flight**

Every student of the game wants to hit it longer and straighter and would like to be more consistent. When I ask what is ailing them, the response varies.... “I am pulling it, hooking it, slicing it, etc”. I have learned over the years that the majority of the time, the student is truly not in tune with what is actually happening to their golf ball. This does not just apply to the average golfer; it rings true with single digit players as well as professionals.

As we previously, alignment is important. When you are practicing or playing, you need to pick a target. If you don't pick a target, it will be difficult to make a proper evaluation of your ball flight.

With regards to YOUR ball flight... if you have always hit a small cut, it is probably not the time to start trying to hit a draw and vice versa. Again, body type, injuries and natural set-up will influence what kind of ball striker you are.

Ultimately, we are trying to eliminate one side of the golf course. So, flipping back and forth as to what your “go-to” shot is going to be is not advisable nor will it lead to a consistent pattern of shots.

### **PATH vs. CLUBFACE**

The initial direction of the ball is determined by the forward swing path of the golf club through impact. The curvature of the ball flight is determined by the position of the clubface in relation to the club path.

So, if your ball starts left and curves to the right; that is a pull fade. If you ball starts right and curves left that is a push draw.

## **Making a Plan for Consistent Ball Flight**

Understanding your ball flight is a wonderful way for you to be your own coach.

Whether you are playing in the club championship, US Open or a quick 9 holes with your friends, the potential to hit a bad shot is real. In order to not hit two in a row, you can develop a one or two point list that addresses your tendencies.

For five rounds keep statistics as to where you are missing your tee shots and approaches with regards to direction. If you were confused as to your “tendency” it should be a bit more clear after five rounds.

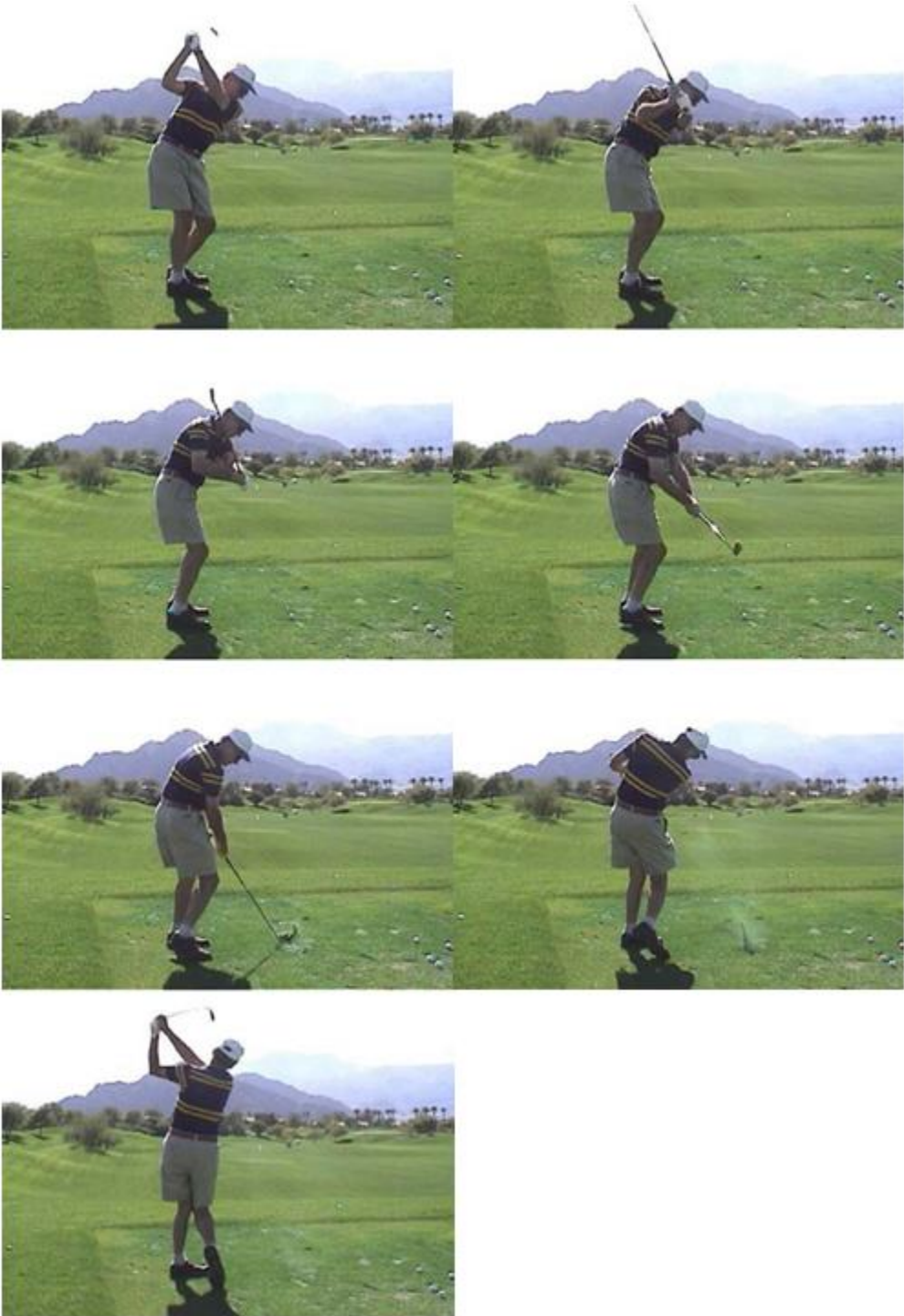
Below are some typical flaws that I see that produce weak, inconsistent shot making that can obviously wreak havoc on your score and potentially produce injury. In addition to the flaws addressed are drills to assist you in reducing the shots that typically ruin a potentially good scoring round.

### **PULL FADE- The dreaded “over the top/out to in”**

The premise of a good golf swing is that it is efficient and repeatable motion. As I discussed in the previous chapter, your body type, skill level, and previous injury has to be taken in to consideration.

Obviously, when writing for the masses, every body type/injury/ and skill level cannot be addressed. That being said, if the above ball flight applies to you and the swing below (path) looks familiar, there is hope!!!

The swing below is from the top of the backswing through impact. The backswing is not shown as the purpose is to illustrate the path on the way down. However, the backswing does affect what happens on the downswing.



In the third frame, you can see the shaft going through the neck and in the sixth frame, notice the left arm “buckling” past impact.

**DRILL:**

With your seven iron, take ten balls to a lie on the range where the ball is slightly above your feet. When hitting on this kind of lie, it is important to move your hands down on the handle to accommodate for the hill.

Before you hit balls, make some swings. Your swing may feel flatter than normal, this is a good sensation to have. When making the swings, take notice that your club is bottoming out in the same place that it started. If your club is still steep (or going through your neck in the downswing) you will hit the ground BEFORE your original address position.

**DRILL:**





Compare the second frame in this sequence to the second or third frame in the first sequence. Also take note of the left arm in the 6th frame. Before the arm was buckling and the elbow was toward the sky. The arm has “folded” now and the elbow is toward the ground. In this case, the club has the potential to release AND the club is coming more from the inside (frame 3 in the second series vs. frame 4 in the first series).

### **Why do I come over the top?**

There are many reasons that one would have a steep plane and the club would work over the top or out to in causing a pull and depending on the club face a fade or draw.

For the sake of space of time, I will address two.

1. Lack of Arm Rotation
2. Improper Loading at the Top of the Backswing



## Lack of Arm Rotation

In the previous chapter, we spoke about arm hang and how at address, you should be able to see the inner part of your left elbow at address if you were facing a mirror. The elbow itself point at the left hip.

This is a neutral position and will allow the arm and club to rotate in the backswing. If the arm is already pre-rotated at address, the club and arm will have a tendency to work above the plane in the backswing, be under-rotated and cause the club to work steeply in the downswing.

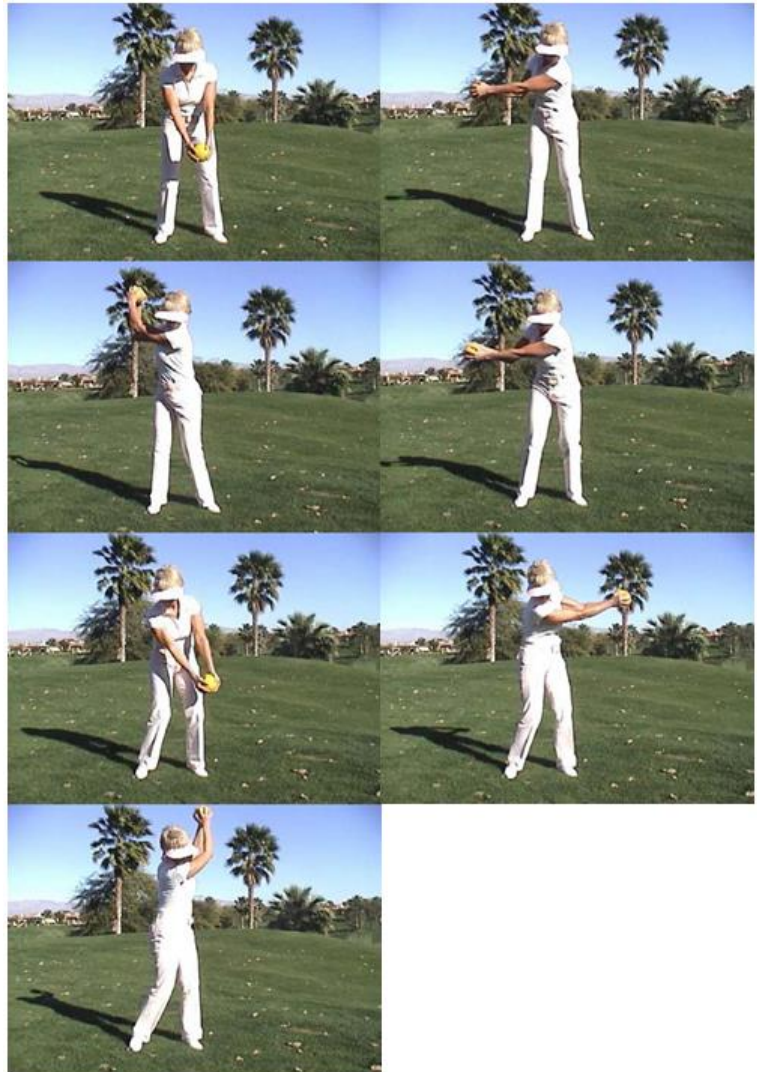


The drill below can be done with a 5 pound dumbbell or a small medicine ball. A five pound weight is plenty; the weight of the ball will assist with the arm rotation.

Arm rotation affects body motion and the way the golf club swings. Again, the more efficient you are, the more repeatable the motion.

Here is a “before” picture when the arms were not getting rotated. Notice the arm hang in the first frame versus the first frame of the above sequence.

Furthermore, take notice of the impact position in each of the sequences (frame 5 of both sequences). Take note of the rotation on the left side of impact as well.



In the second sequence, you will notice the left arm on top of the right. In the drill sequence, the arms have rotated.

Remember, the golf swing is generally a mirror image from one side to the other.

If the arms cannot rotate on the backswing, they cannot rotate on the downswing.

Many times, this lack of rotation can also cause a hook along with the pull as the club stays closed throughout the golf swing.



## Improper Loading at the Top of the Backswing

As you read in the previous section on set-up, the address position can affect the loading in the backswing. If the load is not correct in the backswing, the downswing ends up being a series of compensations to get the club back on the ball.



When the right hip gets high and the torso pitches toward the target, it is VERY difficult to get the club back on the ball and the body and club in synchronization on a consistent basis.

There were always be an exception. You may know someone who has fabulous timing and be out of “synch” at the top and make it work. However, the person who has the fewest compensations and can get out of their own way is going to hold up better under pressure as there is less to manufacture.

In order to have consistent loading, the set-up is first issue to address. Neutral is best. The triangle in the center of the body and the weight is evenly distributed on your feet (50/50 left and right).

Past your set-up, narrow your stance. When the stance is narrow, the hips are more able to rotate rather than get high. If the hips rotate, the torso will have a tendency to follow.

#### DRILL:

Narrow your stance to force the hips to rotate thus loading the backswing.



Improper loading of the backswing can cause several shots; high and right with loss of distance and low left. If the body cannot move, we tend to recruit from the only place that can and that is the arms.

The arms, however, are not the engine of the golf swing; the entire core is (which is the key to rotation).

An easy way to remember loading is you cannot go left if you haven't gone right. Think of any other sport that you have played in the past; throwing a ball, returning a serve, etc. If you tried to do either of these things in the above fashion, the ball would very rarely be propelled forward with any kind of velocity.

The pictures above are exaggerated examples so that you, the reader can truly see how these errors cause inconsistency. It, however, doesn't take much for the body to get out of sequence.

If your body motion mimics the pictures in the least, you will have to manufacture something in the downswing in order to get the club back on the ball.

The one time that you have poor timing, that can be the difference between shooting under par or breaking 90 or 80 for the first time or even worse, missing the cut.

## Fast Opportunities for Game Improvement

Swing mechanics are important; they lead to more consistent ball flight and consistent scoring. However, the game of golf is scoring rather than swinging... below are six ways to improve your score right now... these drills and exercises will get you focused on scoring today while you work long term on making consistent/efficient body movement for the future.

### **Bunkers**

Maybe you are new to the game or have had inconsistent success out of a greenside bunker. Here is a great way to practice to build confidence. To assist students with their confidence, I initially use a plank of wood in the bunker to help with the feel of the club gliding through the sand rather than digging.

In the bunker, your set-up is the key to your success. Feet should be shoulder width apart and, slightly open to counteract the open face. The club-face needs to be open throughout the shot and by opening the blade prior to putting your grip on, the clubface has a chance of staying open through the hitting area.

Acceleration and an open club-face are the key to getting you out of the bunker.

In order to develop confidence, try the drill below the next time you have a chance to practice.

### **DRILL:**

Get the board flush with the sand and at the front of the board, pile a handful of sand. Take your set-up and explode the sand out of the bunker and off the

board. This will make some noise but not hurt your golf club or you. After 5 to 10 shots, put a ball on top of the sand that is on the board and feel the same action.

Explode the sand out and out comes the ball. After you feel comfortable with those shots, remove the board and place a ball on a pile of sand in the bunker and make 5 to 10 shots.

When you are ready, place the ball in the bunker without the help of a pile of sand or the board.

Proper technique and confidence will lead to better bunker shots. By progressing through these steps, I know that you will be more confident the next time you hit a ball in to a greenside bunker.

### **Lag Putting**

Many golfers have a tough time gauging long distance putts. Long putts are difficult as a rule but even more so when not practiced.

Set-up is, as always, important. Getting yourself positioned in good posture, grip in the palms and facing each other. Set your sternum slightly behind the ball in order to get a better feel for the line and to allow the putter to swing on plane.

In addition to the drill below, make a habit of pacing off your putts during practice and during the round. The more familiar you are with how far 30, 40 and 50 feet actually are, the more likely you are to have success.

So, the next time you have 15 minutes, head to the putting green and play the “ladder game.”



## **DRILL:**

Place 15 balls the distance you want to work on from the fringe. The goal is to “build a ladder” from the fringe back to you. Putt the first ball to the fringe, the next just short of the first, etc... As you become more proficient, the balls are to be strung closer and closer together. When you “miss”, begin again. Play three times trying to beat your former score.

By building the ladder you are not only working on a specific distance to the fringe but also learning how to “die” putts in to the hole or in this case closer to the ball you hit previously.

## **Chipping: Low and Rolling VS. High and Soft**

Having the ability to hit different shots in different situations on the golf course is comparable to the different shots that you would hit on the tennis court or even in baseball... The terrain, pin placement, and the firmness of the greens will all play a part in what shot is appropriate.

Your set-up will dictate how the ball comes off the club whether it be high and soft or low and rolling. A common error I see is players trying to hit a higher/softer ball but set up with the ball back in their stance and their hands and weight pressed forward.

This is certainly one way to keep the ball down and roll but not too effective to get the ball to be higher and softer... If doing this with a wedge, you are effectively making it an 8 iron by removing some of the loft of the golf club.

So, if you would like to hit the ball higher and softer, change your set-up. Your ball position can be placed anywhere from the middle of your stance to just

inside your left heel (if you are a right handed golfer). Your hands hang in the center of your body and your weight distributed equally. Lastly, make sure that the leading edge of the golf club is not digging in to the turf. The club was meant to sit on its “back” or on the sole rather than on the leading edge.

Conversely, if you are trying to hit it lower and have it roll out move the ball back in your stance (just behind middle) and this will automatically get your hands and body weight slightly forward... there is no need to get the ball by the right foot and 80% of the weight forward... this does not promote consistency but rather digging the club into the ground or thinning the ball across the green.

### **No Pressure!! (Except in your feet)**

In order to not lose power and force throughout the golf swing, the feet must have continued ground pressure.

I see in both tour players and amateurs a loss of power due to the lack of pressure in their right heel at the top of their back swing. By feeling that load or pressure in the right heel at the top of the back swing, one is able to transfer the force from the ground to the golf club and then to the ball. If not firmly planted at address or too much on the toes, proper footwork cannot occur and the transference of force is lost.

In addition to the loss of power, the lack of foot pressure also contributes to the over the top move that we all try to avoid which leads to a weak slice and less distance. By getting the proper loading in the back swing, you have more of chance of keeping the club and body in balance and on plane resulting in more consistent ball striking.

## **DRILL:**

Try this the next time you are on the practice tee: Take some back swings with your left toe up in the air. Feel the amount of pressure you have in your right heel at the top of your back swing.

Position yourself in front of a mirror to see the difference. You should feel much more “loaded” and behind the ball, ready to make a powerful and dynamic downswing. You can make a downswing allowing that left toe to replant.

For added affect, turn the golf club upside down and grip it on the shaft just above the club head. You may find that when you load in that right heel, you can hear a definitive swoosh when making the down swing. This feel along with a feel of pressure in your right quadricep and rear-end is a good indication of proper loading.

## **Putting- Less wrists, more triangle**

Improving one’s putting is a quick and effective way to drop one’s handicap. Being consistent on the putting green can be achieved by creating a simple and repeatable motion each time.

I have observed many of my students using a lot of wrist action during the putting stroke. Poor posture and grip are typically two culprits as to why the wrists get involved in a shot that should be controlled by the back, shoulders and core.

The key to proper posture in the putting stroke is getting your arms to hang underneath your shoulders and putting the handle of the putter in the palm of your hands. By doing so, you will be less inclined to be “handsy” or “wristy” in

the putting stroke. However, if you still are having problems feeling the back, shoulders and core (abdominal area) assisting in making the putter move in a pendulum type motion, try the following drill.

### **DRILL:**

Take a golf ball and place it between the grip of the putter and the inside of right forearm, just above your wrist. If your wrists break down, the ball will fall out, giving you immediate feedback. Keeping your wrists and hands out of the putting stroke will encourage the shoulder/arms triangle to stay intact, thus creating a simple and efficient putting stroke.

This simple drill, with proper execution, will produce a more consistent path with your putter thus resulting in a more consistent ball roll and hopefully, more putts being made.

### **LACK OF CLUBHEAD SPEED**

So, you want to hit it further.... If the club is being controlled in the back swing; you are trying to “place” it, it cannot travel very quickly. If it is not traveling quickly, there is going to be very little momentum to propel the ball forward.

Width in the golf swing is great; however, it has to be coupled with the turning of the torso and the “setting “ or “wrist cock” in the golf swing in proper sequence.

Two drills that are fantastic for “synching” the body and club as well as increasing club head speed are as follows. You can actually hit balls like this but do it while using a seven iron and place the ball on a tee. If the ball is on a tee, you are more likely to focus on the drill rather than hitting the golf ball.

## 1. Start Forward

## 2. Push Down/Pull up

1. Start forward- this is a fantastic drill for momentum and “synching up” the golf club, arms and torso. Hover your club above the teed up ball.

Swing the clubhead forward 12-18 inches (keeping your torso square to the ball) and then back over the ball to the top of your backswing and then through to your finish. This is ONE motion and basically you are pushing the golf club forward and getting the club moving rather than starting from a static position.



2. To get the club moving earlier off the ball and to get your torso moving as well, get set up to the golf ball and when you move the club away, push down on the handle with your left hand while you are pulling up with the right and make your turn to the top of your backswing.

The club gets to the top of your backswing much quicker, with the assistance of your turn, thus creating more swing speed and hopefully, more distance.

\*\* The important part of this drill is that you still have to turn. If you don't turn and just "pick the club up", you will lose distance as you have eliminated your power source.

The game of golf is truly from 100 yards in. Hitting the driver in play is certainly important but having the ability to score with your short irons and putter is truly where the game is won.

## Putting Lessons and Tips

Ever wonder what it would be like to putt like a pro?

Name a golfer who doesn't dream of hitting every drive in the middle of the fairway, longer and slightly further than the one just hit.

Imagine flying every iron shot toward the flag and that crystal clear vision of rolling putt after putt right into the hole.

Dreaming is an essential part of the game of golf for which complete mastery is unattainable. Yet golfers always work toward that unmistakable feeling of hitting the ball just right, even for a moment and building up to that elusive perfect round or picture perfect score.




The truth is more strokes are lost on the short game than in any other way. Even more to the point is the number of strokes lost in putting alone. Having the perfect drive with an ideal landing spot is just the beginning. Keeping your putts to regulation can make all the difference in saving your hole, your round and your score.

When you're ready to go low, just like a pro, here are the putting tips you will need to make it happen. All the great masters of the putting stroke know they need solid technique, a steel trap mind and a body for golf.

Now, it's time to explore all the commonalities of great golfers.

### **A Look at the Pros**

Take a look at the following chart which shows the current LPGA leader board for pros regarding putting statistics. In first place is Michelle Wie with only 27.33 putts per round.

RANK	NAME	TOTAL PUTTS	TOTAL ROUNDS	PUTTS AVERAGE
1	 Michelle Wie	164	6	27.33
2	 Mi Jung Hur	337	12	28.08
3	 Suzuka Yamaguchi	281	10	28.10
4	 Haru Nomura	507	18	28.17
5	 Hyo Joo Kim	566	20	28.30
6	 Jessica Korda	230	8	28.75
7	 Cristie Kerr	695	24	28.96
8	 Alana Uriell	174	6	29.00
9	 Kristen Gillman	552	19	29.05
10	 Ally McDonald	523	18	29.06
11	 Stacy Lewis	407	14	29.07

To put this in perspective for the average golfer, consider this.

A golfer that averages a score of 85 hits 5 greens in regulation, 46% of fairways, has 33.7 total putts, 0.8 birdies per round, and 6.6 pars.

A golfer that averages a score of 100 hits 0 greens in regulation, 11% of fairways, has 38.3 putts, 0 birdies, and 1.3 pars.

\* [Source](#): Probable Golf Instruction

Now, how about your putting statistics?

If you either never track your putts or haven't in a while, this is a great time to start. To keep accurate stats, you only need to keep a separate line on your score card for the total number of putts per hole, for 18 holes.



Then, do this for a minimum sampling of 5 rounds of golf. This will be the first step is beginning to understand what kinds of patterns you've developed so you know exactly what to start working on as well as monitoring your progress of improvement.

Here is a chart you can use to get you off to the right start. Use the rating system below to give yourself a number based on the 2 separate categories: putting and setup.

Ratings:

Excellent = 1, Very Good = 2, Average = 3, Fair = 4, Poor = 5

PUTTING	SETUP
___ 1. Short putts	___ 1. Posture
___ 2. Long putts	___ 2. Knee flex
___ 3. Right to left	___ 3. Spine tilt
___ 4. Left to right	___ 4. Weight distribution
___ 5. Downhill	___ 5. Preshot routine
___ 6. Uphill	___ OVERALL SETUP
___ 7. Distance control	
___ 8. Technique	
___ OVERALL PUTTING	

## The Putting Stroke

There is nothing more important in putting than making sure you are following the basic fundamentals of posture, grip and alignment. Once you have a solid foundation, you can begin exploring different drills and techniques that help you continue to improve at a rapid pace. If you establish a consistent set up, you are more likely to produce a putting stroke you can count on from one hole to the next and one that holds up under pressure.



The two most important elements of putting are learning how to control distance and direction. *Direction is controlled by your clubface and the path of your stroke.* By establishing a solid grip, your clubface has a better chance of staying square and following the intended path along the target line. A good set up will ensure your putting stroke will be consistent along the path, both back and through.

This leads us to distance control. Distance *is controlled by the length of your backswing and the tempo of your stroke*. When we talk about length, we are referring to how far back you take your club in the backstroke.

Tempo refers to the total amount of time it takes to move your putter from start to finish in your stroke. Interestingly, all golfers can have slightly different versions of tempo.

Some tempos are more relaxed with a nice smooth back and forth sweeping motion while others tempos may be more energetic and punchy, with a faster pace both back and through. Neither is more correct than the other. It usually reflects on the golfers' personality or even the way they have learned to play golf.

Once you have mastered distance and direction, you get to the fun and challenging part of putting-the art (and science) of reading the greens.

Let's start by going through the fundamentals of distance and direction.

### **The Set Up**

-Hands should sit under the shoulders and arms and elbows resting on the side of your body.

-The thumbs sit on top of the grip and the palms of both hands oppose one another.

-Slight knee flex and bend over from the waist and hips.

-The eye line is over or slightly inside the ball.

-Ball position is forward in the stance under the left eye. This controls the path of the putter.

-Your stance is square to slightly open depending on how you see your target line.

- The shaft of the putter sits at 90 degrees to the target line.
- Your posture is created by the length of the putter and your weight is 50/50.

### **The Stroke**

- The path moves back straight and through for short putts and gradually moves inside on long putts.
- Direction starts with a square putter face at set up.
- You control the face with the grip and the path with the movement of your shoulders and forearms.
- Keeping your head and lower body still and quiet throughout the stroke will help produce better results under pressure.

### **Key Points**

- The length of the backswing controls distance.
- The tempo of the stroke changes with the speed of the green.
- Trust the read of the green from the lowest point of the green.

### **Purposeful Practice**

One of the best ways to make sure you are improving rapidly with your putting techniques is to make sure that every practice session has a purpose. It is still common today to see golfers wandering around aimlessly on the putting green in the name of 'practice', but without any real mission or sense of purpose.

Here are some great ways to make your putting practice sessions count.

1) Start by tracking all your putts for the next few rounds you play to get a sense of where you need to improve most. Statistics don't lie so you will be able to quickly observe the most critical mistakes you are making.

2) Focus on the 'money putts' for fast improvement. Some of the biggest money shots are from the 5 to 8 foot range. Begin by placing 4 or 5 balls about 5 feet out from the flag. Taking one ball at a time, practice putting to the hole. When you get them all in, step back to 6 feet. Continue out to 8 feet, then start all over again from a different slope of the putting green or from a different angle of attack.

3) Change your thinking about how you approach your putts. The majority of all golfers, think in terms of numbers, for example, 'I'm putting for Birdie or putting for Par'. This is one of the worst things a golfer can do! Instead, practice on making a good solid stroke. It relieves the pressure and puts the emphasis in a more positive and productive place.

## Role Models of Inspiration

Let's take a look at some famous female swing sequences so we have an idea of what to try and model after. Remember each body and swing is unique so it is better to use this as a reference as opposed to trying to be exactly like any one golfer.

### [Annika Sorenstam](#)



## Lorena Ochoa



## Ann Van Dam

Current longest hitter on tour at 291 yards



## Troy Mullins

Current longest hitter on long drive circuit at 402 yards.



## What are the key long drive concepts?

### Principle #1:

#### **A Big Shoulder Turn**

The most accepted rule is to have a 2 to 1 ratio for your shoulders vs. hip turn. That typically means a 90 degree shoulder turn and 45 degree hip turn. Butch Harmon once described Tiger Woods' ratio as 3 to 1 with a 90 degree shoulder turn and 30 degree hip turn.



## **Principle #2:**

### **Solid Leverage**

There are several places where golfers use leverage to create distance.

**Lag:** Lag refers to the angle of the shaft relative to the position of the hands/wrists at impact. The hands return to the impact position first while the club head lags behind. Whatever core speed you generate on your downswing, it is multiplied by the lag you release at impact. The key is to not release your lag until you get to the impact zone.



**The Rule of 90's:** At the top of the swing, your shoulders will form a right angle. Your club will also form a right angle at the top.



### **Principle #3:**

#### **Good Balance**

A good swing is balanced. It is not on the toes or the heels. It is not leaning back and it is not leaning forward. It is balanced in every respect of your contact with the ground and allows you to have strong dynamic control.

It also takes on a different meaning when you talk about the balance of the body. It is also in balance.

### **Principle #4:**

#### **Center Contact**

All golfers know about the sweet spot. Your chance of hitting the perfect drive will always hinge on your ability to have the perfect contact....not necessarily the perfect swing. There are lots of ways to move through your transition from backswing to forward swing. Those moves (think Jim Furyk) can vary, but the contact point rarely does

### **Principle #5:**

#### **Swing Speed**

We know with certainty that golfers can increase drive distance by training for speed. You can do this with simple golf drills and enhance your results with exercises and stretches that support your efforts. The good news is that it takes very little effort and time to improve.

Here are two more revelations about distance principles.

- width and extension can be used to your advantage

The terms "width" and "extension" are both used to explain the distance between your hands and your torso during your backswing.

By extending your arms away from your body is the way to achieve this. Think in terms of leverage! The farther away from the ball your hands are at the top, the greater the leverage.

And what does greater leverage do for you? That's right...more clubhead speed!



Where can the body break down and take some of this leverage away from you?

- Excessive bending at the left elbow
- Poor weight transfer
- Lack of good core strength
- Poor spinal rotation



Big hitters all have good "width" and "extension".

## **SPEED TRAINING FOR GOLF**

*This is the key addition to your current workout plan!* In fact, increasing distance off the tee is the most common reason why a golfer will start a golf-specific conditioning program. In order to hit the ball farther with the same club a golfer must increase club head speed or better coordinate the movement directly leading to better ball contact.

There are several ways to increase club head speed:

1) Improving technique -improve timing and release through ball impact. Maintaining the angle between the shaft and the forearm as the golfer approaches the ball has been shown to increase club head speed.

2) Equipment - properly fitted equipment is essential!

3) Fitness – Program developed must concentrate on the development of speed and power. (please see the separate book for [Power Workouts for Women](#))

We have already talked about the basic principles of distance. Our goal is to perform drills which help us understand and execute each of the following:

- Learn how to move our upper body and lower body in sync (this increases our movement efficiency and increases our probability of making center contact)

- Learn how to develop the maximum lag position (this allows us the ability to use the most leverage for distance)

- Develop faster speed using over speed and under speed drills

- Develop better balance in our swing using bilateral training (we will do this from a technical and physical standpoint with drills and exercises)

- Learn how to find our optimal rotation for a big shoulder turn (this will be addressed in the fitness section as it relates to the flexibility in your hips, shoulders and spine.

### Lag Drills:

At the top of your backswing you are in your maximum lag position. Your left arm and your club shaft form a 90 degree angle. If you rotate your body to the target without letting your arms drop down towards the ball your body rotation will carry your lag position to the impact zone.

Turn towards the target first, before you let your arms swing down away from your shoulders.

Learning lag is best shown through a series of positions or the rules of 90.



Your shoulders should form a 90 degree angle at the top of the backswing. If you are right handed, check your mirror when you are in your backswing. If you are having trouble getting here, pay attention to shoulder stretches in the fitness section of this book.



Your club should be in a 90 degree angle between your left arm and the shaft at the top of the backswing.



Here is a golfer at 90 degrees or a near perfect L shape of the left arm and club in a prolonged lag position.

Lag Tip: Practice the positions above in front of a mirror. Also practice taking only short swings with a full follow through. Keep your backswing to only a half way back position and follow through at full strength and power. This will allow you to focus on the action and not the outcome.

### Whoosh Drills:

Many golfers are familiar with a whoosh drill. It answers the single most important question about lag....

“How do I know where I am releasing my lag?”

There are lots of training aides on the market to help you understand lag. I am not here to promote any particular products for this as many of them work with the same purpose. The popular training devices like the SpeedWhoosh, the Golf Stick, the Speed Stik, etc. all make a sound like a whoosh or a crack so you can get feedback on where your club is releasing stored energy.

### Whoosh Drill:

Turn your club head upside down and use your normal grip positioned near the clubhead.

Take a couple of swings and pay attention to where you hear the whoosh sound.

**Where you hear the whooshing sound is where your club is traveling the fastest and it is where you are releasing your lag.**



If you hear your whoosh at the top, then you are releasing your lag too early. It is also called casting.

If you hear the whoosh at the back of the swing or the bottom of the swing, you are releasing too early. You are stopping your rotation at the ball.

The objective is to move your whoosh as far forward in your swing as possible. The reason is because you still want to be accelerating at the target as you rotate through the impact zone.

As soon as you stop your rotation, your hands will release.

### **Body Motion Drills:**

Hips and legs are the most powerful muscles in the body. As you come down from the top of the backswing, fire your hips as hard as you can. Push off the back leg and on down the line. Notice in the third photo how far forward those hips are relative to the arms. The hips are well past impact as the arms approach it.



### **Body Motion Drills:**

A strong leverage point is to have your upper arm connected (and stay connected) to your chest.





Here is a drill that can help.

Place a towel or club head cover under your left arm. This helps get our body orientation more towards the target. This helps us avoid having a swing where our arms separate and try to do the work on their own. The arm muscles aren't as strong as using your core to drive the motion.

Start in your address position then take a backswing. When the upper arm comes across your chest, place a towel underneath your arm. This will allow your left arm to stay on top of your chest. Every long driver you will notice has their upper arm connected at impact. Your swing will finish when you are facing your target.

### Body Motion Drill:

This will help you build strength and help you build a solid swing plane. It forces you to swing both clubs in balance using your arms, wrists and upper body and allowing the lower body to remain stable. Grip two clubs - one in each hand - and make sure you choke up on the clubs and start with both of them off the ground. Keep your hands a few inches apart during the drill.





### Body Motion Drill:

Body motion is the winding and unwinding of the upper body back and through the golf swing. The lower body resists the turning of the upper body in the backswing and this resistance unleashes power at impact.

The coiling of the body around the spine angle controls the weight shift from one side of the body to the other allowing the arms to swing through impact. Pivots are excellent drills to practice because they help you improve your stability, flexibility and tempo.

The pivot is the essence of the golf swing – moving around your spine - and by working on controlling the movement of your body you will have more control of your arms and a better feel for impact.

#### How to Perform the Drill:

1. Place the club in front of your shoulders and cross your arms and assume your set up position
2. Make sure your left shoulder is slightly higher than your right
3. Feel your left shoulder move down and across, over your right knee
4. Your head will move slightly to the right and your weight will shift to your right side
5. In the transition feel your left knee, left hip and left shoulder move away from your right side and shift the weight to your left side

6. Uncoil the upper body and feel your right shoulder move across over your left knee
7. Finish the drill with your weight on your left side and your right shoulder facing the target.



### **Bilateral Training Drills:**

Your body wants symmetry. With every move you make, one muscle is lengthening while another is shortening. It seeks balance from top to bottom, left to right and front to back. When it doesn't have balance, it breaks down in injury, stress and short and tight muscles. Your body is in a constant battle to try and remain in balance.

Swinging the club on a regular basis and placing the majority of the load on one side of the body is destructive. This is the reason most (if not all) long drivers make sure to train 'bilaterally'.

All this means is that all swings are performed from the right side, then also from the left side.



### **Speed Drills:**

Speed drills are where you can expect to see the most dramatic improvement with your swing speed and distance. Remember this is not about swinging the club hard.

Here are some good tips to keep in mind:

- Hands stay loose, but have a firm grip. (common problems are a weak grip or a grip that is too tight)
- Hinge the club and hold the angle
- Get wide in your backswing and move into a full extension
- Think ‘right elbow to right hip’ (backswing to downswing)
- Begin slower on the backswing, then full speed on the downswing
- Speed MUST be at the bottom of the swing
- Keep your nose behind the ball to create the right launch angle

### **Should you use a weighted club or no weight?**

We have all seen baseball player swing a bat while “on deck” in order to make it easier to accelerate their normal bat when facing a pitcher.

**Research has shown that ideally the weight of the bat should remain within 15 – 20 % of the player normal bat weight.** If the weight is either too heavy or too light the muscles behave abnormally and the benefits of the exercise are lost. A simple way to increase the weight of the club by an appropriate weight is to tape a golf ball to the club face or purchase lead tape from a golf retail shop.

Simply weight your 5 iron. Based on this weight, figure out what an additional 15 – 20% weight increase would be. Place the lead tape on the back of the club head until this weight is obtained. Swing the weighted club normally but concentrate on making the club head “whoosh” as it passes through impact.

Ideally, using a 5 iron other than the 5 iron from your normal set would be recommended.

The more difficult aspect of the program is to obtain a second club that weights 15 – 20% less than your standard 5 iron. This can be often be

obtained by utilizing a ladies or senior golf shafted 5 iron.

An alternative method can be to use your normal 5 iron, holding the club upside down with the grip facing down towards the ground. Once again swing concentrating on making the “swoosh noise as the club passes through impact.

## **Recommended Speed Training Program**

Duration: Optimal time-frame is 12-weeks

Frequency: 4 training sessions/week

Warm-up sequence: Standard - Heavy - Light – Standard

Warm-up sequence utilizes dry swings only, 10 repetitions of each.

Concentrate on making the “swooshing sound through the impact position.

### **Training Program:**

Complete 15 swings concentrating on the “whoosh” with your normal 5 iron making ball contact. Do not worry about the ball flight or centeredness of contact during this exercise.

While performing the above exercise program, try to keep your arms as relaxed as possible. Another important tip is to pay special attention to the angle the club makes with your lead forearm. Numerous research studies have shown that maintaining a large angle between the forearm and shaft deep into the downswing is essential to maximize club head speed.

**Basic speed training rule: Spend 1/3 of your time with a weighted club and 2/3 of your time with a lighter club**