
Improving Your Short Game For Lower Summer Scores

In a golf landscape dominated by distance obsession, mastering the subtle art of the short game remains the surest path to lower scores and tournament success.



GREG SUTTON
CONTRIBUTOR



With outdoor season in full swing, many golfers are rediscovering that frustrating truth: putting and chipping account for nearly half of all strokes in a typical round. As driving distances continue to increase across the game, the ability to finesse shots around and on the green remains the great equalizer between good and great players.

Recent statistics from the PGA Tour underscore this reality. The top 10 players in Strokes Gained: Putting averaged 1.5 fewer strokes per round than those ranked 100th and below—a six-stroke difference over a typical tournament. Meanwhile, driving distance showed significantly less correlation with overall scoring average.

For amateur golfers, the disparity is even more pronounced. According to Golf Digest's latest analysis, recreational players lose approximately 65% of their strokes to par within 100 yards of the hole, despite spending the majority of practice time focused on full swings.

"The indoor golf season offers the perfect opportunity to maintain your short game edge," explains renowned coach Dave Pelz. "Modern simulators can precisely measure putting stroke metrics and green reading success rates, providing data that outdoor practice often can't deliver with the same consistency."

Experts recommend dedicating at least half of your remaining indoor sessions to short game work before fully

transitioning outdoors. Particularly beneficial are putting drills focusing on distance control rather than just direction, as speed control accounts for approximately 80% of successful putting.

With summer tournaments and friendly competitions approaching, those who have diligently sharpened their short game indoors will likely find themselves with a distinct advantage when stakes are highest.

“Everyone wants to bomb it off the tee, but championships are won and lost around the greens,” says three-time major winner Jordan Spieth. “The golfers who stay committed to their short game practice schedule year-round are the ones holding trophies when it matters most.”