



Complete Game Coaching & Golf Travel Adventures

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PUTTING

Before we start with the skill elements it is important to recognize that your putter selection is the first step to success. Randomly selecting a putter from a rack is flirting with danger. There are a few putter specifications to match to your anatomy and putting style. Length, Hosel Design – offset or non-offset and Club head – shape and weighting, are the top three to consider. In my opinion, a better fit equals better aim and a greater chance of sinking putts!

Now that you have the best fit in your hands, it is time to put a good stroke on the ball. To do that I recommend that you honour these Five Rules:

1. Use a very light hold.
2. Establish a comfortable posture that places your eyes within a zone of one ball below/above target line.
3. Square the putter face to the target line and set the sweet spot/ line behind the ball.
4. Stroke in a pendulum motion using the shoulder muscles and eliminate any wrist action.
5. Steady everything else, anchor the eyes at the back of the ball, after your final look at your target line.

These fundamentals should be inserted into a repeatable pre-stroke routine, which starts at the back of the ball looking down your intended line. I guarantee your putting will improve.

“Perfect Practice Makes Perfect”:

I believe the way you practice is just as important as the act of practicing all together! I have seen many players with poor practice technique, start with Block Practice - repeating the same location over and over. Next make your practice game-like, this is called Random Practice. In addition, training with purpose is systematic; I tend to promote a *priority practice routine*, like an *order of operations*.

What is more important, speed control or your line (aim)? Well, both are pretty darn important, however I say get your speed down first. Your natural instincts (let's not forget these!), will not misdirect your line too much and when you are hole-high your chance of sinking the second putt is very good. Therefore, first order of operations or priority is speed control.

Next order of operations is getting confident with those short ones, from about 3-4 feet to the hole. If you have lagged in a dandy you should feel like a 4-footer is a tap-in.

Then, we add the reading of the green and/or picking the line to our speed control.

A couple of pointers around this last skill are: putts generally break away from mountains and towards water and the break will come in the latter half of the putt when the ball starts to slow down. To assist with reading the green take your eyes off of the green itself and have a look around noting the lay of the land. Note: most amateurs tend to under-read the break, so if in doubt add more (research suggests double what you think on those nasty side hill lies)!

Here is a list of some skill specific practice drills for putting:

FUNDAMENTALS

1. Pendulum Feel

- Place a sponge between your wrists and stroke from the shoulders

2. Find the Sweet spot

- Tape a penny on both the heel and toe of the putter and putt.

3. Zen of Putting

- Place the ball logo at the back where the putter will make contact with it
- Place two tees just beyond the length of the putter head
- Stroke through the tees, keeping your eyes anchored on the logo

DISTANCE CONTROL

1. Stroke to Fringe

- Putt from 20, 30, 40 feet
- Strive to keep within 10% of the total distance, ex. 30 feet = within 3 feet

2. Eyes Open / Eyes Closed

- Use two balls and practice a variety of distances
- Putt the first one with eyes open and the second with eyes closed

SHORT PUTTS

3. Four Corners

- Place four balls around the hole making a square; start at 3 feet, then 4 feet, etc.
- Putt in 3 rounds in a row (total of 12), if you miss one you must start again

READING THE GREEN / PICKING THE LINE

4. Ultimate Target

- Pick a sloping putt and place a tee in the ground where you believe the break to be
- Stroke some putts, seeking to have the ball curl around the tee and feed to the hole (move the tee based on your discoveries)

If you intend to improve your overall game then you must become a good putter. To become a good putter there are fundamental rules to respect, on the road to building your individualized style. Many refer to the putting green as the “dance floor” and the act of putting as an art. It all comes down to this final stage. The best way to prepare is with a class act practice routine that is purposeful and game-like. So when your turn is up, you can show up and perform. I wish you the best in your choreography of the dance!