

## **BASIC SWING FUNDAMENTALS**

Now that the golf season is back in full swing, many of you will be looking to improve your accuracy, consistency and your driving distance. Although there are many factors that improve all of these areas, the one constant that I always check first with any individual's golf mechanics are their basic swing fundamentals.

The swing fundamentals are essential to achieving lower scores and an over all enhanced enjoyment of the game. These swing fundamentals would include: the grip; the stance; your posture; your alignment and then the finish position. These fundamentals are considered the most important positions in golf and should be addressed prior to improving the motion of your swing.

**THE GRIP** – How your place your hands on the golf club directly influences whether the golf club is square at impact. What this means is that a poor grip will result in poor direction and distance.

Most players will grip the club the way it feels comfortable to them, generally speaking they will hold the handle of the club in their palm instead of their fingers. When you hold the handle of the club in the palm the tendency is to grip the club too tight, and as a result your lower hand will dominate and the end result will be a flip at the bottom of the swing or at impact. In most cases this will result in the ball going too high and will create a slice. Gripping the club too tight can also cause you to top and or miss the ball.

When taking your grip ensure that you hold the handle of the club in your fingers with your thumbs down the middle of the handle. The grip pressure should be very light, as if you are holding a baby bird (do not kill the bird). When you swing it will feel like the club will want to fly out of your hands, do not worry it will not. This is the feeling of a relaxed grip pressure. When you swing with a relaxed grip pressure the club head will actually square up to the path the club is traveling and the end result will be straighter ball flight, more solid contact resulting in more distance.

**THE STANCE** – There are seven key components to a good stance. They include your feet shoulder width, knees slightly flexed, bum pushed out to help create good posture, arms relaxed, chin up and eyes on the ball.

When stepping up to the ball you need to ensure that your feet are not too far apart. By having too wide of a stance will restrict your lower body movement throughout the swing forcing you to use only your arms. This will directly influence your distance. Ensure that your feet are no wider that the width of your shoulders.

Flexing of the knees helps put you into a more athletic and balanced position and will also assist you in creating torque (which creates distance) in the backswing. Arch your

lower back or stick your butt out. This helps create a straight back and great posture and helps eliminate tension in your back.

The next two are extremely important. They include allowing your arms to hang from your shoulders. What we want to avoid is extending your arms away from your body at address or reaching for the ball. This can cause you to top the ball and lose plenty of distance. Secondly you want to make sure that your chin is up. This is to ensure that you have room for your shoulder to move under your chin in the backswing. If your chin is down in your chest then you will likely bend your arms in your backswing creating inconsistency in your shots. Finally, ensure that you keep your eyes on the ball until you make contact.

**ALIGNMENT** – Most players have a problem ensuring that they are aligned to their target. What is important here is to line your self up to your intended target line. What this means is that if you are a right handed golfer and you have a 20 yard slice on most of your shots, then you have to be sure that you align your body in such a way that allows for that slice. In other words you have to align yourself approximately 20 yards to the left of where you want the ball to finish. By doing so your ball will start left of your target, and then fade into the green.

To align yourself properly, ensure that your feet, knees, hips and shoulders are all traveling towards your intended target line. This will allow the path of your club to travel towards your target.

**THE FINISH POSITION** – Considered the most important position in golf. This is where all of your weight transfers onto your front foot after impact with your hips and shoulders facing the target, your hands and golf club is above your shoulder with the club pointing towards the ground and your back foot is rolled up on its toe.

By doing so you ensure that you have used your whole body and that the golf club is at its maximum speed when you make contact with the ball. This position should not be under-estimated and is guaranteed to increase distance, accuracy and a solid ball contact.