
Finally in the Cup

A New Approach for Mastering the Art and Science of
Putting

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Introduction

As a teaching professional I have a first hand perspective to the practice habits of most amateurs. It's like a broken record. They arrive at the golf course, pull their clubs out of the trunk of their car, and walk right over to the range. It was as though the putting green didn't even exist.

I have been witnessing this country club attitude for too long, I felt obligated to write this book to help make a paradigm shift. There's no other area of the game that can improve your score as much as putting. No matter your ability level, learning how to putt can help you break 100, 90, 80, or even 70.

There's a reason why the worldwide average score for amateurs is still over 100. Amateurs don't practice putting. They don't because it's boring, a hassle, and not fun. Why would they practice putting when they can go right to range and pound balls?

Golfers are obsessed with the long drive and the feeling of a well struck golf shot. It has plagued us from the beginning. This obsession drives us away from the putting like nothing else. When we finally do decide to roll a few putts, they are meaningless. Sometimes we don't even know what we are supposed to do. We grab a couple balls, aim for a hole, and hope it goes in.

The level of excellence we constantly dream about will never be achieved by pounding golf balls. It lies in the one club in our bag we neglect the most - our putter. It's the final frontier in golf. If we practice our putting as much as we hit balls our scores would drop. The paradigm shift needs to happen.

Not having a systematic approach to putting is the main reason we don't succeed. We have never been taught the right process to rolling the ball into the cup. This book is about helping you develop a strategy before you even pull the putter out of the bag. You will learn the art of reading greens, the set up, the feel and mechanics of the stroke, getting the ball started on the right path, and other drills to give you more accuracy and control.

Art vs. Science

Putting is a combination of art and science. In order to be successful, you have to learn and respect the simplicity of both. Getting into too much detail will only confuse you. The more complex the stroke, the more difficult it is to repeat. The following definitions will give you better insight into the difference between the art and science of putting.

Science of Putting: A series of physical motions with a flat faced club to roll an round ball into a hole on a smooth surface, under the affect of gravity, slope, and speed of green.

Art of Putting: Imagining the roll of one's ball over an undulating surface, translating that information into a pace of swing that rolls the ball into the cup.

You probably noticed the art of putting involves more imagination, creativity, and feel. On the other hand, the science of putting involves the tangible factors such as the objects in use, gravity, slope, and speed. Learning to blend both aspects is the key to becoming a master putter.

This material is simple and easy to understand, it is not designed to confuse you. It will not go into incredible detail. It will only present those areas that require your immediate attention. The set up and mechanics of the stroke are the science, while the feel of the stroke and your pre putt strategy is the art.

I truly believe when you learn to combine the art and science you will be on the right path to amazing results.

Part 1

The Set Up

The Grip

The goal is to position your body so nothing abnormal affects the stroke. That means you want to set up in a very natural position. Natural body positions are the ones our body will shift towards if we don't get in the way. If you start natural, the stroke itself will become natural.

Since the arms are one of the main drivers of the stroke, you don't want interfere with the natural position of the arms. In this way you hold the club in your palms. You don't want to hold the club in your fingers. This eliminates compensations and takes the hands out of the stroke.

They key is to establish a grip that accommodates the relaxed position with our arms hanging by our sides. Another reason we hold the club in our palms is because there is no wrist hinge during the putting stroke. The following photographs will illustrate the proper grip with the putter in each hand.





You can use the same grip as your full swing if you choose. Otherwise I recommend a grip I learned from Stan Utley, a former PGA Tour player. I started using it a couple years ago and it works great for me. Here's how it works. Use an overlap grip, except your right pinkie does not overlap the pointer and middle fingers, it overlaps the middle and ring fingers. In other words, move the overlap down one notch. In this position your left pointer finger runs straight down the left side of the shaft.

Keys to remember:

1. Hold the club in the palms
2. Right palm and back of left hand face the target
3. Place both thumbs on top of the shaft
4. Secure the grip with your fingertips

Stance and Posture

Your goal is to stand in a manner that allows the putter to swing correctly. Since the putting stroke is so small in comparison to the full swing, you must realize how the factors of the set up will greatly influence the performance of your stroke. Your stance and posture are crucial.

Don't stand too wide, and don't stand too narrow. When you stand too wide it inhibits your ability to rotate your shoulders. When you stand too narrow, you're not providing your body with solid base. You could lose balance very easily. The ideal stance positions the feet either shoulder width or slightly inside shoulder width. This provides the stroke with maximum support.



One of the most common faults is slouching. So many amateurs slouch forward and round their spine angle. This creates too much resistance in the stroke. Just like the full swing, your spine angle is the axis by which you rotate. Anytime you round the spine angle you're creating inefficiency.



Slouching does not produce consistent results. It places the elbows either too far behind the body, or extending off to the sides. It puts too much pressure on the hands to perform the stroke. Remember, tilt forward from the hips and keep your back fairly straight.

Tilted from the hips with your back straight, you want to be in a position so that your eyes come to rest over the center of the inside edge of the ball. With your eyes over the ball they are on top of the target line. This gives your eyes the best optical advantage to make sure that the leading edge of the putter is lined up at right angles to the intended line. It also sets up the perfect view to monitor a path that travels slightly inside going back, back to square at impact, and slightly inside going forward. You lose these advantages if your eyes rest too far inside or outside the ball. Please refer to following photographs.



Finally, you want the arms slightly flexed at the elbows. The best way to describe it is to feel the elbows resting softly underneath the rib cage. There should be no tension at all. The arms and elbows are in a very relaxed position. From this position the club shaft and forearms create a straight line. When you feel your elbows resting gently underneath your rib cage, you're in a natural position.



Since the putting stroke is a smaller version of the full swing, it's critical you establish a posture that your body agrees with. The key is to feel natural. The following photograph illustrates the correct posture.



Keys to remember:

1. Tilt from the hips
2. Eyes directly over the ball, or inside edge of the ball
3. Arms slightly flexed at the elbows (shaft and forearm create straight line)

Alignment

Like the full swing, alignment is a critical aspect to making more putts. There are a couple things to consider with your putter. First, you want to take a stance with your feet parallel to your high point (you will learn about the high point later. For now, just imagine the high point as your target line). Getting your feet square to the high point is the first step. The next step is your forearm alignment. You never want to have your front or back forearm resting above the other. This creates an off plane stroke - one that travels from inside to outside or from outside to inside. The final element is your shoulders. You want to square your shoulders with the line of your feet. If you can set your shoulders, forearms, and feet all parallel with the high point of your path you are in very good shape.





Key to remember:

1. Feet, shoulders, and forearms are square to the target line

Ball Position

Ball position is a common argument. Amateurs are always tinkering with different positions in their stance. No wonder their results are inconsistent. They have not consistently committed to one position. Here's what you want to do. Position the putter head in the middle of your stance. and play the ball slightly forward. Do not place the ball any further forward in your stance. The leading edge of the putter would have too much room to roll over and close down. We don't want to set ourselves up for this type of action. We are looking for consistent results. Positioning the club in the middle and playing the ball slightly forward will work best.





Keys to remember:

1. Putter in the middle of your stance
2. Ball slightly forward

Part 2

Feel and Mechanics of the Stroke

Main Drivers of the Stroke

“Unless we could swing the putter on a perfectly vertical axis, which doesn’t happen in golf, we have to swing on an arc.”

The putting stroke is a combination of the arms and shoulders working together. There is no weight transfer and no wrist hinge. Those are the most important mechanics you need to know right now. I will elaborate on each of them, but for now, if you can master them you’re on the path to making more putts.

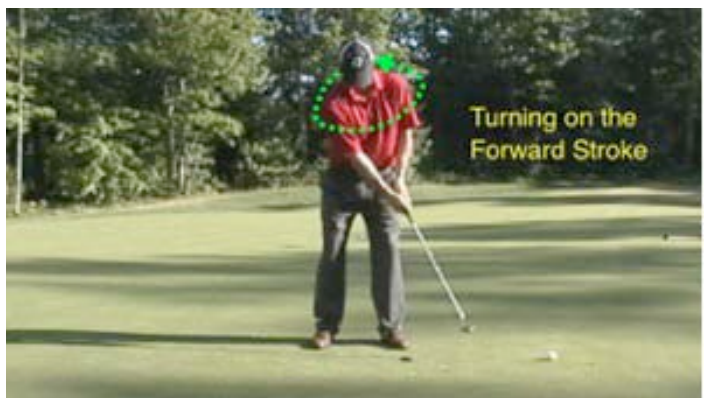
The feeling on the back stroke comes from a combination of your left shoulder turning towards your chin and your left arm extending. The right arm responds by softening and folding against your torso. At the completion of the back stroke the plane of your forearms will point right of the target.



The feeling on the forward stroke comes from a combination of your right shoulder turning towards your chin and your right arm extending. The left arm responds by softening and folding against your torso. At the completion of the forward stroke the plane of your forearms will point left of the target.



One of the most common faults of amateurs and pros is tilting the shoulders. On the back stroke, the left shoulder tilts down towards the left foot rather than turning under the chin. On the other hand, during the forward stroke the right shoulder tilts down towards the right foot rather than turning under the chin. Natural body positions do not agree with tilting. You must learn to turn your shoulders rather than tilt them. Turning around your spine angle is the most natural and consistent method. Think of the putting stroke as a smaller version of the full swing. The cornerstones to efficient motion is a consistent spine angle. Wouldn't it hold true in putting?



Keep in mind, on the back stroke your left shoulder does not travel all the way to your chin – it only travels a small amount closer. The shoulders hardly move on short putts. It's only a concept you need to be aware of. It makes you think of turning rather than tilting. We are working with a smaller version of the full swing. The spine angle is your axis. Learning to rotate around the spine angle is key to understanding this principle.

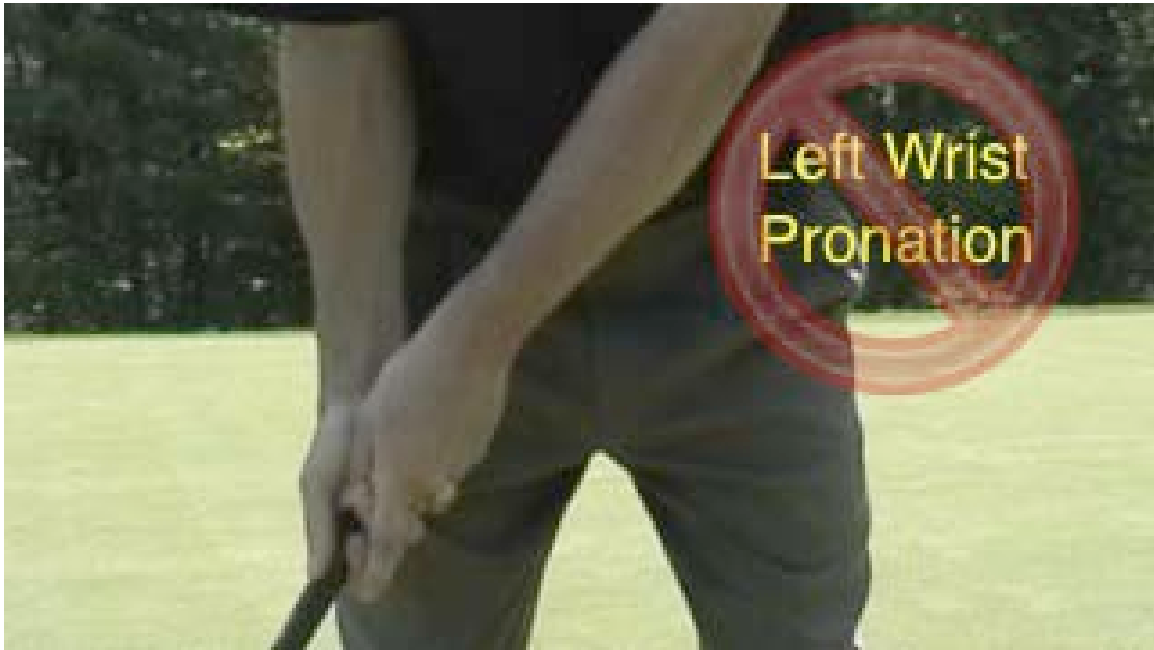
What Not To Do

There are elements during the putting stroke that you need to stay away from. These are things you don't want to do. If you have been doing them or decide to do them, they will destroy your consistency and make you miss putts.

Don't hinge your wrists in the putting stroke. You are probably aware of the hinge in the full swing, but never thought about it during the putting stroke. That's okay, just be aware you never should allow the wrists to hinge during the putting stroke.



Don't pronate the left wrist on the back stroke, or pronate the right wrist on the forward stroke. Your hands and wrists are not allowed to twist the club in any way. The result is unnecessary face rotation that causes inconsistency in your direction.



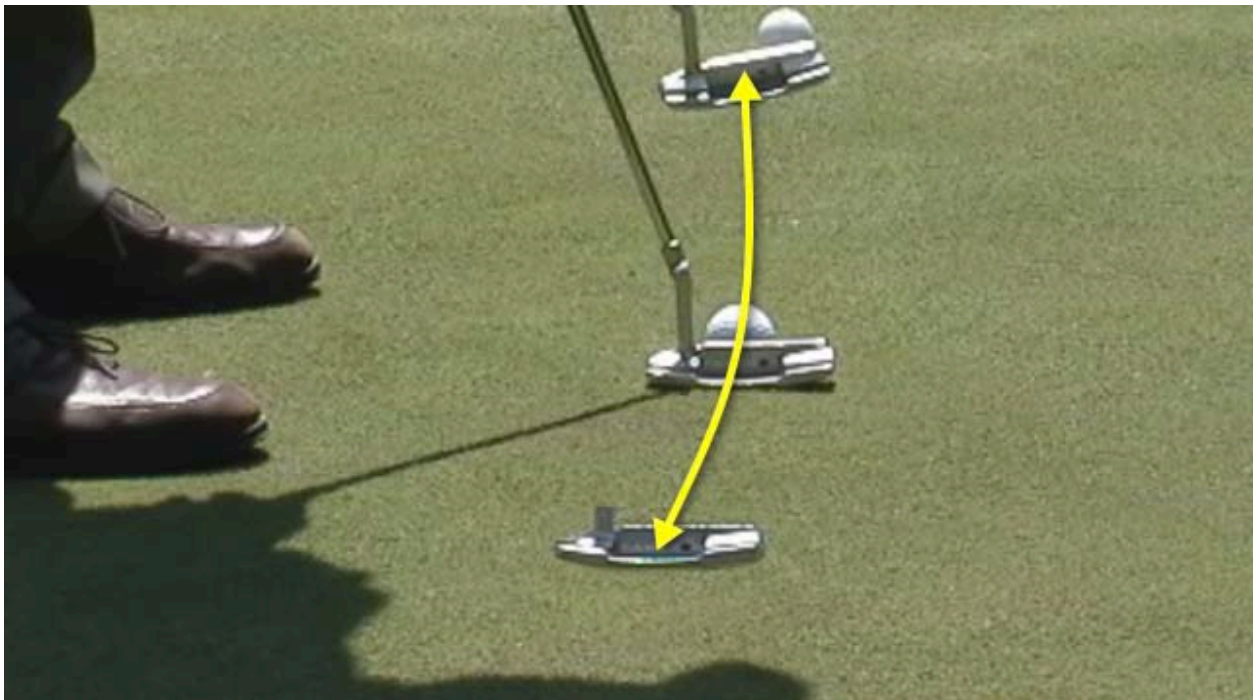
Don't lose the angle in your left wrist. From a face on point of view, your left wrist forms an angle. This angle is critical and not to be disrupted during the stroke. If your losing this angle at any point, its a signal that your hands are too active. I recommend getting in front of a mirror and monitoring the angle of your left wrist



Don't shift your weight. There's certainly a weight transfer in the full swing, but not in the putting stroke. You need to keep your lower body as quiet as possible. Your weight should feel evenly distributed between your right and left foot. Feel centered over the ball. At no point during the stroke are you allowed to shift your weight. Facing an uphill putt, amateurs commonly move their weight forward as a means to generate more club head speed. Stay away from this terrible habit. It will cause faulty contact and poor distance control.

Path of the Putter and Face Rotation

If you stumbled through a couple infomercials on the golf channel lately, you've probably heard of the straight back straight through method versus the inside-square-inside method. Both methods have been the cornerstones of putting theorists. Here's what you should know. Since we are standing to one side of the ball when we hit it, the swing has to happen in a round circular motion. If we are attempting to produce a straight-back straight-through path, we are doing something counter to what our body wants to do. That means we are doing something abnormal. Our shaft angle is not vertical, it rests at an angle. We must allow the club to travel along an arc - moving slightly inside going back and moving slightly inside going forward.



Now that I cleared things up about the arc style, I want to touch on another important aspect called face rotation. Golfers ask me a lot of questions. One of the most common goes like this, "Should the putter open on the backstroke? If so, how much?" First you need to know how important it is for the putter to travel slightly inside going back and slightly inside going forward. With that said, the putter must open slightly going back and close slightly going forward. If you do not allow the face to open and close slightly, you are doing something abnormal. Your body won't agree with it. That means the hands are responsible for keeping the face square going back and forward. This is not the way to roll the ball naturally and consistently.



Here's another way to look at it. The face always stays square to the arc no matter its location in the stroke. It opens and closes in response to the position of the club during the stroke. Since my putter travels slightly inside at the completion of my back stroke, the face must open slightly to accommodate. Now at the completion of my forward stroke, the face must close slightly to accommodate an arc that, once again, travels slightly inside. At all times, the face remains square to its arc.

The Putter Travels Further than the Grip

This is another important concept to work with and perhaps one of the reasons your missing a lot of short putts and having trouble lagging. As the putter swings back away from the ball, it must travel a distance exceeding the grip. That means if you compared the distance your putter head

travels and the distance your grip travels during the stroke, your putter head must travel further. You never want to dominate the swinging motion by moving the grip end of the putter. By working the grip end the stroke becomes robotic and jerky. You're giving more responsibility to your hands. That's not the way to make a smooth stroke. Your goal is to swing the putter, not the grip. Feel the weight of the putter in your hands. Never intercede the momentum of the weight of the putter swinging back. It causes the putter to travel an extra distance going backward and forward. This is how you work the putter, not the grip. It gets the ball rolling on a better, more consistent path.



Two Factors that Control Distance

The distance your ball travels is dependent on two factors during the stroke – the length of your stroke and the tempo of it. If you can learn to adjust them effectively your success rate will increase dramatically.

Keep this in mind next time your standing behind the ball: shorter distance calls for a shorter stroke and a slower tempo while longer distance calls for a longer stroke and faster tempo.

There's another element you should be aware of – elevation. If you're facing a 30 ft. putt uphill versus a 30 ft. putt downhill the length of stroke and tempo of it will vary because uphill putts require a longer stroke and a faster tempo or vice versa.



A Secret for Grooving the Best Stroke of Your Life

Learning the asset of each component during the stroke is a big step towards becoming a consistent putter. It gives you a better understanding of which component works most effectively in certain situations. By doing so you will greatly improve your ability to lag from long distance and find the cup from short distance.

After studying many other techniques and methods from various PGA Tour players and teachers, I have found through my own rigorous experimentation that this method produces the best results. By following this simple technique I promise you will groove the best stroke of your life. Its time for you to transform your stroke into a cup-seeking machine.



The Stabilizer

Your leading arm is the engine of the stroke. As the leading component, it coordinates the first move away from the ball. The reason it's called the "stabilizer" is because it stabilizes the face rotation of the putter head during the stroke. By controlling and minimizing face rotation accuracy is greatly enhanced.

The Feeler

Your back arm is the passive supporter of the stroke. It only comes into play when it feels like it. It applies whatever it thinks is necessary throughout the stroke. That's why it's called the "feeler." Its areas of assistance are tempo and solid contact. By improving these areas distance control is dramatically improved.

How to Utilize the Stabilizer and the Feeler

When you approach a short distance putt, let's say inside 10 feet, the majority of your focus is on direction. You're standing behind the ball thinking about the path to the hole – how much the ball will break and what will be the high point. You're not forgetting about distance, but you're really zoning in on the correct path. You're thinking *if I can just start the ball on right path its going to roll into the cup*. For this reason you're going to utilize the stabilizing arm. That means your lead arm is going to play a more dominant role during the stroke. That's because your stabilizing arm is designed for accuracy. In this way you optimize the chance of your ball starting on the right path.



When you approach a long distance putt the majority of your focus is on distance – producing a stroke with the correct length and tempo that will get the ball to the cup. Of course you can't neglect the critical element of direction, but your major area of concern here is judging distance. For this reason, you're going to activate the feeling arm of the stroke. That means, the feeling arm is going to play a more dominant role during the stroke. That's because your feeling arm is designed for controlling distance. The results of doing this will give you much better control from long distance.



I have no doubt if you learn to incorporate this technique you will become a better putter. However, before you take this to the course, I recommend you find a practice green and work on a couple drills. Please refer to Part 4 of this book. It illustrates two drills that will greatly enhance your understanding of the stabilizer and the feeler and how to develop incorporate them into your stroke.

Tomi Putting Analyzer

The TOMI system is a great tool for putting. It captures data that reveals the true science behind the putting stroke. Tomi collects alignment at address, alignment at impact, path at impact, stroke path and rotation, shaft angle, impact spot, speed at impact, and stroke tempo. Each component offers a wealth of information about your stroke. I rolled 5 putts and saved the data so you could see how the system works.



TOMI was developed by Marius Film, the personal putting coach of many of the world's top players on the PGA, Champions and LPGA tours. He is considered one of the world's top putting authorities and has personally analyzed over 43,000 strokes in his career. If you would like to learn more [CLICK HERE](#)

Alignment at Address & Alignment at Impact

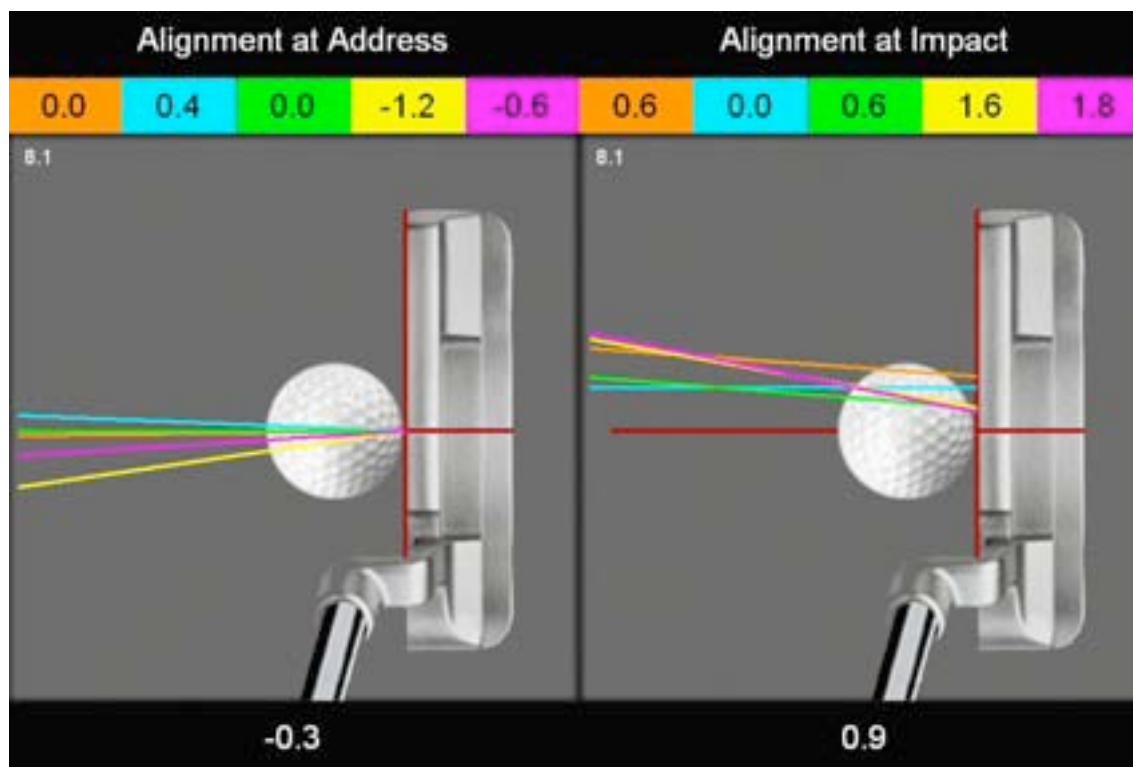
KEY:

The meaning of a positive value

In any given stroke, a positive value displayed on the TOMI interface infers that the golfer was aiming right of the intended target line.

The meaning of a negative value

In any given stroke, a negative value displayed on the TOMI interface infers that the golfer was aiming left of the intended target line.



Comments: The bottom value represents my average score. As you can see, my alignment at address averaged to -.3. My alignment at impact averaged to .9. It means that my putter face was slightly closed at address and slightly open at impact.

Path at Impact, Stroke Path, & Rotation

KEY:

The meaning of a positive value

A positive value infers that, in the impact zone, the putter head traveled across the line from inside the line to out of the line.

The meaning of a negative value

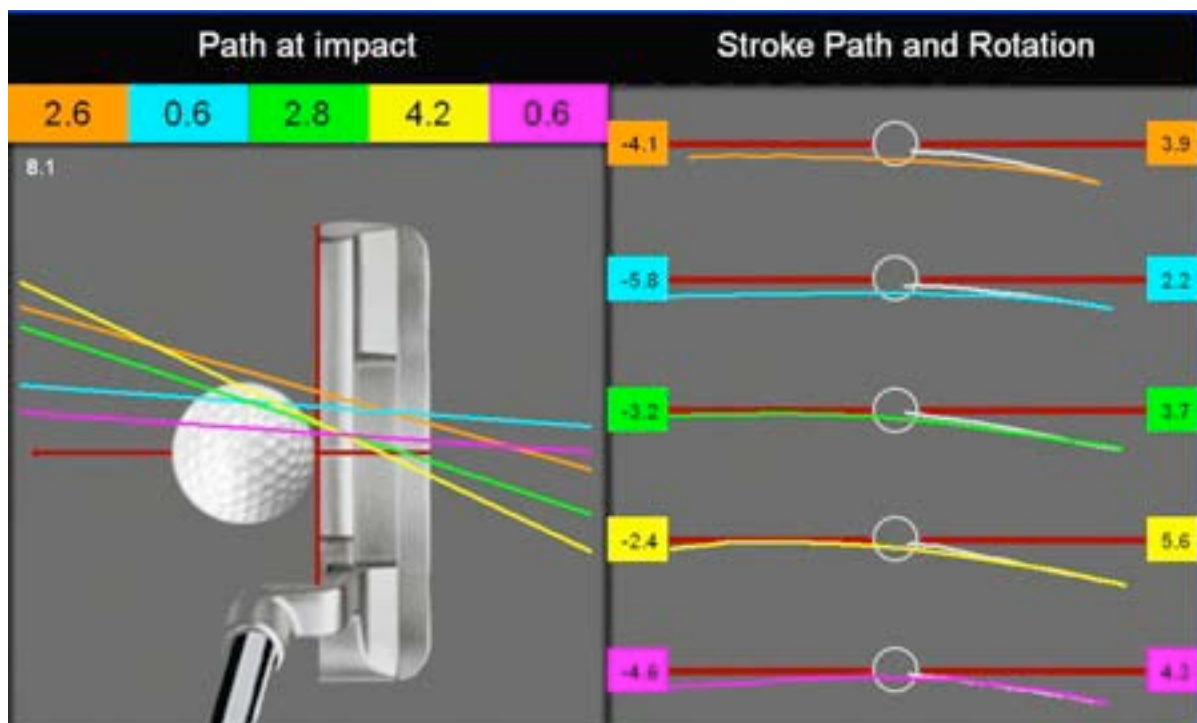
A negative value infers that the path of the putter at impact is outside to in.

The rotation at the end of the back stroke (displayed on the right side for each stroke) should be between 4 to 6 degrees, depending on the target distance.

The rotation at the end of the forward stroke (displayed on the left side for each stroke) should be between - 4 to - 6 degrees depending on the target distance.

*The tour average of the total rotation during the stroke is 11 degrees for a ten foot putt.

*The impact zone is defined as 4 inches before and 4 inches after impact. The path at impact refers to the direction in which the putter head is traveling through the impact zone.



Comments: As you can see all my numbers for path at impact are positive. That means my stroke is consistently inside to outside. Looking at stroke path, it does appear I pull the putter back too far inside. Also, my face rotation is minimal. It does not consistently fall between 4 and 6 degrees on the back stroke and forward stroke.

Shaft Angle & Impact Spot

KEY:

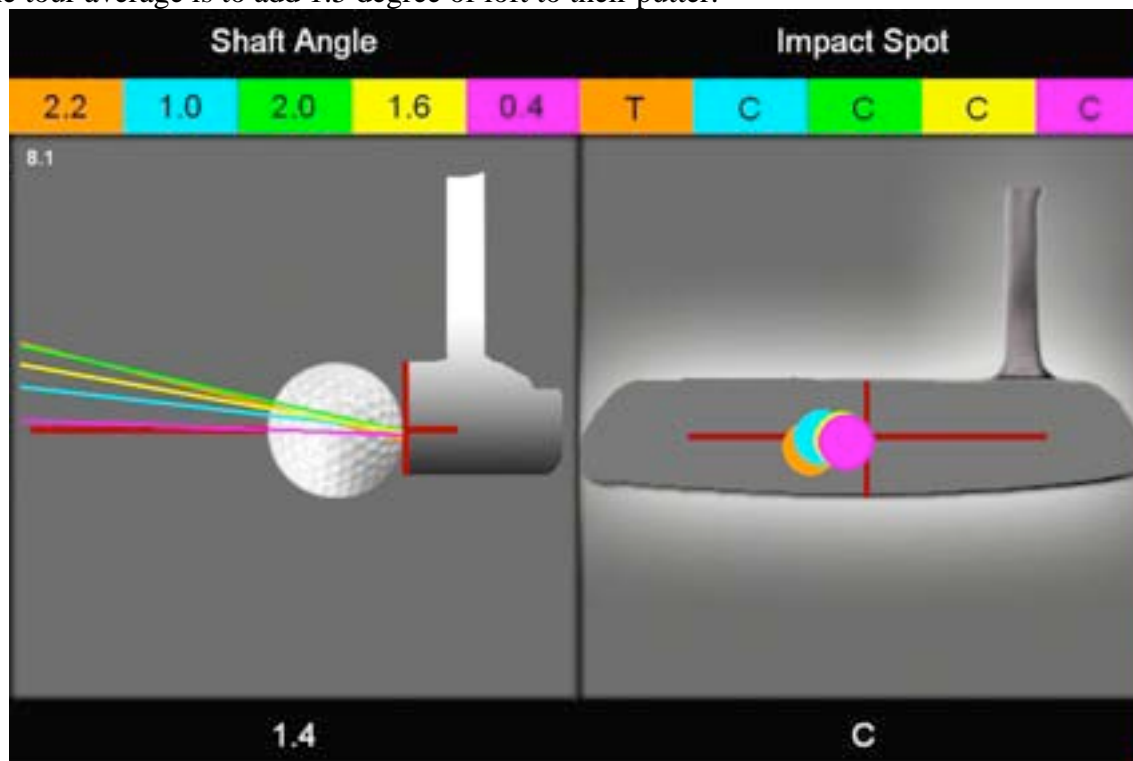
The meaning of a positive value

A positive value infers that loft was added to the putter.

The meaning of a negative value

A negative value infers that loft was taken away from the putter.

*The tour average is to add 1.5 degree of loft to their putter.



Comments: My shaft angle at impact looks pretty good. I never take loft away and I never add too much loft. My average is around the same as a tour player. Also, my impact spot looks good with most of my hits around the center.

Speed at Impact & Stroke Tempo

Speed must be consistent from stroke to stroke no matter what the number is. The number will always differ with the different green/carpet speed.

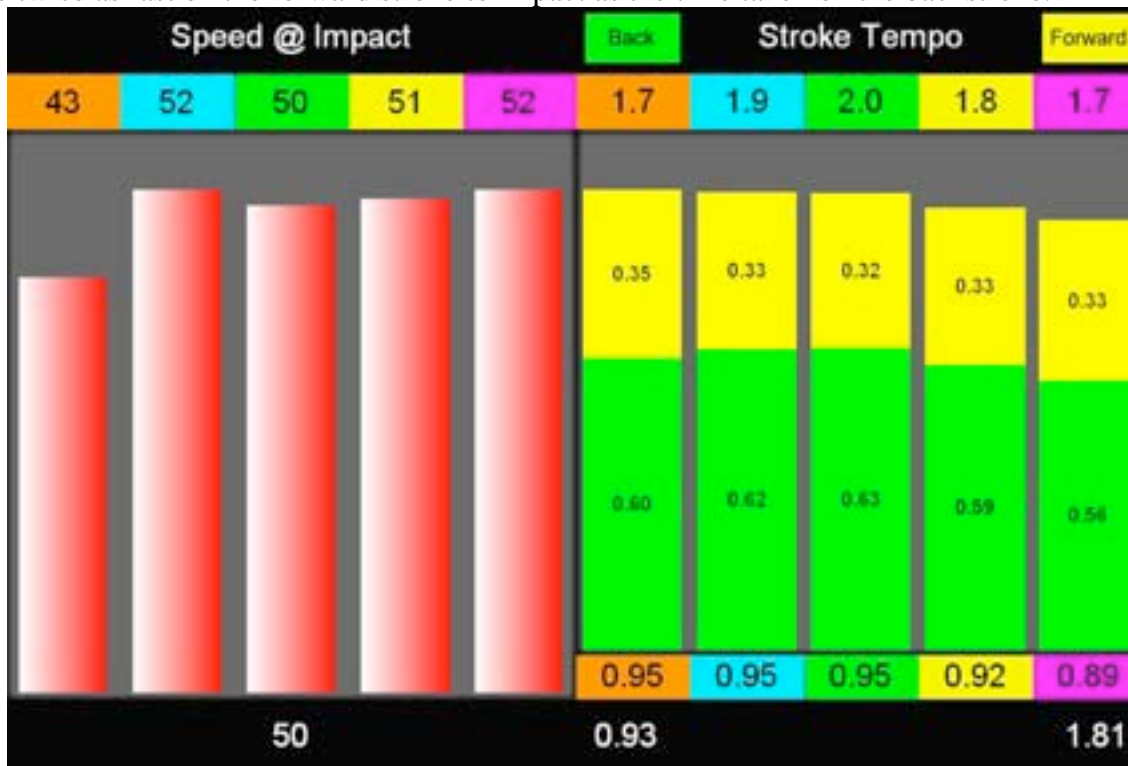
Green Value: Time from swing start to end of backstroke

Yellow Value: Time from end of backstroke to impact.

Top Value: the ratio of backstroke time against forward stroke time.

Bottom Value: Total time from swing start to impact.

*The tour average of the ratio of backstroke time to forward stroke time is 2. The golfer's goal is to be twice as fast on the forward stroke to impact as the time taken on the backstroke.



Comments: There seems to be some inconsistency in my speed at impact. My first stroke looks very slow in comparison with others. However, I like my stroke tempo. My time from start of swing to end of backstroke is consistently twice as long from end of backstroke to impact. Also, my total time of stroke value looks consistent around .95.

Part 3

Pre-Putt Strategy

The Art of Reading Greens

Putting is 50% of your score. So, why don't we spend more time putting? Because we are obsessed with the long drive or the feeling of a well struck golf shot. We spend hours on the range tinkering with swing changes. This has plagued golfers from the beginning. No wonder the average score is still around 100.

This section is about reading greens – the art of visualizing a path to the hole. When done correctly it will give you more confidence over the ball and lower your score. I promise.

One of the major neglected aspects of putting is the pre-putt strategy. Amateurs simply do not know how to read putts. They know if the putt will break right or left, but when it comes to how much break to play, or where to aim, they are lost. If I had a nickel for every time an amateur missed on the low side I would be a billionaire. This section will outline specific details before you even think about the stroke.

The best putters in the world rarely second guess themselves. They have an amazing ability to visualize a path to the hole. I guarantee this did not come naturally. It was a process of trial and error – endless hours of practicing and playing competitive golf that gave them the experience to be successful. They trust what they see and they go for it. That's the type of attitude necessary for successful green reading.

A great place to begin strategy is on the approach shot. With a good view of the green you can observe all the surrounding terrain. Determine the best and worst places if you did miss the green. More importantly, you want to figure out the best place to putt from. Ideally, figure out where you would face an up hill putt. Try to hit for that location.

As you walk to the green, analyze the slope. Get a feel for the contours of the green, the elevation, where the spines located, and where is the low side. All this information should be calculated before you even set foot on the green. If you get in the habit of this type of analysis, I promise you will be more prepared to make your putt.

Now you finally reached the green. Without walking to your ball, get an even better feel for the contours, the elevation, the spines, and where the low side is. You should also be very aware where your playing partners position. You might have the opportunity to watch them roll their putts and use some of that information.

Step # 1 Visualize the Break

Now, stand behind your ball and do the following. Visualize yourself executing the putt. Watch a movie of yourself hitting the putt. What did the stroke look like? How far did you take the putter back? What did it sound like? What was the initial starting line? How much did the ball break? Which side of the cup did the ball enter? Visualize this process several times until you determine the correct path to the hole.



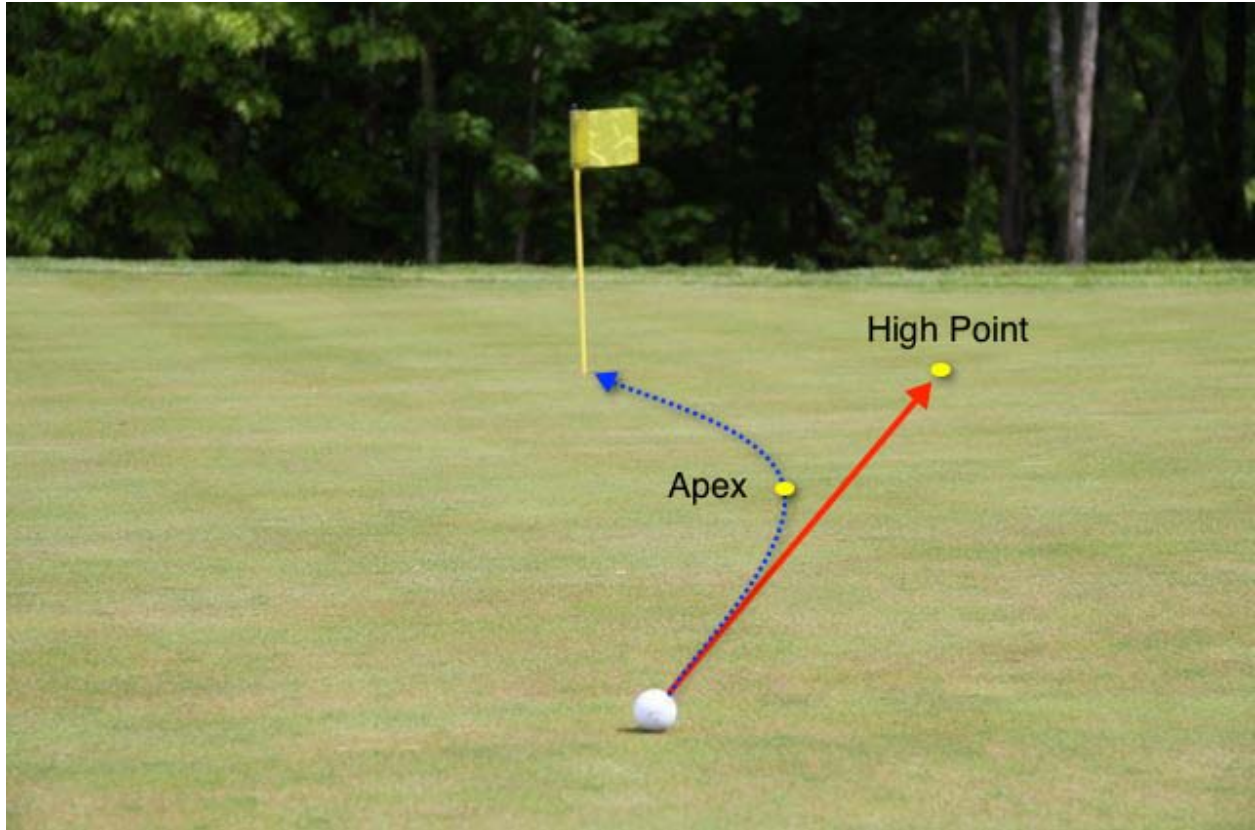
Step #2 Determine the Apex

Stand half way between your ball and the hole on the low side of the cup. The low side of the cup is the side where the ball will break towards. So, if you're facing a putt that will break right to left you want to stand on the left side of the cup. When your half-way locate an old ball mark, clump of discolored grass, or piece of dirt that will represent the apex of the break. In other words, you want to find the peak of your path. This step is crucial to determining your proper path.



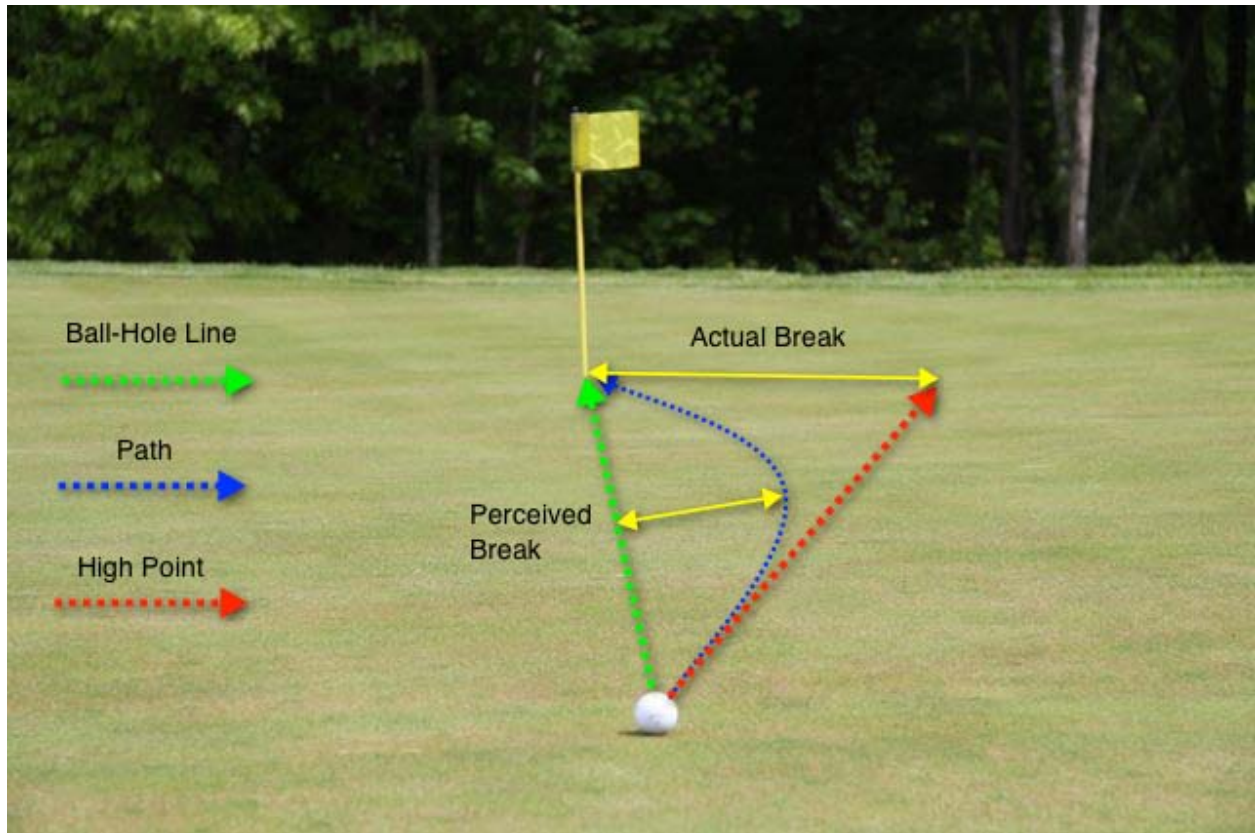
Step #3 Determine the High Point

Now you can either go behind the cup and get a read from the other side or you can go back behind the ball again. Whatever you prefer from this point is okay. Your goal here is to look for the high point of your path. Keep in the mind; the high point and apex do not form a straight line. The high point is your initial direction that will send the ball to its apex.



When you have determined the high point and the apex, and the difference, you're ready to roll. 90% of amateurs miss on the low side because they aim for the apex. That's not the way to read greens. The high point and apex do not form a straight line. The high point is always above the apex. It's the initial line that starts the ball on a path to the apex.

Most amateurs aim for the apex because it seems right. They search for the peak of the break and get the ball started on that line. This is wrong and the number one reason why amateurs always don't play enough break. Here's what you need to know if you want to make more putts. The actual break is the distance between the extension of your high point and the hole.



Getting the Ball Started on the Right Path

Learning to make more putts is constantly on the minds of professional golfers. They know that rolling the ball well is the most effective way to lower their score. Putting can be the difference between first place or second place, making the cut or going home, making a pay check and making no check. Because of its importance, pros are always on the look out for anything cutting edge that will help them make more putts.

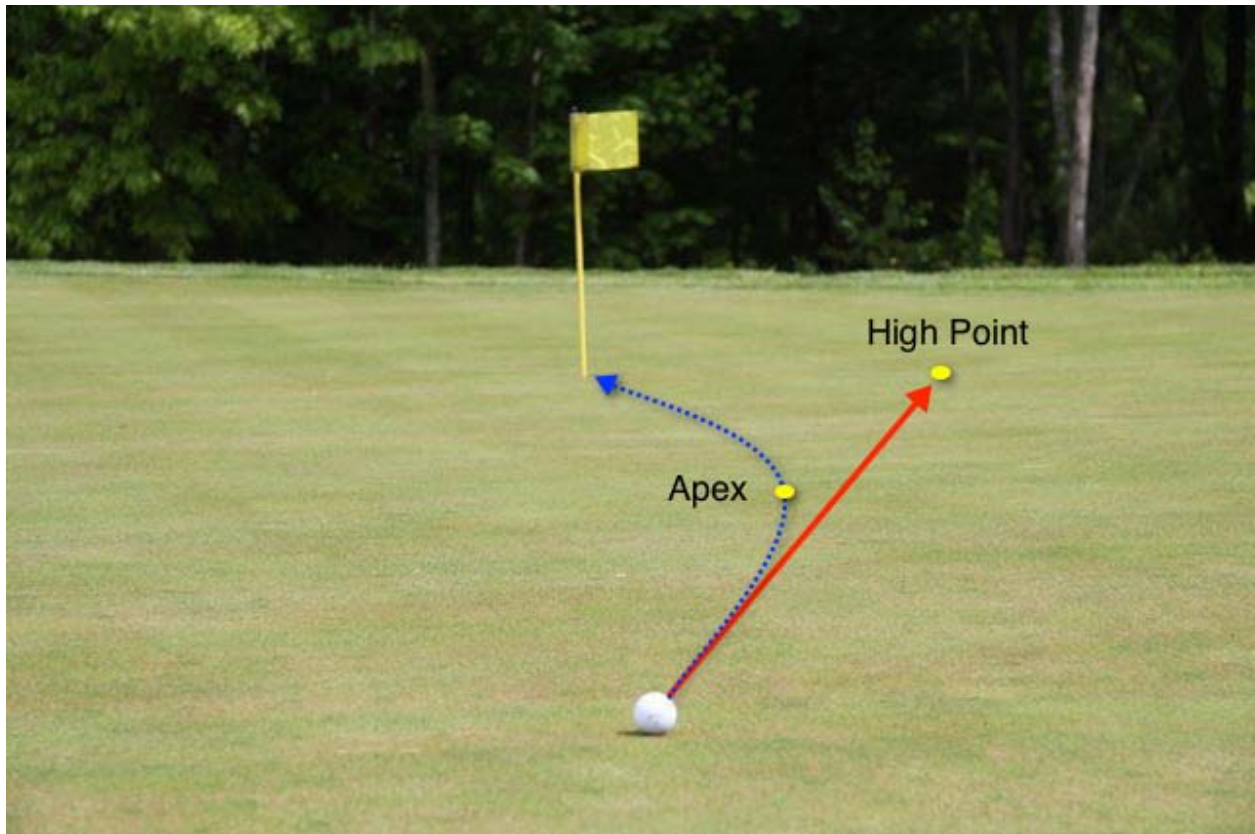
Tiger Woods is the World's #1 golfer for a very good reason – he's an excellent putter. His fundamentals are impeccable and his stroke is near perfect. It's no wonder he's done so well in major championships.

Tiger employs a tactic that every golfer should take advantage of. He utilizes a line on his golf ball to navigate the high point of his putt. This is a highly effective technique for starting the ball on the proper line. It works especially well with longer putts when the hole location is out of focus. If your ball does not have a line that's okay. You can purchase a very cheap device that makes it real easy.



We never want to second-guess. When we establish a read, we have to trust our instincts and go for it. Using a line on the ball has the ability to give you more confidence over the ball. It eliminates second-guessing by giving your stroke a point of reference to get the ball rolling.

First determine the break, apex, and the high point.



Now connect the line on your ball with the high point. All you have to do from this point forward is set the putter behind the ball square to the line on your ball. You've committed. You have completely taken direction out of the equation - a huge advantage for making more putts.



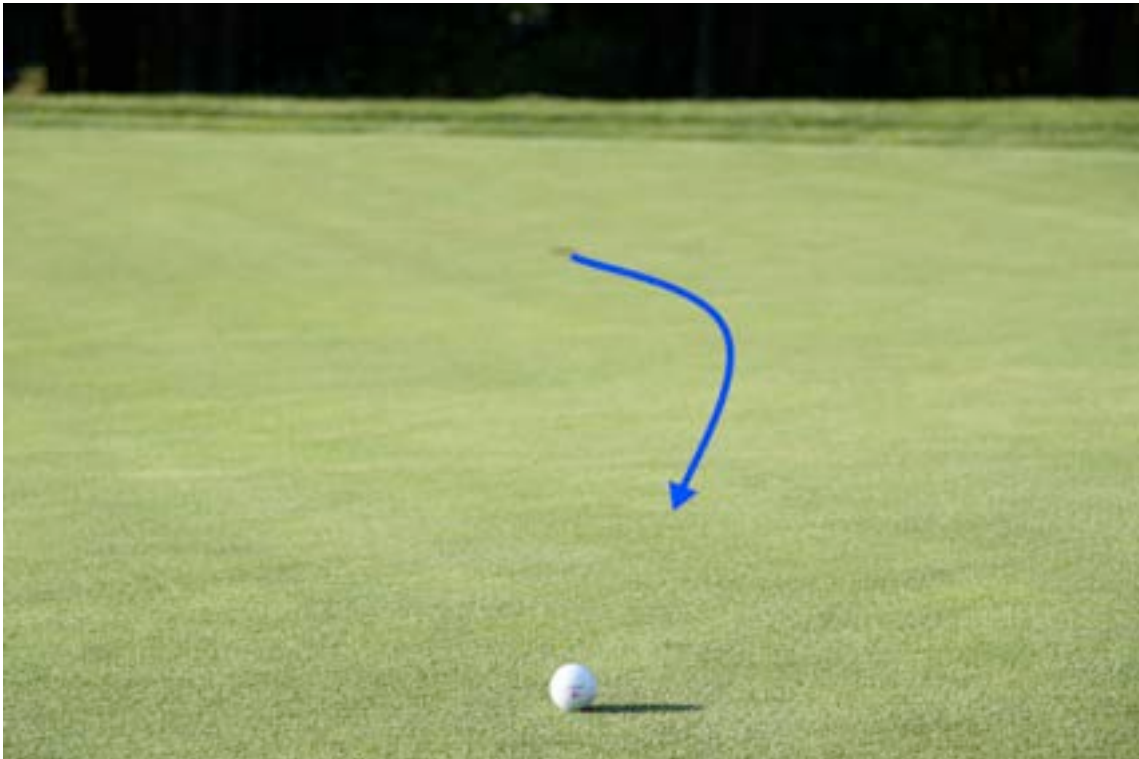
No more standing over the ball not knowing where you should hit the putt. By following this procedure you take the uncertainty of direction out of the equation. This technique, employed by most professional golfers including Tiger Woods, is an extremely effective way to get the ball started on the right path.

Visualization

Visualization can be an extremely effective technique when done correctly. Seeing the path in your mind's eye gives you more confidence to make the putt. The key is to be crystal clear with your instincts. Trust what you see and go for it.

Visualization Technique # 1

Stand behind the ball and focus your attention on the hole location. Starting from the cup, read the putt backwards to the ball. Get a feel for the angle at which the ball would enter the cup and work backwards. Keep in mind this fact: the ball breaks more as it loses speed. The ball always breaks more around the cup. This is a great technique if you're confused about the initial line. Bring your attention right to the cup and visualize the break in reverse. This might give you a better read than you originally thought.



Visualization Technique # 2

Imagine a clock around the cup when you begin to read the putt. If you were to make the putt, at what time would the ball enter the cup? If it was a straight putt it would enter at 6:00. If it were a big slider from right to left it would enter at 3:00. If it were a big slider from left to right it would enter at 9:00.

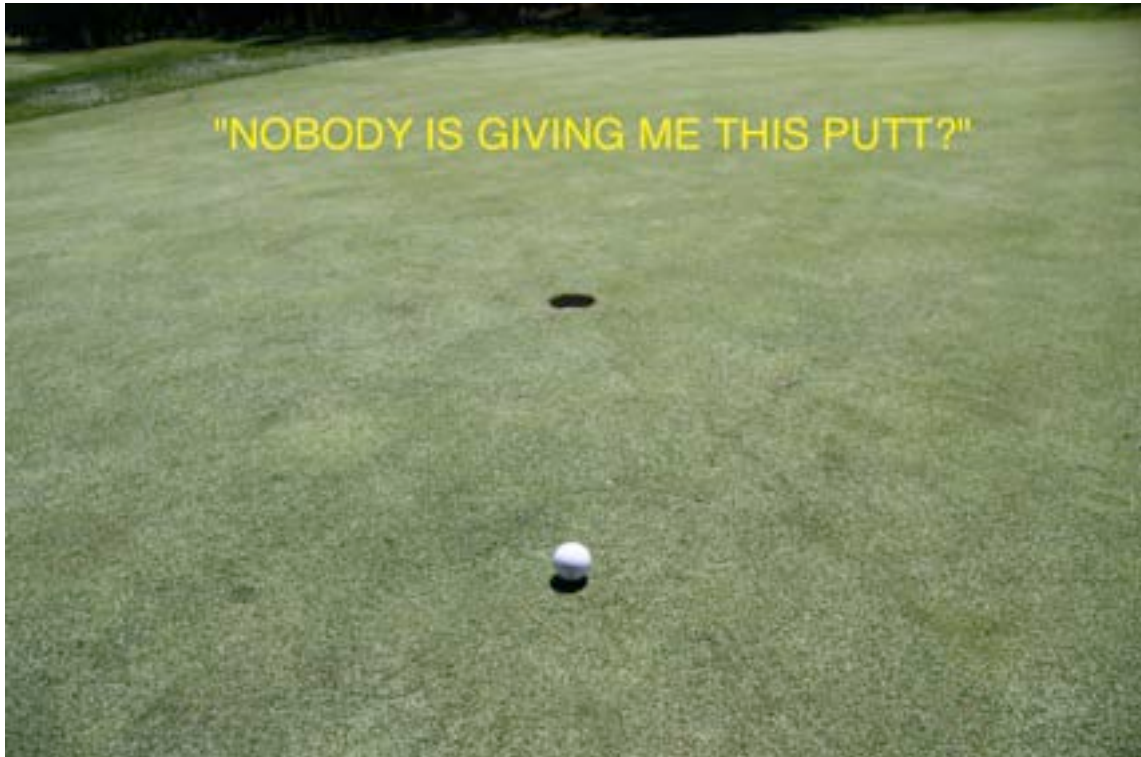


This technique can be very effective when combined with "Visualizing Technique #1." When you determine the time at which the ball will enter, read the break backwards.

Visualization is such a critical aspect to successful putting. Using these techniques will absolutely help you make more putts. I consistently use them, especially on longer putts, and find a lot of success. I find they work on longer putts because as the ball slows down it takes more break. So, learning how the putt will break around the hole is critical. I always visualize how the ball would enter the hole first, and then work backwards. It's a great technique and I highly recommend it for you.

Never Miss a Three Footer

You just lagged a decent putt from 30 ft. It looks close to the hole, but as you approach the cup the putt gets longer and longer. You look up at your playing partners and nobody makes eye contact with you. It means you have to putt out. Yikes...What should you do?



I'm writing this within "Pre-Putt Strategy" because I absolutely believe you can miss or make the putt even before you set up to make the stroke. Your mind can be an asset or liability. You have the ability to convince yourself the outcome of the stroke. It's up to you what you want to do. That means, you must have a good strategy. You're going to need a game plan for getting it the ball safely into the cup.

Step #1 - Visualize the path

Stand behind the ball and visualize the path. Determine if there is any slope. You're close enough so you're not going to use the line on your ball. Your peripheral vision will pick up something to aim for and align the putter correctly.

Step # 3 - Aim Small Miss Small

Don't aim for the cup, aim for something within the cup. You want to pick out a piece of dirt, discoloration of grass, or marking on the inside edge of the cup. This way you have a smaller target to aim for. Your margin of error is a lot smaller with a smaller target. That's why you don't aim for the cup. Always aim for something within the cup.



Step # 3 - Execute the stroke

Don't use your hands to steer the club into the ball. That's a sure way to miss the putt. Remember the feel and mechanics of the stroke. The stroke is a combination of the shoulders and arms working together. Your hands are only securing the putter in place. Also, don't take a long back stroke because it provides opportunity to decelerate and twist the putter head. That will spell disaster so don't allow the putter to swing passed your back foot. Always accelerate through the ball.

SECRET: Utilize the stabilizing arm. Focus on pulling the putter through with your left arm rather than pushing with the right. This will minimize face rotation and optimize accuracy.

Visualize the ball into the cup a few times if you have to. Convince yourself the ball is going into the cup. All you have to do it make it happen. You can do it!



Part 4

Drills

Three Drills that Guarantee Improvement

Putting is your focus if you want to lower your handicap. No other area of the game will save as many shots. It's up to you to get on the putting green and practice. Work on these three drills and I promise you will score better.

Drill #1

Shorten Your Backstroke on Short Putts

The following drill is designed to shorten your backstroke. Too many amateurs take the putter back too long. The result is deceleration through the ball and too much twisting in the putter head. Both lead to inconsistency and missed putts.

Procedure: place a ball three feet from the hole and mark its position with a tee. This is your starting point. Place another tee 4 inches behind the ball. Roll a series of putts making conscious effort not to hit the second tee. If your putter head collides with the tee, your backstroke is too long. By shortening your backstroke you will find it necessary to make a more aggressive stroke. This drill will help you realize the importance of a minimal backstroke – one that does not set itself up for deceleration and/or twisting.



Drill #2

Develop Your Feeler

This is your drill if you're lacking feel in your stroke. It will help you regain sensitivity to putting green and improve your distance control.

Procedure: take 10-15 balls to the putting green. Using your right hand only, putt each ball to the edge of the green from 30-50ft away. Focus on allowing the clubface to open slightly going back, squaring back up at impact, and closing down on the follow through. However, you don't want to be overly concerned with direction. The focus of this drill is distance control. After a few strokes you'll already begin to develop a better feel for your stroke.



Drill #3

Develop Your Stabilizer

Breaking down the left wrist is very common among amateurs. The following drill will strengthen your left wrist and promote better control over the putter face.

Procedure: Start from two feet and roll a series of putts with in your left hand only. Get a feel for the stroke and focus on accelerating through the ball. Watch your left hand move towards the cup. Once you get comfortable back up to six feet and repeat. You really want to feel as though your left wrist is frozen. See how many from six feet you can make in a row. If you really want to test yourself, try from ten feet. The goal here is to get the back of your left hand moving aggressively to the hole on a straight line.⁵² You will have better control if you can groove this stroke.



I hope you enjoyed reading, “Finally in the Cup.” Please send me an email with any questions you might have to adam@scratchgolfsschool.com I would be happy to help you become a better putter!

If you would like more information about golf lessons, full swing advice, short game tips and drills please visit my website www.scratchgolfsschool.com

Thank You!