

Golf tip from Dana Rader Golf School:

Right tool for the right job to improve your short game

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In a game where we see a lot of flop shots and “2 hop and stop” shots on T.V., recreational golfers need to know that to score better when it comes to the short game all that’s needed is a few simple shots and a good plan. A good impact position and a non-complicated motion will lead to a more consistent short game.



First, get in regular posture and set 60% of your weight on your target side of your body (left side for right handed golfers and right side for left handed golfers). The handle of your club needs to be leaning forward of the club head/golf ball. I like to use the inside of my target leg as a reference. This will produce a flat top hand wrist and a slight bend in the bottom hand wrist. (picture#1)

To execute a simple pendulum motion, transport your shoulders, hands, arms and club with your big muscles (back + chest) back and through the ball. Keep the angles in your wrists intact through the

impact zone. Letting the club pass the hands will result in those misses that cost you shots around the green, such as thin, fat, skulled and topped. In addition you must keep your weight on your target side throughout the entire motion. This will produce repeatable solid contact.

The size of the backswing will determine the distance and a good follow through. Weight on the target foot and a forward leaning club shaft will produce the contact. I like to use the clock system to determine the size of the swing. Your hands will operate like the hands on a clock by swinging them 7 to 5, 8 to 4, 9 to 3 and 10-2. This, combined with club selection and ball position will control trajectory and distance. (picture #2)

The three essential shots within 30 yards of the green:

#1: The Putt: Yes, the simple putt! If

there is nothing impeding in front of you, roll the ball. The more time the ball spends on the ground the more control of the ball you have.

#2: The Chip and Run: If you have a low obstacle in front of you such as a sprinkler head, divot or a little bit of rough, use the chip and run. This is a low running golf shot that will spend about 20% in the air and 80% on the ground. To set up for the shot, play the ball in the back of your stance with your weight and handle forward. You can use an 8, 9 or PW depending upon how far from the green you are. Swing the club to a 7 to 5 or 8 to 4 position.



#3: The Pitch Shot: When the situation calls for a higher shot because you have to carry the ball over something such as a bunker, water or rough and have it stop relatively fast, this is the shot you need. Use a gap, sand or lob wedge and play the ball in the center of your stance. Lean the handle forward, keep your weight forward and use the clock system with the repeatable, simple motion. Mastering these shots is the fastest way to reduce the number of strokes in your game! Photos courtesy of Bissell Companies



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