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**How To Implement Golf Fitness Exercises Into Your Golf Swing Improvement Program**

**By Sean Cochran**

Over the last few weeks at BioForce Golf, we have had many questions about golf fitness exercises.

Questions such as: are these type of exercises beneficial to someone who has had a lower back injury, what are the best types of exercises to improve my clubhead speed, and what flexibility exercises can improve my back swing?

Through many of our free daily golf tips on our website, we have provided answers to these questions and many more. One area of golf fitness I get quite a few questions about revolves on how to implement golf exercises into a golf swing improvement program.

Many of the individuals who come to our site are not experts in "working out." I've written my golf-specific exercise manual, YOUR BODY & YOUR SWING, to help you develop a program for yourself.

Probably one of the most-asked questions is: how do I go about introducing certain exercises into my golf fitness program?

At times, certain individuals are unable to perform an exercise in its basic form. They are either out of shape, suffering from an injury, or too stiff to perform it correctly. A Russian Twist may be too difficult for a beginner to execute correctly. It takes great core strength, endurance and flexibility to complete the exercise to the limit.

In this type of situation there are "baby steps" you can take in terms of implementing such exercises into your golf fitness program.

I like to call this the "position, movement, tolerance" training guideline. This is an easy methodology to follow in terms of implementing exercises into a training program.

We'll use the Russian Twist exercise in my book, YOUR BODY & YOUR SWING, as an example.

## How To Implement Golf Fitness Exercises Into Your Golf Swing Improvement Program

When you are implementing a golf fitness exercise(s) into your golf swing improvement program, you must be able to place the body in the correct starting position of the exercise.

For example, if I were to have you perform a Russian Twist, first I would ask you to place your body in the correct position for the exercise. In this situation it would be knees slightly bent and placing your torso in a position where the "abs were turned on."

### Hold it Right There!

Just placing your body in the correct position for an exercise requires effort from the body. If you were able to place your body in the correct position, I would then ask you to "hold" this position for a certain amount of time. This would indicate you are strong enough to add movement to your golf fitness exercise.

On the other hand, if you were only able to hold the starting position of the Russian Twist for 15 seconds before your lower back started to bother you, this is an indicator to me that this is where we begin your golf fitness program. I would have you "hold" the start position of this golf exercise for a certain number of seconds and sets. This would, over a period of time, develop more strength and endurance in those golf muscles.

Once we have reached a good "hold" time on a golf exercise, we then progress to adding "movement" into the equation. Movement simply stands for range of motion (how much movement you can do). Every golf exercise has a certain range of motion you move through to get the greatest benefit for your golf game.

In the Russian Twist example, a full range of motion would be a full shoulder turn to the left and right of center. Again, at the beginning you may be unable to make a full shoulder turn. So what do we do? We slowly work on increasing the "movement" within the golf exercise until you are at a point of full range.

As with the idea of "position," we do the same with the idea of "movement." We gradually increase until you have achieved a full range of motion in the golf exercise. Once this is achieved, we move on to the final stage of implementing a golf-specific exercise.

The final stage of implementing any golf exercise into your golf swing improvement program is "tolerance." Tolerance can be defined as performing the correct number of sets and repetitions of a golf exercise for it to be beneficial to your golf game.

### No Pain, No Gain!

The idea of "no pain, no gain" does not work in this situation. Rather, you want to be able to perform a self-prescribed number of sets and reps of every golf exercise in your program. This prescribed amount of work is up to you, the individual golfer, and what you feel is best for your body.

Too little work will provide you no benefit. Too much work or following the "no pain, no gain" mind-set can increase the possibility of injury greatly.

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You need to use your best judgment on every golf exercise in your program. This will allow you to perform each golf exercise with the correct technique, develop (maybe over time) the correct range of motion of each golf exercise in your program, and finally take each exercise to "your own level of tolerance."

It is very easy to implement golf exercises into your golf swing improvement program. Follow the simple rule of "position, movement, tolerance," and this should help you dramatically in the development of your golf fitness program.

Once you've mastered the exercises and routines in your current exercise program, you'll be ready to take it to the next level, a more advanced program.

Sean Cochran

Sean Cochran is one of the most recognized golf fitness instructors in the world today. He travels the

PGA Tour regularly with 2005 PGA & 2004 Masters Champion Phil Mickelson. He has made many of his golf tips, golf instruction and golf swing improvement techniques available to amateur golfers on the website

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## **How To Set Up A Golf Fitness Program To Improve Your Golf Game**

**By Sean Cochran**

Professional golfers on the PGA Tour understand the connection between golf swing mechanics and the body. The most notable players in the world have regimented golf fitness programs they adhere religiously too. The benefits of such programs have been well documented in the media. Press clippings from Tiger Woods, Vijay Singh, and Phil Mickelson all refer to golf fitness exercises being a component of their regular practice schedule.

The amateur can learn a lot from the pros. They can learn the importance the body has in relation to the golf swing, how golf swing mechanics and the body are intertwined, and improvement in the golf game requires the implementation of a golf fitness program.

Where most amateurs get "off-track" with their golf fitness training is the components and exercises incorporated in such a program. Golf fitness programs are quite different than "general" fitness or

## How To Implement Golf Fitness Exercises Into Your Golf Swing Improvement Program

"weight training" programs. A golf fitness program is designed to develop the golfer's body around the golf swing. In order for this to occur certain parameters and exercises are required in such a program.

First and foremost the amateur golfer must understand the connection between the golf swing and body. The golf swing is a complex series of biomechanical movements execute by the golfer. In order for the golfer to execute the biomechanics of the golf swing correctly. It is necessary for the golfer to have certain physical parameters well developed.

These physical parameters are flexibility, balance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and muscular power. High levels of flexibility, balance, strength, endurance, and power are required to execute the golf swing correctly. Often times the amateur golfer is not flexible enough, strong enough, or powerful enough to execute the golf swing correctly.

This results in the golfer developing compensation patterns in their golf swing. The result being poor shots and high scores on the golf course. Bottom line is a physical foundation of flexibility, balance, strength, endurance, and power is required to develop an efficient golf swing. If the amateur golfer is lacking in anyone of these categories the foundation upon which the golf swing is being built will be insufficient.

Once the amateur golfer understands the connection between the golf swing and the body it is necessary to implement a golf fitness program, A golf fitness program is different than "traditional" training programs in such this type of program develops the body around the golf swing.

A golf fitness program trains the body to the positions, movements, and requirements of the golf swing. A golf fitness program is not concern about "beach muscles" or how one looks in the mirror. Rather a golf fitness program has the primary goal of improving the scores on the golf course and play of the golfer.

This type of improvement is a result of using exercise to develop the physical parameters of the body relative to the golf swing. A golf fitness program will include flexibility exercises, balance drills, muscular strength exercise, endurance training modalities, and power drills. Exercises from all of these categories are included in a comprehensive golf fitness program.

Understand the exercises and drills within each of these categories are not necessarily traditional type of exercises. For example, flexibility exercises for golf are less concerned about touching your toes, and more concerned about completing a full shoulder turn. Flexibility exercises for golf are geared towards developing the flexibility within your body to execute the components of the golf swing correctly.

The same can be said about every other category of exercise and drill incorporated in a golf fitness program. The balance drills in a golf fitness program are designed to improve the golfer's balance capacities relative to the golf swing. Power exercises in a golf fitness program are designed to improve clubhead speed. Where as power drills in other programs may be geared towards improving how fast you run.

## How To Implement Golf Fitness Exercises Into Your Golf Swing Improvement Program

Once the amateur golfer understands the connection between the golf swing and body, the elements of the body needing development relative to the golf swing, and the components of a golf fitness program. The final component of understanding is golf fitness training order.

Often times the amateur golfer desires more power (i.e. clubhead speed) in their golf swing. As a result they perform only exercises to enhance the power components within their body. What the amateur golfer fails to realize is developing golf strength, endurance, or power is useless if they do not have the flexibility or balance capacities to execute the golf swing. Developing the body for the golf swing requires the amateur golfer to follow a specific order relative to their training programs.

It is necessary for the amateur golfer to first develop their flexibility for the golf swing. Secondly proceed to increasing their balance capacities in relation to the golf swing. Continue the process with developing strength and endurance for the golf swing. Completing the process with power drills to enhance clubhead speed. This guarantees the effort placed within a golf fitness program will enhance the golfer's swing. It becomes a simple process once the golfer is educated on the relationship between the golf swing and the body. The benefits a golf fitness program has upon the golfer's swing, and how to implement golf fitness exercises correctly.

Sean Cochran

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