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Principles Of Accurate Chipping

By Jack Moorehouse

Here's a question I sometimes ask when giving a golf lesson. What do pro golfers Jose Maria

Olazabal, Tiger Woods, and Sergio Garcia all have in common? Answer: They don't hit into trouble often, but when they do, their short games save them, and accurate chipping is one of the most potent weapons in their short game. In fact, most players with low golf handicaps chip accurately.

The chip shot is one of the easiest shots to learn in golf. It's also one of the most crucial. In medal play, accurate chipping can save you one or two strokes on a hole, sometimes more. In match play, it can be the difference between winning or losing a hole or a match. And in player rankings, it's often what separates players with high golf handicaps from those with low ones.

Confidence, experience, and imagination all contribute to accurate chipping. But so does good technique. Below are 6 keys to accurate chipping:

1.Decide on a landing spot 2.Use a one-piece takeaway 3.Maintain weight on front side 4.Keep hands ahead of clubhead 5.Hold the clubhead 6.Accelerate the club through the ball

Professional golfers play a wide variety of shots around the green. One player may use a sand wedge to chip with from a certain spot, while another hits a 9 iron from the same spot. Regardless of what club they use, they all pick out a landing spot before hitting the ball, which they play the ball off their left heels.

Picking a landing spot is imperative, as I've mentioned in my golf tips. So is using a one-piece takeaway. In fact, it's as important in chipping as it is in driving. Since the shot is hit mostly with your arms and hands, it requires little or no weight transfer, so place your weight on your front side and keep it there. Also, keep your head still when hitting the ball.

The backswing is important as well. The length determines the length of the shot—the longer the backswing, the longer the shot. Be mindful of your backswing when chipping. Also, take the club back smoothly and slowly, allowing your wrists to hinge naturally.

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When committing to the downswing, make sure your hands stay ahead of the clubhead to ensure crisp ball-before-turf contact. The objective is to slide the blade of the clubhead under the ball, taking only a sliver of turf in the process.

Also, don't allow your right hand to cross over your left through impact. Known as "holding the clubhead," the technique keeps the clubface open, creating a high shot that lands softly on the ground.

In my golf tips I tell players to finish in balance and with their hands slightly higher than the height of their backswing. Doing so indicates that the golfer has accelerated the clubhead through the ball. The motion is similar to throwing a ball underhanded, which I sometimes have players do in my golf lessons to get a feel for the shot.

Change the Club Drill The change-the-club drill is an excellent exercise for practicing your chipping. It

simulates hitting from the fringe of the green or fairway when your landing spot is about 3 feet away, but the ball needs to roll about 15 feet or more. The idea is to hit various clubs with the same motion to learn reaction and distance. It's a golf lesson in itself.

Choose a green that's a challenge. Maybe it has some valleys in it or maybe a significant side slope. Then pick a spot about five feet off the green and drop a ball. Set one club about two and a half feet behind the ball and another club about two and a half feet in front of the ball to give you an idea of distance. With the identical motion hit chip shots with each of four clubs--the sand wedge, 9 iron, 7 iron, and 5 iron.

After hitting the ball you'll notice that the ball runs farther as the clubs get lower and lower. Pick the club that will land the ball about two to three feet on the green and run the rest of the way to the hole. Remember to factor in slope and/or the speed of the green when selecting a club.

Using different clubs will give you a better feel for which club runs the ball farther and which lands softly and stops, making club selection somewhat easier next time you play.

Keep practicing this drill until can get within a foot of the pin every time. By then, you should start seeing the benefits of accurate pitching not only in better scores but also in a lower golf handicap. And that will keep you practicing for better results.

Jack Moorehouse is the author of the best-selling book "How To Break 80 And Shoot Like The Pros

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." He is NOT a golf pro, rather a working man that has helped thousands

of golfers from all seven continents lower their handicap immediately.

Golf Tips On When To Chip Versus Putting

By George Gabriel

Playing a chip shot from the fringe of a green versus putting through the fringe can be a little confusing for the average golfer. A lot of golfers choose to putt for the fear of not being able to control the distance of a chip shot around a green, and lets not talk about choking a chip shot. More often than not the confidence lies in the ability to putt the ball. When do you decide to chip instead of putt?

A quick review of some your options will help in the decision process. The circumstances have to be right to putt the ball. Here are some golf tips to consider and several situations to help your decision on choosing to chip the golf ball rather than electing to putt.

You may want to chip in these circumstances.

(1)Wet grass or thick grass.

The moisture or thickness of the grass is going to slow up the ball considerably, therefore weight of putt has to be determined to get it through the grass, and once you get it rolling on the green, the weight of putt it took you to get it through the fringe may not be enough or too much distance for the golf hole. In this circumstance there is too much weight control to consider.

(2)A very wet or slow green.

Chipping the golf ball will take a lot of moisture out of play, and a slow green forces you to swing harder with a putter to get the golf ball up to the hole, when the art of putting should call for a soft touch.

(3)Long grass and uphill to the hole.

You have to hit it harder to get it through the grass with a putter and up to the hole. Eliminate the chance of getting the golf ball caught up in the grass by chipping out and over.

(4)Over 7 feet of grass between golf ball and start of green, and hole is beyond center of green.

Chipping over the grass will eliminate slowing the golf ball up if you have a lot of green to work with.

(5)Hole is beyond center of green and more than 20 feet.

The odds are higher on getting the golf ball beyond 20 feet with a chipper versus a putter.

(6)Sprinkler system directly in front of line to golf hole or other obstacle that will affect the roll of golf ball.

Eliminate possible deflection of golf ball by chipping over the obstacle.

(7)Too much rolling terrain in the first 1/3 distance to the hole.

Taking most of the rolling green out of play by chipping over will give you a lot less rolling green to read unless you are very good at reading greens.

You have the ultimate decision on your ability to play any one of these golf club selections in these circumstances, but there is a good reason to think about these circumstances before you choose the club. I hope some of these golf tips will help in your decision process, and your goal to save strokes.

Tee Times

<http://www.golfanchor.net>

– Started playing golf and learned the game as a caddie back in the mid–sixties.



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