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Golf Secrets

By KEN BLACK

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Introduction

This book has been written for beginning golfers and those with some experience that want to **improve** their game and shoot lower scores. It is also an excellent guide that shows you how to **avoid** high scores (double bogeys or more) and disappointing rounds.

Applying the secrets in this book may not be enough to get you ready for the P.G.A. Tour, but you'll start playing your best golf ever and may just be smiling on the links much more often!

It doesn't matter if you're 18 year's old or 80 year's old, an Olympic athlete, or someone who has trouble making a complete swing, because the secret techniques and information in this book will super-charge your game!

An added bonus is that you don't have to take lessons to improve your golf swing if you don't want to, or you just don't have the time; these revelations can usually be used with no adjustments to your swing or, at most, very little adjustment.

In the information age that we find ourselves, it can be very difficult to figure out what is true and what's not. More than ever before, our generation is constantly bombarded with information due to advancements in technology and the modern "rush, rush" mentality.

Yes, machines like the Personal Computer (PC), the DVD Player, the Video Cassette Recorder, the Photocopier, the Laser Printer etcetera can make parts of our lives more efficient, but I'll tell you a little secret that you might not have noticed yet:

They move faster than we do!

It seems like we're always rushing around trying to keep up with things we created. It is no wonder that more people get burned out at work and have breakdowns, take more sick-leave, get more headaches and have no energy at the end of the day.

Is there a way that we can stop this insanity? Is there **any** way to slow down this race and take a break?

Since we're talking about serious effects on your physical and mental health, what would the best Doctors in the world advise?

They would say, "Eat well, exercise and have some fun with friends and family, at least a couple of days a week. This can give you more energy and more vitality to handle the hectic pace in our current world and it can diffuse the high blood pressure and stress we endure on a weekly basis".

So, how about some golf?

Do doctors play golf ? You can safely bet that the vast majority do. Sure, it's a low aerobic activity, but it is exercise. There's no doubt about it. The reason is that you have to walk about 4 miles every game, up and down hills, often carrying your golf bag on your shoulders or pulling a cart with your clubs attached to it.

Add these other benefits:

- the incredible challenge in the game itself,
- spending time outdoors with beautiful trees, lakes, flowers and even wildlife to catch your attention.

It's no wonder golf is enjoyed by millions of people worldwide, with more taking up the game every year.



Now you know that there are reasons you should play golf, but I'll bet you already knew about those, right?

Did you also know that this spectacular sport is a **“stress reducer”**?

Or, is it? ...

Does this look like anyone you know ?

This golfer doesn't look very happy, does he?

Maybe he had a bad day at work.

Maybe he got a flat tire on the way to the course.

Maybe he just found out that you're only allowed to play with 14 clubs.

Or could it be that his clubs are just really too flexible?

On the other hand, possibly, just possibly, he just lost his fourth golf ball of the day (add another \$12.00 to the cost of the day).

And he just got another **“8”** on a hole, **but, it's only the fifth hole!**

Or, my favorite ... **“He needed an excuse to buy a new set of clubs”**.

Golf is supposed to be a relaxing, enjoyable, exhilarating break from work and the pressures of life, isn't it?

You'd be surprised at how many people **“think and feel”** like this **“golf-club-bending-guy”** on the golf course.

Something's wrong somewhere!

Here's why golf can be frustrating:

How can you possibly have fun and relax if you're playing poorly and embarrassing yourself in front of your playing partners?

The answer is that you can't, unless you don't care at all what others think of you and your score doesn't matter.

What can you do?

Well, you have a variety of choices. You can:

- Buy a new set of clubs that are custom fit to your type of game (not a bad idea if you can afford it).



- Take some swing lessons from your local Golf Professional (another good idea if you have the money and the time).
- Take up tennis (some people do, but not you).
- Practice 12 more hours a week (okay, but what do you practice?).
- See your doctor and get some medication (you should, if necessary).



Read this book and put the advice into practice (a good idea). Then you may start looking like this, sooner than you think ...

Trying to find the magic **“cure”** is a common dilemma for most golfers.

If you're just starting out in this game, or even if you've been playing for many years, it can be tough to figure out:

- How to play well
- What golf equipment to buy
- How much to spend
- What are all the rules

And there are many other factors.

The age-old question, "Will a change to your swing, stance, equipment, or your golf shoes really improve your game?" has been in existence since the game began hundreds of years ago in Scotland.

There are many ideas, theories and lessons available in magazines, newsletters and books, some of which are very good, but it is usually difficult for the average or beginning player to fit these ideas into their game.

It may:

- be hard to understand
- demand extraordinary physical co-ordination or
- take a long time to make it work.

This book does not replace lessons from your Golf Club Professional. If you are not sure about your basic fundamentals (grip, stance, back-swing, follow-through etc.) or are having problems with a bad slice or hook, then having a lesson or series of lessons will be a good investment in your game. A Club Pro has been trained to help you.

Unfortunately, our busy lifestyles often don't allow us time to perfect our games the way that we would like. If you include travel time, practice time and the game itself, a typical round of golf can take **6 or 7 hours**, sometimes even more. So, as you know, it can be difficult for anyone to find the time to practice enough to improve.

That is why “**Golf Secrets**” can help you.

You will find how to:

- practice more effectively than ever before,
- solve problems that everyone faces on the golf course,
- prepare for a game, even if you have “no time” or “very little time”.

You do not have to change your golf swing to use the methods in this manual, yet you'll find these secrets so powerful that your game will improve quickly if you just follow the easy steps.

The first half of the book includes many logical tips that work, but in the last couple of chapters you'll discover ...

- exact solutions to golfers' specific problems
- exactly how to practice to save yourself some time and
- a logical plan that is simple and easy to follow.

You should find this book easy to read. It is not a 300 page book that you will never finish because it bores you. It is short and to the point, giving you proven answers and not just theory.

To improve your game, to start out learning the game correctly, you need something that works, not something that might work. As you add these subtle methods to your game, you'll soon find yourself



shooting lower scores and actually enjoying golf more.

Your friends will wonder what has happened to you, but you'll know the answer.

How can I make these bold statements and what qualifies me to show you how to play better and even win golf tournaments?

Almost all about me is revealed in the next Chapter!

Who is Ken Black?

I figure that you should know a little something about the author, so here goes ...

I am nobody special. I'm just like you, except that I probably weigh more and am shorter than you (180 lbs., 5 ft. 6 inches). I was 162 lbs a year ago, but that's another story. You are also likely to have more hair than me. I may drink more coffee than you. You can tell that when you look at my eyes in this picture that was taken just after another large coffee.



I have a rather short back-swing and I am not a P.G.A. Tour Pro like Phil Mickelson or Tiger Woods, but I do have quite a bit of knowledge about golf.

Please let me explain.

I owned a Golf Club manufacturing company in the 1980's and have played the game for 31 years, since I was twelve.

When I was learning how clubs were made and how to custom fit clubs for different types of players, I attended some golf schools and visited famous golf companies in the U.S.A., including:

- Custom Golf Clubs (Golfsmith) in Austin, Texas
- Louisville Golf Company in Louisville, Kentucky
- The Golfworks Golf Company and
- Dynacraft USA in Newark, Ohio.

This helped me to understand the influence that golf clubs can have on your game.

My handicap has ranged from 0 to 3 since 1994, depending on how much I managed to play. Over the years, I studied the best P.G.A. professionals in the game, including many former Club Champions at different levels (Junior, Senior, Class A, B and C).

I consider myself fortunate to be aware of many factors that are common to each level of golfer. This knowledge came through playing with all types of people and custom fitting golf clubs for many different kinds of players over the years.

Like many of my readers, I read countless books and saw many videos with game improvement strategies, but I did not begin to play really well or win tournaments until I discovered some little known **revelations** (secrets).

When you put this knowledge in to your game, it will propel you to lower your scores and achieve more success on the links than you have experienced before.

With this know-how, I was able to win six straight Class A Club Championships from 1994 to 1999 at two different Golf Clubs. In the same period, I won several other individual events and was part of 8 Florida Sweep winning teams.

But it only started happening after I put into practice the many secrets and principles you'll find in this book.

I love helping people and teaching. I guess my mom and dad instilled this in to me when I was young. Anyway, I have been in the limelight for a while, so I figured it was time to give back some of what I've learned and show you how you can excel at this sport too.

My wish is that this book will help you to reach your golfing goals but, more importantly, that you will understand what a privilege it is to even be able to play this game in freedom, considering all the turmoil in other parts of the world.

Be thankful of this opportunity each time you play, appreciate the great outdoors, the fresh air, the beautiful flowers and trees and even your playing partners, then you will soon realize how blessed and fortunate we all are!

I would like to dedicate this book to my parents, whose encouragement and love over the years have been a great inspiration for me. My father also won many golf tournaments when he was younger and he actually taught me how to play the game, so I owe him a great deal of credit.

I'll never forget the warm, overwhelming, feeling of joy I had when he presented me with my first set of golf clubs when I was twelve years old - a set of **Jack Nicklaus' "Golden Bear"** golf clubs, which I played with for several years.

My mother and father often took me to play with them on various courses when I was young, and they taught me a great deal, especially about respect and kindness to others. I am very fortunate to have been blessed with a great mom and dad.

You can learn to play well.

One of the fascinating things about golfers is the never-ending quest to improve. Wanting to play better and shoot lower scores is natural for anyone who takes the game at all seriously.

You might be thrilled just to beat your playing partners (your Saturday foursome) more often, and come out winning a drink or a free lunch instead of losing most of the time. But remember, the human competitive nature is normal and very healthy only if used wisely.

To be a gracious winner is one thing, but to also have the courage and honor to properly congratulate someone who manages to beat you is just as important.

Golf is a funny game.

One day you can go out and play a great round and the next day, it can seem as though you are playing on a different planet, and nothing will go right.

This is what makes golf such a fantastic sport; there is always room for improvement.

However, what if there was a way to beat the odds, at least most of the time, and start shooting more consistent scores?

Would this make your life just a little bit better?

I hope your answer is yes, and I do believe that the information you find in this book will catapult your game in that direction.



Why are the Tour Professionals so good?

- Is it because they can practice all day, day after day, week after week?
- Or is it because they have the world's best teachers giving them advanced one on one training, in person?
- Perhaps they can shoot outrageously low numbers all the time because their golf swings are perfect?
- Or could it also be that they are all in top physical condition and perfectly healthy?
- A better question is that if all of these things are true, why do they have different swings, putting strokes and teachers? And why can some do very little practice and get the job done but others spend all day at the practice tee or green?

And what does this have to do with your game? Well, frankly, it has everything to do with your game!

Each of us is unique. We are of different ages, sizes, strengths and weaknesses. But it doesn't matter, because a person with a sharp short game and good concentration often defeats someone else who hits their drives twenty to thirty yards further. Likewise, a player with confidence and some knowledge can overcome almost all odds and win.

Those who do well at golf are not always the most gifted or the strongest. The edge that they have is that they believe they can improve.

If I said to you, John or Alice, "give me your car keys, you don't deserve to drive", what would you say? You'd tell me to get lost, because you have a valid driver's license and you deserve to drive. In other words, you learned what was necessary, you paid the price, and you have earned the right to drive. But, although it may have seemed scary and impossible at first, once you figured out how to do it, it was a "piece of cake", wasn't it?

Golf is very similar.

If you learn exactly how to improve your game and you practice **what works**, good things will start to happen right before your eyes, because you have earned the right!

I have played with hundreds of golfers of all abilities in my thirty-plus years of playing the game, and I have noticed one common element with those who do not do well. This is the reason:

They do not really believe that they can.

That may sound a little strange, but it is true ...

More true than anyone would like to admit.

But, there is hope ... there is an answer ...

I used to feel that way myself until I began reversing this curse with the God given determination that everyone has within us. The truth is that everyone can have an astounding short game, because it only involves short shots and putting. Likewise, you can figure out how to think and influence your subconscious mind to do better.

Here's a shocker for you ...

Just learn what to do, how to relax on the course, how to practice and what to avoid. Apply your new knowledge a little bit at a time and the lower handicap you wanted will become a reality.

Oh, yes ...one more thing; you'll find the answers in the pages that follow."

Know your course



Without a doubt, you must know something about the course you're playing to be able to play well at any level. If you don't, you'll waste strokes unnecessarily.

This is one of the simple secrets that I learned over the years. It is also one of the factors that is most neglected among amateur golfers.

Did you know that Tiger Woods studied many old videos of the **Masters** Golf Tournament before he won the event in 1997 by 12 strokes and set an all time record of 19 under par?

He learned from the tapes the spots to hit his drives to, the best approach shots and how certain putts reacted on the greens.

He knew, just as Jack Nicklaus knew, that you must **study** and play as many practice rounds as possible on the course where you will be playing a tournament and where you normally play. It is obvious that this knowledge does make a difference.

“Course Knowledge is Power.”

You need to find out as much as possible about the usual local conditions (the golf course you play), the wind direction, fairways, greens, hazards and tees before you can expect to play like a pro. This will give you another **edge** over everyone you play golf with. It will help you win more bets, more often.

Conditions

Conditions include wind, rain and the temperature.

It is important to know the usual conditions at your course.

Depending on where you live, it may rain a great deal, be very windy, cool, cold or hot most of the year. You should know how to dress for these elements and know how the conditions affect your club selection.

Does the **wind** come from the east, west, north or south on an average day? How does this affect which club you play on each hole?

You need to be aware of what club to use from the tees and from the fairways in specific wind situations.

For example, hole number 3 at my golf club, the Mississippi Golf Club in Appleton, Ontario, is a dogleg right par five, 520 yards, with "out of bounds" (O.B.) along the whole right side of the fairway.

Fortunately, there aren't many trees in the way of the tee shot. The wind is often northwesterly, around 10 to 15 miles per hour and it moves in the direction of the shape of the hole.

By the way, the weather office names the type of wind by the direction it comes from. For example, a northwesterly wind comes from the northwest (it is blowing from the north and sideways towards the west at the same time). A southwest wind comes from the south and also blows sideways to the west.

Getting back to my story:

It is very tempting to just cut right over the O.B. markers to shorten the hole and try to get on in two. The odds are in your favor.

At least they seem to be most of the time, but only if you hit a very solid shot. I sometimes cut the corner in casual games with my friends but I never try this in a tournament or even in the week prior to an event. The reason is simple ...

You should always play the real odds, even if your mind seems to be telling you that the odds are in your favor.

Remember and (please!) never forget, you and I are not P.G.A. or L.P.G.A. professionals. **They** may be able to pull off any shot they want to 90% of the time but, since we have less skill, we must use our mind as much as possible, not relying on our **emotions** to make decisions for us.

It is critical to think first before taking any chances.

In the situation I described above, the real odds are that, even if I miss the tee shot slightly by hitting it **thin** on the “heel” or the “toe” of the club, I’m **out of bounds** and almost assured of getting a double bogey, or worse.

Even if I take a chance and manage to get over the corner of the dogleg where I can put my second shot on the green or close to the green, I’ll probably birdie the hole, but there are no guarantees.

However, if I aim straight ahead and play safe, my ball will probably end up on the fairway at a point that reduces the odds of that dreaded “double bogey”. And this still provides me with the opportunity to get close in two (because the wind is behind me), hit a good chip and one putt for a birdie.

There are more ways than one of getting a good score on a hole, so be sure to choose the way that is best, assuming that you might not hit your best shot. Although you may not want to follow this advice in a friendly game with the guys or gals, you should do this on most occasions, and definitely in any tournaments you enter.



The same logic holds true for **rainy**, **cold** or **very hot** days.

Whenever the conditions are tough, always think a little more than usual and take a more conservative approach. Be prepared, if you think that it might rain. Make sure you have a good rain suit, the largest possible umbrella, a cover for your golf bag and extra

“dry” gloves (sealed in a “Ziploc” or other plastic bag and tucked away in a pocket of your golf bag that is at the back, facing away from the rain).

You should also have at least three towels **if the weather is poor**. Wrap one on the inside mesh of your umbrella. Protect that towel from the elements and use it to wipe off your golf ball etc. Keep another towel in your golf bag and use that to dry off your grips and your hands, when necessary. Keep another attached to the outside of your bag for cleaning your golf clubs.

If it's **cold**, don't “follow the crowd” and wear just a golf hat and a sweater, or a jacket – be wise, comfortable and forget about how you look. If the temperature calls for it, wear a toque (winter hat), sweater, jacket and even winter gloves between shots - **keep warm!**

Also, remember that a golf ball doesn't travel as far in the cold, so use one or two clubs more on each shot.

For **very hot and humid days**, be sure you have plenty of water to drink. Usually, most courses provide drinking water on three or four holes but **don't rely on this**.

Bring your own water in a vacuum flask or just buy some bottled water and bring it along. This will help to prevent you getting dehydrated. Getting dehydrated might cause you to become very sick.

The other side effect of not drinking enough water is a headache. This may sound over-dramatic but you should have a supply of Advil, Tylenol or another headache medication in your golf bag at all times in case you need it.

A pounding headache can kill your golf score! Believe me, I'm an expert when it comes to this. Some headaches I had on the golf course were so bad that I had to leave in the middle of the game.

It's not good if you're forced to quit when you're in a tournament. That is why I always have pain relievers on hand. If I even suspect that I may get an attack, I take two pills before I start out.

Have you ever seen the television commercial with Raymond Floyd talking about feeling pain before he starts playing? He is talking about arthritic pain in his fingers. What does he do? He takes Advil to stop it. The same goes for headaches. Ibuprofen is a brand that helps many people with these ailments. Talk to your doctor first if you're not sure what you should use.

For those of you who are perfectly healthy and never bothered by these problems, consider yourself very fortunate. Even so, you should still keep a supply in your bag in case one of your playing partners doesn't feel well. This is the right thing to do.

Nothing can destroy your chances of winning a tournament, or a bet with your friends, more than not being able to play !

One other note, of which I am sure you are already aware, is to wear **sunscreen** and a hat if it is sunny. You protect yourself from getting sunburn and reduce the chances of getting heat-stroke.

And no, that's not so funny if it happens to you.

These things may seem unimportant to even mention in this book, but I do so because I have witnessed countless episodes of people not preparing themselves for the conditions of the day and suffering dearly for that mistake.

Don't let this happen to you.



Fairways ...



Being very familiar with the characteristics of each fairway is important. You need to know where:

- **troublesome** trees are located,
- the rough is the worst
- the ground is the hardest or softest, and
- exactly where bunkers (sand traps) and water hazards are situated.

Knowing what trees to avoid on which side of the fairway can save you from one to several strokes a game.

It is absolutely essential to stay as far away as possible from trees that are very high or have overhanging branches. Many holes on golf courses have “signature” trees that are there to block your second shot, or third shot on a par 5, if you come anywhere near them. Some holes may even have huge trees in the middle of the fairway. They are there to interfere with your first (tee) shot if you’re not careful.

As an example, I was playing in a very big 36-hole tournament in 1997 that was hosted by my Club. The number eight hole is a dogleg right par 4,360 yards with a water hazard in front of you and trees lined straight across your intended line of flight. You're only option is to hit a very high tee shot to clear the trees, or go far left where there is an opening in the fairway. In a tournament, the smart play is to aim left through the opening and fade the ball (hook for left handers) to the right.

Of course, the short cut is straight over the trees.

If you succeed, you'll have a nine iron or a wedge into the green. If you take the more conservative approach and go left, you may be forced to use anywhere from a three iron to a seven iron coming into the putting surface.

On both days of this event, I tried to go right over the trees and hit them both days.

Didn't we already learn this lesson ? ...

This left me with a blind second shot, blocked by countless unforgiving Maples on both days. The result was a bogey on this hole two days in a row and, as luck would have it, **I lost by two strokes.**



Ooops ...

This was a learning experience. I didn't follow my own logic and play the odds, so I suffered for it. However, I haven't made that mistake again.

Another frequently forgotten tidbit of knowledge that any golfer should strive to figure out is "where are the fairways hard?" and "where are they soft?"

If a part of the fairway is hard, you may be able to hit to this area off your tee shot and gain an extra 15 to 20 yards, or you may be able to use less club going to the green, land the ball before the green and let it bounce onto the putting surface.

How can you figure this out?

Well, playing and watching how your shots, and those of your playing partner react on each hole is one way, but another good way is to watch other groups playing the holes after you have finished playing.

If your 9th or 18th greens are visible from the clubhouse, watch where shots are landing and how far they are bouncing. It is really a great idea to do this in the

week leading up to an event. That same logic applies to seeing where the greens are soft because of poor drainage, rainy weather or whatever.

It is always an advantage to know approximately where to land your approach shots so you hit more greens in regulation.

This also holds true for bunkers and water hazards. Do you know where all of them are?

Sounds like an obvious question, doesn't it?

You need to know these things so you can aim your tee shot or approach shot in the right direction and land it in a safe spot. Hitting towards trouble areas is not smart and will land you right in the middle of these "**golf ball disposals**" more times than not.



If, however, you have no choice but to hit over them, just ensure that you use enough club to clear the hazards and get on or close to the green.

The bottom line is that you don't want to waste shots.

You might always be tempted to "go for the gold" and pull off an impressive shot that will impress your playing partners at the time but ...

Do you want to get a "pat on the back" for an occasional great shot?

OR ...

Do you want to be congratulated at the end of the day by your fellow members, friends and maybe even the Golf Pro on the excellent game you just played?

Greens

Greens are made in various shapes and sizes, and have different types of grasses, varying slopes and tiers (levels).

The most important thing to know about the putting surfaces you're playing on is where to try to land your approach shots and what parts of the greens to avoid.

Since you can only find out how the ball breaks and how fast certain putts are by playing the course, that is what you do.

Watch where you and your partners are putting from on each hole and in what direction a putt breaks. However, don't rely on your memory to retain all of these facts. Pick a couple of games a month to mark down on a separate sheet of paper the behavior of the greens.

But don't get too obsessive about this subject because weather conditions, the condition of the greens themselves, the time of the day when you play (later in the day the grass is slower and often has more spike marks) and even the time of the year can change the speed and characteristics of a green.

Learning where the ball breaks left or right and whether you have a downhill or uphill putt will improve your consistency in putting.

There is a common belief that putts will always break towards the water if there is a water hazard near a green. This is usually only the case with older greens. Newer greens are often built to slope away from any water hazard. The only way to know for sure is to go on the course when it is not busy and practice putting.

Another little known way to find out this vital information is to talk to those people who have been members for a long time. Ask your club's golf professional who might fall into this category (including themselves) and try and arrange a game with them. You can learn first hand what subtle breaks are in the greens this way.

Hazards

Hazards are defined as bunkers (sand traps) and all water hazards on the course. You should make it a habit to avoid these as much as possible. It is safer to fade or hook a ball around a bunker or water hazard than to try to go straight over it and take the risk of landing in it.

As mentioned previously, one of the common errors that many amateurs make is to not use enough club when going over these obstacles, especially when going against the wind.

I'll say it again ...

Use enough club to clear any hazard in front of the greens you play

A neat trick is to use one more club than you were thinking, and then choke up on the club. This means placing your hands on the club about 1 to 2 inches from the top of the grip, instead of at the end of the grip as you would for a normal shot. You'll still get the distance you need and the shot will be easier to execute.

With regards to water hazards, know your rights and obligations according to the rules.

When yellow stakes define the start and end of a "water hazard":

These water hazards are usually right in front of you, between you and the hole. If your ball ends up in a yellow staked water hazard you can play the ball as is, without grounding your club in the hazard, or count one penalty stroke and drop anywhere behind the hazard, going as far back as you want, as long as you are not closer to the hole and you keep the point where the ball last crossed the margin of the hazard between you and the hole.

This means that if you drew a line between where you drop it and the point where it first crossed the hazard, to the pin, it would form a straight line. It is a good idea to drop the ball in the fairway to ensure yourself of a good lie, and as close to the hazard as possible so your shot to the green is shorter.

When red stakes define the start and end of a “water hazard”:

These hazards are usually to the left or right of the fairway and not right in front of you. The local golf course's rules can set which types of stakes are used.

Although you can drop on the other side of the water but not closer to the hole, or play from within the hazard without grounding your club, the correct play is usually to drop within two club lengths of where the ball entered the hazard but not closer to the hole.

Tees

Your first rule here is to find out if you'll be playing from the Red Tees (Ladies), White Tees (Men's normal tees) or Blue Tees (from the back of the tee area) in any tournament you are playing in.

Find this out, if possible, at least three weeks before the event and then play from the specified tees only in every game you play until the event.

The Superintendent of the Club, on the day before an event, often puts chalk marks where the tee markers will be placed for the competition. Try to get a game on the day before the event and play from those exact spots. This will help to make you more comfortable in the tournament.

The only other thing you should be aware of is whether it is better for you to tee up your ball on the left, right or center of the teeing ground.

You should copy what the touring pros do:

1. If it is a straight hole, tee up in the centre of the tee.
2. If it is a dogleg right, tee your ball up on the right side of the tee. This gives you more room and you'll be aiming to the widest part of the fairway.
3. If it is a dogleg left, tee your ball up towards the left side of the tee. Again, this allows you to aim in the direction of the largest portion of the fairway.

These guidelines can be changed slightly to allow for:

- the direction and strength of the wind,
- any trees in your way near the tee, and
- the actual condition of the tee (if the teeing ground is slanted or worn out, then you might not want to use that area).

Solutions to common problems

In this section, you are going to find out the most common problems facing golfers, and some techniques and fast solutions to overcome them. **The problem areas are:**

- **Putting**
- **Driving**
- **Physical**
- **Mental**

Study and follow these methods and watch your scores drop.

Putting

The three things that most aggravate golfers about putting are:

1. **Lag putting** (not being able to get the ball within two feet of the hole on a long putt)
2. **Three putting**, and
3. Missing very short putts (less than 2 feet), sometimes called **the yips**.

One reason why you may have had a good round of putting one day and a bad day the next is because the ball was not at the ideal position in your stance. There are always exceptions but, in about 95% of all cases, **it is critical for your eyes to be directly over the line of the putt towards the hole.**

Another way to look at it is to imagine a straight line drawn about 3 feet before the ball, right through the ball and directly to the hole. You want your eyes to be right over this line.

Many teachers also advocate placing your eyes directly over the ball, but this is personal preference. This increases the chances of hitting a solid, straight putt every time.

How wide your stance is, or how much you bend over the ball at address is really a personal issue, and you should do whatever is most comfortable. Many great putters have a shoulder width stance while some take a wider or even a narrower approach.

I would advise that, if you have a longer putt (e.g. 40 ft. +), you should stand more upright with a slightly narrower stance because you'll be able to see the line of the putt better and you'll be able to make a longer, more fluid stroke this way.



For long putts, whether you have a 30 ft. putt or a 75 ft. putt, the procedure you should go through to get that first putt within the 2 ft. range is the same.

Do these things and your putting will improve:

(a). Always follow a set routine when you putt.

For example, look at the break of the putt from behind the ball for 10 seconds, stand beside the ball and take three practice strokes, and then step up to the ball and make your actual stroke.

Doing the same thing all the time will create consistency in your putting and lead to better results, especially under pressure. You'll see the P.G.A. and L.P.G.A. pros do this, or something very similar, all the time.

(b). Break longer putts into three or four pieces.

Let's assume you have a 30-foot putt to make. When you stand beside your ball and look towards the hole, imagine that the hole is 10 feet away, then take a small practice stroke as if you only had a 10-foot putt.

Sometimes it is easier to do this if you can see a spot on the green (e.g. old ball mark) 10 feet away.

Next, on your second practice stroke, look down the line to the hole some 20 ft. and think of how hard you would have to hit the ball to get it to go 20 ft., then take that practice stroke.

Finally, look at the location of the actual hole 30 feet away. Make your practice stroke a little longer than the imaginary twenty-foot putt and try to feel how hard you have to hit the ball to get it to go thirty feet.

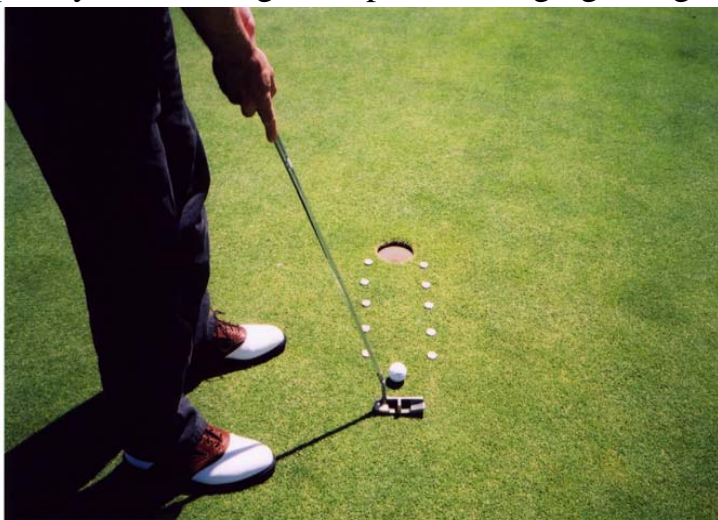
Go through this drill on the practice green at your club, or the course you're playing, and you'll find that it becomes automatic.

Your game will love you for it.

To reduce the chances of 3 putts on a hole and missing very short putts under two feet in length, simply practice these steps:

(a) If you may be missing the hole to the right or left, opening or closing the face of the putter head at impact, you need to get the putter swinging straight back and forth on short putts.

Pick a flat spot on your practice green and line up some quarters or other coins on either side of the hole for about 12 inches, just like runway lights at an airport. The coins should be about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch wider than the width of your putter



head, on either side. It would look something like this photograph:

Now, with your golf ball just outside this one-foot runway, your goal is to putt the ball through the line of quarters without touching any. When you can do this ten times in a row, you're doing well.

In all likelihood, they will all go in the hole but, if they don't, it's okay. This exercise is just to stroke the ball purely so that you do not hit any of the coins. You can also practice this at home on your carpet and putt into a glass, or a plastic (or aluminum) putting cup, available at any golf store.

I'll bet you're saying, "why practice this at all?"

The reason for the coins (or tees if you prefer) is to let your eyes see more of a tunnel or line to the hole. Do it enough times and your mind will start seeing this line when you're really playing on the course. Crazy, but true!

(b) The next secret is so simple that it is scary, but so effective. You won't believe it until you try it for a couple of weeks.

You don't need a golf ball for this one, just your putter. Practice miniature strokes.

Take the club-head back 3 inches and then, on the follow through, go only 3 inches past where the ball would be. Use a "straight back and straight through" motion, but do it as slowly and as smoothly as possible. It is even better if you can practice this against a wall, a 2 x 4 piece of wood, one of your clubs lying on the putting green or anything else that has a straight solid edge to it.

You must be sure that your stroke is touching the wall or whatever you're using on the back-swing and follow-through. This will help straighten your putting stroke.

(c) One thing that I have seen many times when someone is not putting well, is that they are moving their head to the left or right during the stroke. It is okay to not move your head at all when your putt, like Gary Player, just as it is okay for your eyes to follow the path of the ball after you hit it, as long as your head is stationary, not shifting to the left or right.

One way to check this is to have a friend hold a golf club against the left side of your head (right side for a left-handed player), while you are practicing putting. If you feel yourself pressing against the club on the follow-through, you need to keep your head more still. An even better way is to get someone to take a video

of you putting from all angles with a Camcorder. This will show you what is really happening.

(d) Be sure you are using a putter, golf ball and glove that suits and fits you. See **Section (5) Equipment**.

Driving

Driving the ball off the tee is the second most important skill in your game, after putting. After all, if you can't hit it on the fairway, at least most of the time, you won't get many eagles, birdies or pars.

The touring professionals can hit greens in regulation from almost anywhere on a golf course because of their incredible skill level, and because they practice about 8 hours a day but, for the average golfer, this is impossible.

However, there are some things you can do that take almost no time and will revolutionize your driving ability.

Apply the elements in this checklist to quickly improve your drives:

(1) Does your Driver have the right length, flex, loft, lie and shaft type for your particular game?

See **Section 5 – Equipment** for help in selecting the right club for you. The standard **length** for a metal wood is 44 inches (it is 43 inches with a wooden club), while some are built up to 46 inches. you will gain some distance using a longer club with a “dead center” hit, but you will lose accuracy on off-center hits, so there is a trade off here.

The usual **loft** (angle of the face from top to bottom) of a driver ranges from 8.5 degrees to 13 degrees. I suggest 10.5 degrees. If you are a lower handicap player, you might be able to use 9.5, but you should try the club out first. If you have trouble getting the ball airborne, you might opt for a higher loft, say, around 12 or 13 degrees.

(2) Is your grip worn out or slippery?

If your grip does not feel “tacky” when you hold it, it probably should be replaced.

(3). If you wear a golf glove, is it in good shape?

This is one of the faults common to many of the amateur golfers that I saw and played with in tournaments over the years.

A glove should allow you to get a firm grip on the club, with no slippage whatsoever.

Yes, unfortunately, a good glove can be expensive (e.g. \$15.00 - \$25.00 each), but it is worth the investment, if you play in golf tournaments. You want a glove that is soft, but as “tacky” as possible when you grip a club. This alone can save you one or two strokes each round!

You can also use a synthetic glove if it is raining, but they are not as good in dry weather as leather since they stretch and move around when you move your hands.

Finally, ensure that the glove fits right. It should feel very snug when you put it on because it will stretch somewhat with use, and there should be no excess material at the tips of your fingers. Also, if your fingers are short, try the Cadet version in the Small, Medium, Medium-Large or Large size. This type has shorter fingers.

Refer to **(E) Golf Gloves** in the **Equipment Section** of this manual for more information.

(4) Make sure you are aligned to the target.

If you have any doubts, just drop a club on the ground between you and the ball, pointed right at the point where you want the ball to land. Next, take your stance parallel to the club on the ground and try and align your shoulders and hips in the same way. This is the best way to check where you’re aiming.



It is best to only do this when you're practicing on the driving range.

(5). Swing more slowly.

Most amateurs get far too anxious about the thought of driving the ball as long as they possibly can. They end up swinging too hard at the ball and often either top it, hit a wild slice, or go under the ball and hit it straight up into the air and very short.

You should swing at 75% of your maximum speed to gain more accuracy and, for that matter, more distance (because you’ll hit the sweet spot of the club-head

more often). This is what I do and so does Tiger Woods. Tiger only swings over 75% when he needs to play a very long hole and wants to get more distance off the tee (e.g. Long par 5).

(6) Visualize your shot before you hit it.

Picture the ball flying where you want it to go, before and after you address the ball. Just do this for a few seconds each time.

(7) See your local Club Professional for a lesson.

This will certainly help if you're having a great deal of trouble with a slice or hook, or other swing-related things. They are trained to spot swing abnormalities and problems with fundamentals (grip, stance etc.), so make an appointment if necessary.

Physical.

The only thing to be mentioned about your physical condition is that, the better shape you are in, the more energy you will have and that is an advantage. However, to be honest, you really just need to be able to play 18 holes without getting tired. If you're exhausted, or find that you do not do well on the last four or five holes, perhaps you need to get in better physical condition.

Try walking every day at lunchtime, or at night, for 15 to 30 minutes, or just play more rounds of golf.

Add plenty of fruits and vegetables to your diet to build more stamina. You may have heard this countless times in your life, but **it does work**.

Always, and I mean always, make sure that you have plenty of water on hand when you play. Add a couple of bottles of orange juice, Gatorade or water to your golf bag, and **never let yourself get dehydrated or thirsty during a round**. This will help you feel better, give you extra energy and prevent most headaches from occurring.

Along with this, be sure to eat before you play and in-between each nine holes. A sandwich or piece of fruit is much, much, better than a candy bar or other candy. Sugar will only give you a boost of adrenaline for a short time period and then leave you feeling weaker later on in the game. You don't need that handicap.

Believe it or not, I was able to win six straight Club Championships while I was 35 pounds overweight. I am only 15 pounds over my ideal weight now and I feel much better than I used to. So, anything is possible. If you decide to lose some weight, please see your family doctor first before going on any diet.

Mental.

The mental aspect of the game is very interesting and often misunderstood.

Once you know how your mind works, you can figure out what went wrong in the past and adjust your thinking for the future.



Please realize that what you are about to find out will transform you into a better, more in control and confident player; In order to play your best you must have confidence.

I'm sure that this seems obvious, but is it?

Confidence is how you think about the way you play golf. When you're playing, what are your predominant thoughts? Do you concentrate on hitting good shots, or does your mind wander and think about the worst that can happen (e.g. knock it in the lake)?

Does having confidence guarantee that you will shoot lower scores?

No, but, it sure increases the odds in your favor. So, the question becomes, "how do you get confidence and eliminate negative, destructive thoughts?"

The answer is to concentrate only on the ball going to the target.

The target must be a small point of reference in the distance, but not on the ground. For example:

- a tree branch
- the chimney on a house
- a tower on the green, and so on.

Your mind will work at its best if you focus on a specific spot from the tee and on your second shot to the green.

What you're aiming at can also be the pin, as long as you are not forced to hit a shot over a huge bunker or other hazard. How often have you heard a T.V. commentator like Ken Venturi, Johnny Miller or Curtis Strange say that a P.G.A. pro is aiming directly at the middle of a T.V. tower, or some other small object in the distance?

This is no coincidence.

This is what the World's best golfers do all the time.

They concentrate on what they need to do (hit the ball at a target) and not on negatives such as hitting the ball in the water).



Here's a Revelation for you :

Whatever thought goes through your mind **just before you strike the ball** is what you are telling your brain to do. And the mysterious thing here is that your subconscious does not understand the words, "**do not**".

So, if just before you hit a shot, you say to yourself, "**don't hit in the water,**" you are actually programming yourself to "hit it in the water!"

How many times do negative thoughts like "don't hit it in the water," "don't hit it in the trees," or, "don't hit it out of bounds" sneak into your mind just before you swing? And what percentage of the time does your prediction come true? Probably close to 100%.

You now know that negative thinking does work, but not to your benefit. Could thinking the opposite way work – positive thinking?

The answer is, "Yes, it does work", but, only if you focus and put destructive thoughts out of your head.

It is your choice how you wish to think, believe it or not.

It took me many years to figure this out, but success followed when I did. The same will happen to you. It isn't complicated either.

Just do three things on a regular basis:

1. Aim at a specific target on every shot
2. Think about what you want to do with a shot, **NOT** on what you don't want to do

3. Believe that you are an excellent golfer. Always think about driving the ball well, hitting wedge shots right beside the pin, getting up and down from the bunker easily and one putting all the time. Think these thoughts at the driving range, at home, during a game, or whenever and wherever else you can.

Furthermore, when you're not on the course, **think of specific scores that you want to shoot**. For example, if you want to shoot a 72 next Saturday, see yourself at the end of the game looking at the scorecard and feeling elated that you were able to do this with seemingly no problem at all. Be realistic though. If the best score you have ever shot is a 90, don't expect to shoot 72 in a week's time.

Practice these principles when you play with your friends. The more consistently you do these things, the faster you'll improve. And when that starts to happen, you'll find that negative, unfriendly thoughts disappear on their own. Soon you'll be saying what a "revelation" this really was and how much more fun the game is suddenly becoming!

How to handle Pressure

It is one thing to have confidence but it doesn't do you much good if that confidence goes away when you're under pressure. You must have heard the phrase about golfers, of all abilities, "**choking**" in pressure situations?

An example would be if you just made two straight bogeys and now have to par the last 3 holes to tie for the lead in the final round of your Club Championship. Most people would panic in this situation and end up blowing it by at least one or two strokes.



Why is it that you can par these holes 90% of the time on a normal day and yet, it sometimes “feels” like it is almost impossible to do when it really counts?

Get rid of this stumbling block to your success once and for all.

Please remember that I had to go through this transformation in the past. But, as soon as I started applying the secrets in this book, everything changed and I started shooting very low scores and winning tournaments every year.

Most importantly of all, you can do it too!

So, what exactly is “choking”?

Basically, it's hitting a bad shot after you allow anger, anxiety, doubt or fear to enter your mind.

As has been already noted, whatever you're thinking of, or whatever you say to yourself just before hitting a shot, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. In other words, if you say to yourself, “whatever you do, don't hit it in the water,” guess what will happen?

That's right, “splash!”

Your brain will guide your muscles and your golf club to strange-looking swings, if you allow it. If you're distracted by negative thought patterns, you won't swing the club the way you normally could because your muscles will become tense and almost non-functional.

However, please realize that being a little nervous in the stomach area is normal for all great athletes, including you. I have heard of great players like Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player, Arnold Palmer and many others saying that being nervous, having shaky hands or a pounding heart is a good sign, because it means you are eager to compete.

But ...

Most amateur players fail to realize that you must separate your brain from your body, so to speak. Your body can be nervous, “butterflies in the stomach” and all, but your mind must remain calm.

This is possible, believe it or not, if you follow these guidelines:

- Focus on the target, not on what bad things can happen. Imagine that you're on the course with your friends and you have a bet as to who can hit the fairway or green.
- Take a few deep breaths. Now relax your neck, arms, shoulders, and hands so that you're not tense in any way. Also, another sure way to check if you're too tense is to pay attention to your jaw and teeth. Don't clench or grind your teeth because this will lead to tension everywhere else in your body. This may sound like something your dentist would say, but this is the truth. You must be aware of all of these small factors because they can do harm.
- Don't worry about the results of the shot before you hit it. Just concentrate on making a smooth swing, just as you would on the driving range with nobody else around.
- Finally, if you miss a putt or another shot even though your thoughts were filled with good intentions, just accept it as part of the game and don't dwell on it. Don't beat yourself up. Enjoy the game and try and forget about the shots you missed.

Keep your mind in the present, not in the past or the future.

If you take this prescription, your scores will drop.

Why did Ben Hogan always focus on only one shot at a time? (the present shot). Because he knew the power in this secret.

Equipment

Does the type of golf clubs and other equipment you use really matter?

The answer is yes, without a doubt!

Using the right equipment, without doing anything else, will save you **at least 2 strokes per game!**

It's not really how much you spend on clubs, golf balls, shoes and so on that you should be concerned about. What you must know is:

Do the golf clubs or golf balls I'm using, suit my type of game?

How can you figure out what you should be using?

The following information will help you. I told you this book was a good investment!

(A) Putters

You should ask your local golf professional or a golf-shop expert for guidance on selecting a putter. You shouldn't worry too much about the loft (angle of the face, usually 3 – 5 degree range) of the putter head, but give consideration to these factors:

- the lie angle (angle between the shaft and the ground)
- the length
- the total weight (not swingweight)
- the size and shape of the head
- the head material (e.g. Zinc, Stainless steel, wood, Titanium, Aluminum, ABS Plastic, Balata)
- whether the shaft is offset (putter head is ahead of the shaft) and
- the grip type and size

All these factors must be taken into consideration so that you make an informed choice of putter type and to ensure that it feels “just right”.

Having confidence in your putting is really important, and you will not feel confident standing over a putt unless you like the look and feel of the putter.

The “lie angle” of the shaft determines if the putter head is sitting perfectly flat on the ground when you’re putting. The toe of the putter will be more in the air if the lie angle is too upright and the result may be that you hit more putts to the left of the target (to the right for left handed players). The heel of the putter will be more off the ground if the lie angle is too flat, leading to putts that go to the right of the hole (left for a left handed player).

Putters are now made in many different lie angles. Get the one that lets the head of the club rest squarely on the ground when you take your stance.

The length of the putter is another factor. The standard length for a putter is 35 inches. The right length for you depends on how you stand when you address the ball. A longer putter is better if you like to stand upright. A shorter putter may help if you prefer to bend over and be closer to the ground. There are also very long putters (in the 45 inch and over range) out there. Some people claim that this is a good solution if you have back problems or if you want to see the line of the putt better on long putts. This is totally up to you.

The total weight of your putter is important. Get one that does not feel too heavy. You may have to try out many different putters to find one that is the best weight for you. Generally speaking, use a lighter putter if you play on fast greens. A heavier putter may give you better results if you play on slow greens.

The size and shape of the heads produced by different manufacturers can vary quite a bit. Again, this is personal preference, so choose the one that you like the most.

I personally think that a perimeter-weighted putter is the best. This type of putter has a recess in the middle of the head, with most of the weight distributed on the heel and toe. This will provide you with more solid putts on off-center hits.

One element that is often overlooked when selecting a good putter is the composition of the head. As you probably noticed when you went to a Pro Shop or Golf Store, there are countless types of putters with a wide variation in prices, from around \$20.00 to \$500.00 each.

Why is this ?

There are two main reasons:

1) the brand name (e.g. Ping, Titleist, Wilson etc.) and the material used for the head. A brand name like Ping or Titleist can cost more because countless professional golfers are playing and advertising these brands.

However, I would like to say, here and now, that the big company names in golf, like Titleist, Ben Hogan, Ping, Callaway and many others produce superbly-built putters. Their top brands (usually the most expensive) are built with the best materials and offer the most options. Remember, their “name” and integrity is on the line, so they can’t afford to build poor products.

Usually the cheaper putters will have heads made of PCS plastic, Aluminum or Zinc. These are playable but, since the head material is light, the ball will not feel as good coming off the face and you will be required to hit the ball harder to get it to go the same distance as you would if your club-head was made from a more expensive material. Usually, these putters cannot be adjusted for lie, loft angle or other variables.

On the other hand, the more expensive putters often use stainless steel, brass, titanium, wood (less common) or a mixture of these, with special face inserts often made of a soft “balata” like material. You often find special displays of these putters with different lie angles and lengths already built in. These putters will feel more solid when you strike the ball, look much better at address and perform more consistently over time. They also have various offset shafts and some with no offset (putter head and shaft in one straight line). Some offset is good for most folks because it will help them keep their hands ahead of the ball at impact and lead to a more solid stroke.

In addition, the **grip type and size** should be considered. Putters come with standard-size grips installed, but is this ideal for everyone?

The answer is, "No".

The larger your hands, the larger the width of the grip should be and, conversely, you should have a smaller diameter grip if your hands are small. Most golf shops or pro shops will have sample grips of different sizes for you to see. There are also much larger **Arthritic** grips that are good for people with arthritis or sore hands since they absorb some of the “shock” on off-center hits.

Undersize grips are sometimes available, but are not as common as regular grips on other clubs.

Finally, you should spend as much as you can afford on a good putter.

Why?

Because this is the most overlooked club in the bag, yet it is the most important!

The number of strokes on the putting green is usually from 28 to 36. No other club in your arsenal is used anywhere near as much.

Golfers around the world spend \$500 and more for a Driver, and only \$30 to \$50 for a putter.

This makes no sense.

Do what others don't do and gain another advantage.

***HOT* Information:**

For your information, a wonderful U.S.A. company called **Rankmark** (<http://www.rankmark.com>) tests clubs from 42 different manufacturers every year, using golfers with all levels of skill. The CEO of Rankmark, Charlie Mandel, has done an excellent job in organizing and arranging this data for the benefit of the golfing public.

Here is a short summary of what they do:

They use 150 golfers with a handicap between 10 and 20 and 50 with a handicap between 0 and 9.

Tests are conducted at golf courses, driving ranges and at P.G.A. and L.P.G.A. events.

All golf clubs are tested and rated as follows:

1. Everyone is asked which 5 manufacturers they think are the best in the category they'll be testing
2. They are asked which clubs hit the ball best, for accuracy (to the green for irons); to the pin (for wedges); to the fairway (for drivers) and in the hole (for putters). Then, which were best for distance, or trajectory.
3. Participants are then asked to rate and rank all of the golf clubs.

Clubs are put into three categories:

1. “Best of the Best”
2. “Strongly Recommended”
3. Those that didn’t perform well and are not reported.

As of January 14, 2002, the following **Manufacturers** were rated the “Best of the Best” in the Putters category (all marks combined):

1. Ping (all makes)
2. Titleist (Scotty Cameron Pro Platinum)
3. Yes Golf (C-Groove Center shafted putters)
4. Never Compromise (Z1 Sigma)
5. Hog Golf (Dogleg Right HOG 1005D)
6. Louisville Golf
7. Carbite Golf
8. Bobby Grace (The Snyder)
9. Nicklaus (Nicklaus 18M Mallet)

The top three individual putters were:

1. HOG – Dogleg Right 1005D
2. Titleist Scotty Cameron Pro Platinum
3. Nicklaus 18M Mallet

Your best bet is to try out a few brands on the putting green and find the one that:

- feels best in your hands
- you like the look of, and
- feels the most solid when you hit the ball.

Personally, I tried most of these putters and they are superb creations.

What do I use?

I use a custom-made putter that I manufactured myself. It is similar to the “Titleist Scotty Cameron” putter but, in my opinion, it performs better.

It will help you if your putter is made of the best materials and designed for your putting style (e.g. length, grip, grip-size, head-composition etc.). Don't just go out and buy any custom putter though. Make sure it is guaranteed in workmanship and in performance.

If it's good, whether a Scotty Cameron putter, a White Hot putter or whatever, you should be looking for a soft feel and consistent roll when the ball comes off the face and, of course, a very professional looking design.

This is what the pros look for and they know what they are doing.

(B) Irons and Woods

You should keep in mind these points when selecting a set of irons and/or woods:

- You can buy ready made, major manufacturer clubs “off the shelf” at any Pro-Shop or Golf Shop in your town or city. Some of the most popular sets of clubs are made by Titleist, Ping, Callaway, Spalding Top-Flight, Ben Hogan and Taylor Made.
- You can purchase ready made clubs with some custom modifications; either the manufacturer or the retailer should give you some choices so that the clubs will fit you better.

These choices include:

(1). Club Length

Standard as well as either ½” or 1” longer or shorter are the usual possibilities with the exception of the driver.

The standard length for a driver is 43” or 44” but they are often made 45” or 46” nowadays. That is because the longer club helps you to hit the ball farther. You will gain about 5 to 9 yards in distance for every ½” inch you lengthen a driver from standard. Of course, this is assuming you hit the ball exactly on the sweet-spot each time.

There is a trade-off here ...

Because the ball is farther away from you with a longer club, you will be less accurate. Try a demo club or two out on the driving range before you buy to make sure the club you choose is right for you.

(2). Shaft Type

The types of club that are available include:

- standard weight, lightweight or ultra lightweight steel
- graphite
- fiberglass and
- titanium

Each club manufacturer has their brand name on the label attached to the shaft, and often modify their shafts for whatever appearance they are trying to achieve, but you will know if it is steel, graphite or another material. Steel and titanium look the same, but graphite and fiberglass come in black, silver, red, green and other colors.

(3). Shaft Flex

The normal flexes available range from very firm to very flexible: Extra Stiff, Stiff, Medium (also called Regular), Seniors' Flex, Ladies' Flex. Most Men use Regular Flex (e.g. swing speeds around 90 m.p.h. with a Driver) and most Ladies use Ladies' Flex (e.g. swing speeds approx. 70 to 75 m.p.h. with a Driver).

(4). Shaft Flex Point

This is the point where the shaft flexes most during the swing. A high-flexpoint shaft (e.g. True Temper Dynamic Gold) will hit the ball lower, but will tend to be more stiff near the clubhead and generally promote a straighter shot. This type of shaft is most often used by a low handicap player.

A mid-flexpoint shaft (e.g. True Temper TT-Lite) will hit the ball a bit higher and feel better, since it normally has a tip that is more flexible.

The low-flexpoint shaft will hit the ball higher still and have a tip similar to the mid-flex shaft. This is mostly used by people who want to hit the ball higher or who need help getting the ball air-born.

Please note that the major golf club manufacturers usually do not make their own golf shafts. There are specialist shaft manufacturers who make shafts of

differing specifications for the major club designers. These companies include True Temper, Accles & Pollock, Aldila (graphite) and Graffaloy (graphite).

(5) Club Head Design

Club-head design includes the material and shape used to make a golf club head. Iron heads are often made of stainless steel of varying hardness. Clubs often have different lie options already built into the clubs (e.g. Ping clubs). The lie is determined by the angle at which the hosel (neck) of the head is drilled (also called bored). The lie is the angle of the club (in degrees) measured from the shaft to the floor. It influences how the club-face rests on the ground when you address the ball.

Iron heads are either **investment cast** or **forged**.

The investment cast clubs are more popular and usually perimeter weighted; the weight of the head is distributed more to the sole, heel and toe of the club, which helps with off-center hits. These clubs are built in carefully designed moulds to ensure exact tolerances in weight, loft and lie.

The forged clubs are often used by professionals who claim that the steel feels softer and much better when you strike a shot. The steel is softer and the head can usually be altered in lie or loft using a “Lie & Loft Bending Machine”. These clubs come in perimeter weighted models and “blade” models, which do not have much weight distribution to the heel and toe. Ben Hogan irons are an example of forged clubs.

In addition, some iron heads are made with titanium and/or a mixture of titanium and steel. Some heads even have graphite inserts. Some manufacturers claim that a titanium head will hit the ball further.

There are also heads made with zinc or aluminum. These will always be lower-priced clubs. Zinc or aluminum does not perform anywhere near as well as steel or titanium, so I would not advise buying clubs made of these exotic materials.

Also, Irons are often built with “progressive offset”. Offset refers to the distance between the front edge of the face and the front of the hosel (neck where the shaft is installed). More offset allows your hands to stay ahead of the ball at impact, encouraging more solid contact. There is less offset in the short irons and much more in the long irons in most brands of clubs. Shorter irons are easier to hit than long irons, because of their shorter length and greater loft. More loft

in a club increases backspin on the ball and counteracts sidespin from off-centre shots on the toe or heel of the club face.

Wood heads are either made of wood (Maple or Persimmon), though that is rare these days, stainless steel, titanium, titanium and steel, graphite, ceramic, aluminum, or zinc. The best heads are made of steel, titanium or graphite. A very low priced club is often made with cheaper material, either zinc or aluminum.

Wood heads also come in different sizes; medium, large or very large (e.g. Callaway Great Big Bertha). They also come in various lofts (angle of the face). The Standard loft for a Driver is 10.5 degrees in a metal wood, but 9.5 or even 8.5 degrees and some are lower.

Just remember that the lower the loft, the more you will compress the ball at impact and the lower the trajectory of the ball.

A club with lower loft is also harder for the average golfer to hit and off-centre hits will be worse. With regards to distance, 1 degree means about 2.5 yards in distance, assuming you execute a perfect shot. I would recommend going with the 10.5 degree driver or even a 13 degree drive if you have a difficult time getting the ball airborne.

Fairway woods, made of the same materials as the driver, are available but their lofts are greater. A #3 metal wood normally has a 15-degree loft and a 5 wood normally has 21-degrees of loft. Other woods are available from a 4 wood down to a 9 wood. There are also more lofted woods that can be used instead of an iron.

A wood has a lower center of gravity, and “horizontal face bulge” and “vertical face roll”, which an iron does not have, so, it is generally easier to hit than a long iron.

To make a long story short, the horizontal face bulge and vertical face roll create a more rounded face for the wood, and on off-centre hits, these angles aid in creating counter-clockwise spin to the ball and more backspin, to launch the ball straighter.

If you have trouble using a 3 iron, try a 6 or 7 wood instead.

The same holds true for all other irons. That is, there is always a wood available to replace an iron, if needed. For the majority of golfers, I would only advise replacing a 1, 2 or 3 iron and maybe a 4 iron, with a wood. Your best bet is to

try the clubs out before you buy them and see your local golf professional for guidance in selecting the best clubs for your game.

(6) The Lie

As noted above, the “lie” of a club is the angle measured between the floor and the shaft, with the club-head resting on the center of the face (square), in the playing position. The lie of the club affects the direction the ball will fly off the face.

If a club is too upright for you, the toe will be off the ground more at impact and the ball will go to the left of the target whereas, if the lie is too flat for you, the heel will be off the ground more at impact and the ball will tend to the right than it should.

Can you figure out what the perfect lie is for you?

Yes, you can.

Put a piece of masking tape on the bottom of a 5 iron. Hit a couple of iron shots off a rubber mat at a driving range; not off the grass portion of the tee off area, but directly off the rubber mat. This will mark the tape attached to the bottom of your club. Now use a pen or pencil to put a cross at the center of that mark.

If this cross is toward the toe of the club, the lie of the club is too flat for you; get a club that is more upright in lie. For example, you might need a 5 iron with a lie of 63 degrees, instead of 61 degrees.

On the other hand, if the mark is on the heel side of the center of the club, you need clubs with a flatter lie, for example, 59 degrees for a 5 iron.

The lie of clubs in a standard set will normally be from 59 degrees for a 1 iron to 64 degrees for a pitching wedge, in ½ degree increments between each club. However, if you do not know the lie of your 5 iron, you won't be able to determine exactly what lie you need after taking this test.

Your local golf professional or golf store can give you any help you need with this measurement.

(7) Grip type and size

Grips are usually some type of rubber composition or rubber and cord (similar to thick string) material but they vary from one manufacturer to another. The most popular brands are Golf Pride grips made by the Eaton Corporation, including “Golf Pride Victory”, a green and black rubber grip, Golf Pride Victory Half

Cord, which is half rubber composition and half cord and “Golf Pride Jumbo” which are much larger in diameter and intended for people who have arthritic hands.

There are many other brands of grips out there like “Avon Chamois” grips, brown in color with air cushions in the grip to make it feel softer, WINN grips that come in different colors and are very tacky (similar to the old leather grips) and countless other types. Normally the grip supplied on a club is fine, but you will have a wide variety of choices when it is time to replace the grip.

The diameter of each grip is usually measured 2” below the top of the grip. You can get grips built on your clubs in different diameters. You know you have the correct size when you grip the club normally and the fingertips of your left hand (right hand if you’re left handed) just lightly touch the palm of your hand.

(8) Custom Made Clubs

You can also have golf clubs custom-made for you at some golf shops. These clubs are made with heads that are not from the major manufacturers but, for the most part, they have the same types of shafts and grips made by the most popular grip-makers.

Clubs can be made to fit your various requirements and often cost less than a brand-name set of clubs. This is a good choice if you don’t mind playing with clubs that do not have a big brand name on them.

You could build the clubs yourself. Components are sold at many places, along with instructions on how to build your own set. It is not that hard to do, but you will need several pieces of equipment and supplies to do it.

For starters, you’ll need a vise, rubber shaft clamp, epoxy, a shaft cut-off wheel to trim the shafts, grip tape, grip solvent to install the grips, very coarse sandpaper to rough up the tips of the shafts (so that the epoxy will bond properly with the steel or graphite), heads, shafts, grips, protective glasses to avoid eye injury (from grip solvent, epoxy etc), paper towels, some sort of pan to collect excess grip solvent.

That's a basic list. How much you require depends on how many clubs you want to make and whether there are other things you want to add to the clubs.

Generally, use graphite if you want light clubs, especially in the Driver. If the total weight of the clubs is not important to you, I still advise graphite shafts in

your woods, but lightweight steel shafts in your irons. This is the best combination for distance and control.

As was mentioned with putters, the **Rankmark** company has also tested Irons and Drivers from 42 different manufacturers, using golfers of all abilities. As of January 14th 2002, the following Irons and Drivers were the **Best of the Best (listed in alphabetical order)**:

Irons

- Adams Tight Lies GT
- Callaway Hawkeye VFT
- Hogan Apex Edge
- Ping i3 Oversize
- Taylor Made 300 Series
- Titleist DCI 8220S
- Wilson Deep Red.
- Yonex V Mass 350

Woods

The top Drivers in alphabetical order were :

- Adams ST
- Callaway Hawkeye VFT
- Cleveland Launcher
- Daiwa 350 Hi-Trac Tour
- Golf Gear Tsunami
- Kasco VS Tour Pro
- Ping TiSi Tec
- Taylor Made 300 Series
- Titleist 975J/D
- Wilson Deep Red (305cc/360cc)
- Yonex Vmass 350+

The Top Fairway Woods (in order of votes received):

- Titleist 975F
- Callaway Big Bertha Hawkeye VFT
- Taylor Made 300 Series
- Yonex Vmass 350
- Wilson Deep Red
- Cleveland QuadPro
- Liquidmetal
- Adams I-Wood
- Adams ST

The Best Women's Clubs (in alphabetical order):**Woods**

- Adams
- Cleveland Golf
- Cobra CXI
- Orlimar
- Yonex

Irons

- Cleveland Emerald
- Cobra CXI
- Nicklaus
- Taylor Made Super Steel
- Titleist 981
- Yonex

So, there you have it – the best clubs available on the market at the time of writing. If you are in the market for new clubs, please be sure to try these out. Your game can only improve !

And if you can't afford these top of the line clubs, what do you do?**Well, there are a couple of alternatives for you:**

1. Buy used clubs, the same make as above.
2. Build you own clubs. Go to one of the Club Component suppliers for supplies and instructions on how to do it. Refer to your list of these companies I provided with this book. I highly recommend either "The Golfworks" or "Dynacraft".
3. Re-grip your current clubs with new grips. Your Pro Shop or most golf stores provide this service, or you can do it yourself (as in #2).
4. Buy yourself a top-notch glove, such as a Footjoy Sta-Soft Cabretta Leather. This combination will make your clubs feel much better because the grips and glove will feel more "tacky" and the clubs will be easier to control.

(C) Golf Balls

This is a very interesting subject. If you're not using the right golf ball for your type of game, there is no doubt that you're losing strokes.



There are three basic types of golf balls : **one-piece**, **two-piece** and **three-piece**.

The **one-piece** ball is used at driving ranges and, sometimes, by beginners. It is a solid piece of Surlyn with dimples molded in. It is very durable and inexpensive, but, usually has a lower compression and feels softer. However, the consistency from ball to ball is not always perfect, so they might not all feel the same or go the same distance. I would not recommend that anyone use this type of ball in actual play.

The **two-piece** type are used by most amateur golfers. These balls often consist of a solid core and a durable cover (Surlyn). The core is a rubber compound with a mixture of additives to enhance its performance.

It is a golf ball's core that determines the initial velocity of the ball, its spin rate (control), compression (feel) and the distance it travels.

An 80 compression ball is softer and is used in Ladies' golf quite often.

The 90 compression is the most used ball for men and women, and suitable for most golfers.

The 100 compression ball is rare and is only to be used by those who swing at very high speeds (e.g. over 100 m.p.h.).

The number and design of the dimples on the cover can also affect the aerodynamics of the golf ball, but, not as much as the core construction, so do not worry about this design characteristic.

Three-piece balls are wound balls, with either a solid or liquid center. This core is wrapped with many yards of elastic and encased in a Surlyn, Balata or Elastomer cover. Surlyn is a trademark for the resin invented by the DuPont Company. It is available in varying levels of hardness.

Balata is very soft and will give you better spin, but it is easier to cut, not as durable and it does not fly as far as the two-piece model. These soft cover balls have a core that is filled with a non-toxic solution of water, corn syrup and salt. Most P.G.A. and some L.P.G.A. pros use this type of ball.

The **Elastomer** cover is now found in many top brand golf balls. This new type of cover is in-between Surlyn and Balata in softness and control. I think that you'll see this cover more in the future because of it's excellent playability characteristics.

There are many manufacturers of golf balls, and each company makes many types of balls.

I believe that the best balls for distance and feel are :

- Titleist "Tour Distance SF", Titleist "HP Distance" and Titleist "Pro V1" (made mostly for professionals and low handicap players)
- Spalding "Top Flight XL Pure Distance", "Spalding Strata"
- Callaway Rule 35
- Nike. All makes
- Bridgestone Precept "Tour Advantage", "MC Distance", and Precept "MC Lady"
- Wilson Staff Titanium, Wilson Smart-Core

With such a wide choice, how can you figure out what type is best for your particular game?

The 3 best ways to narrow down your search for the perfect golf ball (for you) are:

(1) What is within your budget?

Prices for a dozen golf balls range from about \$15 to \$60 a dozen. Just choose the best type in your budget range that has the characteristics you need. However, as with golf clubs, you normally get only what you pay for.

(2) Take the "Titleist" Golf Ball test.

This company has an excellent on-line test to figure out which ball should work for you. You will need to turn on your audio (speakers) for this demo and have the Macromedia "Flash" plug-in installed on your computer.

Simply click here : <http://www.titleist.com/htm/fitting/#>

When you're there, be sure to click on the word "Flash" for the presentation.

If you do not want to use Titleist, take the name of the recommended golf ball to your local golf professional or golf store and ask them which other brands are similar.

(3). You can visit the following sites to read some excellent information about golf balls:

- <http://www.preceptgolf.com/golfballs/main.asp>
- <http://www.titleist.com>
- <http://maxfli.com>
- <http://topflight.com>
- <http://nikegolf.nike.com/nikegolf/golfball/index.shtml>
- <http://www.wilsonsports.com/golf/>
- <http://callawaygolf.com/index.asp>

(4). Another good idea is to test.

Go out into a field, or on your home golf course when it isn't busy, and play a few holes with four or five different golf balls. You'll soon figure out which one works the best and goes the farthest.

What golf ball do I play, you may be asking, and what do I recommend?

The golf balls mentioned in the book are all excellent, however, I can tell you that I play the "Titleist Tour Distance", now called the "Titleist Tour Distance SF". I have been playing the Tour Distance for many years with no complaints. And a funny thing ... I took the Titleist test and that is the ball they recommended! **Amazing!**

Hot News

#1. In 2002, Titleist came out with a new golf ball called the *Titleist Pro VI*. The reviews are extremely good. Many P.G.A. Tour Pros have won tournaments this year with this ball. I have not tried this ball yet, but every golf shop I know of can't keep it in stock, so it might be very good. If I were you, I would buy a sleeve of 3 at your local Golf Pro Shop and try them out before buying a dozen or more, since the average price is about \$60.00 + taxes a dozen. Please note that they were designed to be used by players with low handicaps and fast club-head speeds.

#2. Callaway Golf Company has a ball called “**Rule 35**”. It is a three-piece golf ball with a thin urethane cover and a core that is a mixture of rubber (polybutadiene) and tungsten. I have heard very good things about this ball also.

#3. Top Flight also has put out a long distance ball called the “**Top Flight XL Pure Distance**”.

#4. Here is a strange but true fact. The **Bridgestone “Precept MC lady”** golf balls are being bought up just as fast or faster than the Titleist Pro V1 balls. No shop can keep them in stock, and here is the amazing thing: it is not only women who are buying them! It has a very soft feel and yet gets great distance. It is mainly for those with lower club-head speeds.

#5. Another excellent golf ball is the “**Precept MC Distance**”. This one is for men. It is very long off the tee but still with a fairly soft feel. I tried this ball just last week and it is very long with an impressive ball flight. Try this one if you get the chance.

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<mailto:subscribe1@golfrevelations.com>

(E) Gloves

As mentioned in #4 (B) Driving above, using a glove that is of high quality and in as-new condition is very important in a golf tournament. This is a fault that I have seen with many amateur golfers that I have played in tournaments over the years.

A glove should allow you to get a firm grip on the club, with no slippage whatsoever. Yes, unfortunately, a good glove can be expensive, but it is worth the investment, if only for the golf



tournaments you play in. There are different manufacturers and different materials used but, in my opinion, the best gloves on the market are:

- (a). Footjoy Sta-Sof Cabretta leather
- (b). Spalding Top-Flight Cabretta leather
- (c). Footjoy Weather-Sof (a synthetic glove mainly for play in the rain)
- (d). Titleist Cabretta leather

You want a glove that is soft but as “tacky” as possible when you grip a club. This can save you one or two strokes a round.

If it is raining, you can also use a synthetic glove but, since they stretch and move around when you move your hands, they are not as good as leather in dry weather.

Finally, ensure that the glove fits right. It should feel very snug when you put it on, because it will stretch somewhat with use, and there should be no excess material at the tips of your fingers. Also, try the **Cadet** version (in the Small, Medium, Medium-Large or Large size) if your fingers are short. These have shorter fingers.

(F) Hats, Shoes, Clothes

Can what you wear actually improve your golf game? Does the phrase “dress for success” apply to golfers? The answer may surprise you.

Hats

You should wear a golf hat to protect yourself from the sun's harmful rays and to shade your eyes when hitting a shot in the direction of the sun.

When you're selecting your hat, see how it looks in a mirror (usually beside the hat stand at any Pro Shop or golf store). If you like the look of the hat and/or the name written on it (e.g. Titleist, Top-Flight, Ben Hogan etc.), if it inspires confidence and if it feels comfortable, by all means buy it. Anything that makes you feel a little better about your game, and the way you look, is a great idea.

Shoes

As you may already know, there are spikeless golf shoes (also called soft spikes) with plastic or rubber spikes, and steel spiked shoes. Your course may have restrictions on what type you are allowed to use, so check what is appropriate before buying anything.

More and more golf courses require spikeless shoes since these are less damaging to greens and reduce the amount of spike marks on the putting surface. There is nothing more annoying than a blade of grass sticking up in the air (caused by steel spikes), standing between you and a two-foot birdie putt. That is one thing that soft spikes usually prevent.

Again, there are many different makers of golf shoes, two popular brands being Dexter and Foot-Joy. It goes without saying that if you are buying a new pair of shoes, make sure that they fit right and are very comfortable. After all, your shoes help transport you around some four miles of terrain every time you play a game of golf. Even if you play only once or twice a week, a good set of golf shoes is a logical and good investment in your game.

Clothes

Dress as good as you can, with a shirt, skirt, pants, sweater, jacket (or whatever the weather calls for) that make you feel good about yourself. Get your favorite color (white, blue or red always works) and the material (eg. 100 % cotton) that you want, because it can improve your attitude - that is a good thing. If it's cold, pure cotton or corduroy fabric is very good and definitely warmer than anything else.

If you do not have a rain jacket and/or rain-pants yet, these are very good purchases to consider. If you play a lot of golf, consider them as essentials for playing in the rain or if the temperature drops. Your local Pro Shop or Golf Store should have plenty in stock.

Do you think what you wear has any effect on your game?

Some Golf Professionals wear a red shirt on the last day of an event because **red** symbolizes "red numbers", or in other words, "under par". What you wear can have an effect on how you think, so, it should be considered.

The main factors with regard to hats, shoes and clothing are:

- comfort

- being prepared for various weather conditions and
- how they affect your mood

Dressing well will help you feel better about your game.

Now that you have some good clubs, golf balls, shoes and everything else, you're all set.

Well, maybe not yet. You need to start learning how to think on the golf course.

Every good golfer is very skilled at the art of "good thinking".

The next chapter reveals some secrets that will put an end to high scores. Let's get rid of those doubles, triples, and quadruples and replace them with bogeys, pars and even birdies!

Use your 7th Sense

As you know, you have **five senses**, namely:

1. touch
2. smell
3. hearing
4. taste, and
5. sight

Many believe that we have a sixth sense called extra sensory perception (E.S.P.), the ability to know about things happening, or that will happen, even if you are not physically present.

I suggest that you also have another sense that goes unnoticed, some use wisely and some don't use at all. It is something that we are born with, yet it is only developed as we grow up and experience the world.

The lessons learned in life sometimes enhance this personal trait, and sometimes it works in the opposite way and you end up not developing it very much at all. This precious ability can protect you or hurt you, make you happy or sad, rich or poor, and of course, for our purposes, can make you a much better golfer, or not.

This seventh sense is called **common sense**.

Don't laugh, this is something that you use in your daily life, but do you apply its principles to your golf game?

If you don't, you'll have a much tougher time shooting good scores.

Obviously you know not to do stupid things, like:

- passing a police car at 80 km per hour in a 30 km per hour zone
- getting mad at someone who is twice your size, or
- trying to take some honey with bees around (ouch ...)



Why don't you do these things (at least, I hope you don't)?

It's because you know, through experience, the penalty if you do "lose your head".

Use your 7th Sense on the golf course by applying these game improvement principles:**Play the odds.**

For example, if you want to hit a par 5 in two shots, but that requires you to cut over some out-of-bounds stakes or carry over water, is it really worth it? If you miss the shot (e.g. hit it on the heel, hit it thin etc.), will you go out of bounds or in the lake? If that happens, what is likely to be your score on the hole? Maybe a double or triple bogey?

Now, if you aim straight ahead to the fairway, avoid the trouble, what will happen if you miss the shot slightly? And if you do, what is likely to be your score on the hole? Maybe a par, or a bogey at worse, right?

So, which is the best choice?

You're right, option number two is the wise choice most of the time. After all, if you hit a fairly good shot down the fairway, you may even get a birdie but, at least, if you get a par, it does not hurt your final score.

As you know, your final score is all that counts.

Nobody is going to care at the end of the day how you did it, you will all be looking at that final number. If you remember this logic, you will play better.

Analyze putts.

Be very aware of whether you are putting uphill or downhill, or if it looks like the putt breaks left or right. Look at the putt from both sides of the hole.

However, even more important than how it breaks, is the "*speed*" of the putt. The most critical factor to consider is "How fast it is going to roll".

You can figure this out by practicing on the putting green before going out (the practice green is usually very similar to the greens on the course), by splitting the putt up into three parts as discussed earlier, and "feeling" how hard to hit the putt in your practice stroke.



Also, don't go to extremes and spend three or four minutes looking at a putt. Your playing partners won't be very pleased and it will not help you increase the odds of sinking the putt. Again, remember that the "*speed*" of the putt is more crucial to figure out than the break. If you can get the speed right, you'll sink more and avoid three-putting most of the time.

Talking about sinking more Putts:

"After a long time in the development stage, Golf Revelations Golf Company has created a new Game Improvement Putter, guaranteed to improve your putting by 4 strokes or more per game." To learn more, click here : <http://www.worlds-best-golf-putters.com>

Conquer intimidation.

Do you feel intimidated when playing with some players? Is it because they talk too much, are sometimes insulting, or is it because they're very good golfers and you don't really believe that you can beat them?

This is a problem that often prevents people from reaching their true potential.

Don't be concerned. You can get rid of this uncomfortable feeling. Here's how:

(1). For those who talk too much, let them talk and don't ignore them. Talk back to them and be friendly. However, if you ever play with someone who wants to "mumble" when someone else is about to make a shot, or even during the time that someone is hitting, look eye to eye with them and tell them "ssshhh", or even just raise your hand at them, so they'll stop. If politeness doesn't work, then just tell them they should be quiet when someone else is swinging. You don't have to get mad or elaborate, just be firm and make your point.

(2). You might also run into a golfer now and again who wants to win badly and will do anything to achieve that goal. They may try and throw you off your game by saying things like "I'm playing really well lately – you don't have a chance", or, "Joe Smith has been playing great lately and I can't see anyone beating him", or, "Wow, you really cut across that one". They may even brag about the great scores they supposedly shot last week to put fear into your heart.

Don't let these **"words"** sink into you. Let them bounce off you. If they say they will beat you, say something back like **"I wouldn't be surprised !"** or say **"go right ahead, I'm just out here to have some fun"**.

I wouldn't advise you to repeat these things sarcastically, but say them as though you are on their side. This will take the pressure off your shoulders and put it right back where it came from.

Additionally, you may occasionally play with a character that brags about their game all the time. Well, let them brag and don't argue. Even act like you're on their side and say, "Wow, that's great – I bet you took all your friends money that day."

"If someone is trying to put pressure on you, use these guidelines, and the pressure will fall right back on your opponent's shoulders".

The bottom line is not to **internalize** any mean or apparent insults that come your way. Ignore them.

Don't fight the person on the course because it will destroy your concentration and your score.

If you have to express yourself, wait until after the round is over, but think it over because it might not be worth it in the long run. After all, maybe you'll be in the same group next week. Another way is to avoid the person and talk mostly to your other playing partners. Whatever it takes, don't lose your focus.

(3). You might come across someone who likes to repeat the word "luck" or "lucky".

If your ball hits a tree and bounces back in the fairway, instead of out of bounds, you might be called "lucky". If you sink a 40 ft. downhill putt, somebody in your group might say, **"wow, are you lucky you hit the hole, otherwise you would have been off the green"**. Or, if you chip in from off the green, you might here a remark like **"you're lucky you hit the pin, otherwise you might have had a 5 ft. putt coming back"**.

Let me tell you a little secret.

There is no such thing as **"luck"**.

You'll find that people who say you were lucky are just jealous, envious or mad because it was not them that got the good break. Don't ever fall into the trap of calling anyone "lucky", because it is not the honorable thing to do and it is saying that the person didn't deserve that shot.

The fact remains that strange things happen on the golf course and it is just part of the game. Sometimes things bounce your way and sometimes things don't go your way. If your ball or anyone else's hit a tree and bounced into a water hazard, instead of back into the fairway, are they lucky because something unexpected happened ?

No.

So, why not?

The answer is because you only here the word "lucky" if something good happens to somebody on the golf course, and not something bad.

Just remember that if anyone says this to you, just ignore it and forget about it. Don't get angry because that can't help you in any way. Instead, transfer your energy to playing your very best on the remaining holes.

Two rather well known golfers used to say, “**the more I practice, the luckier I get**”. A very true statement.

Who were these individuals ?

Ben Hogan and Gary Player

(4) Now, what if you are paired with last year’s Club Champion, or another very good player. How can you handle this? At some point in your golfing career you will need to deal with this. Why is it that the vast majority of competitors do not play well in this situation?

The way to deal with “**fear**” is to understand that you have complete control over it. The feelings of anxiety, nervousness, and fear of the unknown that you get are created by you and not by your opponents. Don’t let it worry you. You can be victorious over these symptoms.

First, if you are afraid that you will play poorly and maybe get a couple of **triples** and **quadruples**, that is your doing. You don’t have to think that way.

Believe in yourself. The fact that you bought this book shows me that you’re a person of above average intelligence and that you want to improve. You’re on the right track. I believe in you.

Together we’ll get there. You’re not alone.

Remember, I was once in your shoes. I went from being a 100’s shooter, to a 90’s, then 80’s and finally to a 70’s and 60’s scorer, so I know how you feel, whichever step you’re currently in.

You and those you’re playing against are all human. You all have two legs and two arms, two eyes, two ears and each of you have a set of golf clubs, correct?

You may have a different swing, but that means nothing. Do Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino, Tiger Woods and Jim Furyk have different golf swings?

Were they able to play well anyway?

This is even more true in amateur golf. If one player has a seemingly perfect swing and you have a short backswing and not much of a follow-through, does it mean that you have no chance?

No, absolutely not.

Unfortunately, the golfing population believes this lie and falls for it time and time again.



Your success will relate to **how much** you practice, **what** you practice, and **how you think**. If you suspect that your swing fundamentals (grip, stance, swing path) are flawed, then you should see your local P.G.A. Golf Professional for a golf lesson. They should be able to help you get things straightened out.

You just need to practice as outlined in this book, think wisely and positively and accept the fact that you deserve to be a good golfer. Play each game as though it was a foregone conclusion.

Don't act conceited towards others but, inside yourself, just know that you can **master the links**, instead of the links mastering you!

Course Management

This is talked about in almost every golf book for this reason; because it works!

It promotes being organized and single-minded on the golf course, which will help you to fire lower numbers. However, you do not have to use course management as much as touring pros do. Just plan certain shots on every hole.

Think about the following:

- (1). Do you know what clubs to hit on each tee?
Is it a driver, a 3-wood, or maybe even a 3 iron ?

- (2). What about your approach shots on each hole?

If you hit a good drive, what club will you select to get the ball on or near the green with your second shot?

- (3). Where on the green do you want to land your ball?

You would rather have an uphill putt, instead of a downhill putt so, where on the green should you aim to get this kind of putt, taking in to consideration the location of the pin?

- (4). You want to stay away from trouble (e.g. sand, water etc.). What club do you use to “carry” these hazards?

You need to know.

- (5). Do you know the “local rules” for the day?

Before you tee-off, make sure you know them to avoid being penalized. Give yourself as much of an advantage as possible. For example, your club may be playing “preferred lies, 12” on your own fairway”, but check if you can just move the ball with your clubhead, or are you only allowed to “mark, pick, clean and place” the ball on the fairway?

Preferred lies is also referred to as “winter rules” and is usually permitted under a local rule, if the condition of the fairways are not conducive to playing the ball as it lies (without touching it).

In addition, be aware of the regular local rules on the back of the scorecard. For instance, if your ball comes to rest underneath a **new** tree that is under two feet in height, (usually tagged with a ribbon), you may get a free drop of one club-length from the point where the tree does not interfere with your stance or swing.

Know your local rules and the regular rules of golf to help yourself and others.

- (6). **If you would like to shoot, say, a 79 next Saturday, how will you do this ?**

Do not think about this during actual play, but think about and plan for this in your mind at least a week in advance.

Do you feel confident that you can make a birdie on a certain hole, a par, or at worst a bogey on other holes? Whatever you do, do not think about hitting shots into trouble (e.g. out of bounds or in the water).

Focus your thoughts on targets and the results you want, not on what you don't want.

Also, when you have a few spare minutes before retiring at night a week or two before you have an important game, go over your ideal round, hole by hole, thinking about the 3, 4 or 5 you just got on a hole and how you did it, and visualize that you've already accomplished the task of shooting the score you want. In particular, think about holes you normally have trouble with, and see yourself hitting excellent shots on that hole, getting a par or birdie.

It will take a few weeks to get rid of the negative memories in your mind, but you can do it.

Your subconscious mind will be very accommodating and it will remember these good shots, even though they haven't happened yet. Don't underestimate the power of your subconscious.

(7). Always keep track of the number of putts you take on each hole.

You should do this only during a regular round of golf and not during a tournament. Mark this down on your scorecard beside your actual score after you play each hole. This will let you know what greens you may be having trouble with and tell you if your putting needs more work.

Don't record the number of putts during an actual tournament, however, because you do not want to dwell on any putts you may have missed.

Know the Rules

If you're going to play this game, you need to know the rules.

I'm not just referring to local rules at your Club, but the rules according to the United States Golf Association, the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St.

Andrews, Scotland or the Royal Canadian Golf Association. Which rules you must follow depends on what part of the world you live in. You can pick up a rules book up at most Golf Stores or Pro Shops. If you are unsure which rules are in effect in your Country, ask your Golf Pro.

You must know the rules to:

- avoid being penalized during a round
- let you know when you can get relief from trees, immovable obstructions, casual water and so on, and
- know what proper “**etiquette**” (behavior) is on the golf course.

If you don't know these things, it can lead to a great deal of trouble for you on the course and with your playing partners.

There is not enough room here to list every rule, but I will mention the two rules that are most often broken.

(1). Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds

If you hit a tee shot, or any other shot into the trees, into another fairway, into a parking lot and **you cannot see the ball land**, there is a high possibility that it will be lost, right?

On most courses, they also have white stakes marking the boundaries of some holes, and if your ball goes over these markers, it is “out of bounds (O.B.)”.

If your ball is lost (under the rules you have 5 minutes to look for your ball), or out of bounds, the penalty is “**stroke and distance**”.

Stroke and Distance means that you have to count one extra stroke on the hole (penalty stroke) and you also lose the “distance” that you just hit the shot. So, you have to hit your next shot, again, from where you just hit it and **not from where the ball entered the trouble (e.g. 200 yards ahead beside the trees)**.



In addition, you must announce to your playing partners before you hit your next shot, that you are playing a “provisional ball” and tell them the name and number on the ball. You play after everyone else has hit their shots.

For example, you are on the tee and hit a big slice right into a forest. You can't possibly see if the ball is lost or not. You then say, "I am going to play a

provisional ball, a Titleist HP Distance #3, with a red mark on it". When it's your turn, you then hit another tee shot.

You can look for the original ball for 5 minutes and, if you find the ball and play it, there is no penalty shot against you. However, if you can't find it, you then play your next shot, the provisional ball, for the rest of the hole – but, you'll be hitting your third shot next, **not** your second (**remember the penalty stroke**).

For more information on this subject, please see your U.S.G.A. Rule book.

(2). Consideration for other players (Etiquette)

This information can be found in the Rules of Golf under "Section 1 – Etiquette, Courtesy on the Course."

Knowing what to do and what not to do on the golf course is important, just as knowing proper manners at a dinner table is important.

You should never move, talk or stand close to (or directly behind) the ball or the hole, when a golfer is addressing the ball or making a stroke.

Unfortunately, some people you are playing with may do these things (e.g. stand directly behind or in front of you, on your line of putt) to watch your shot more closely, but that is a bad violation of the rules.

Ever watch the PGA or LPGA professionals on T.V. ?



Does anyone stand directly behind them (other than the crowd that's 20 ft. or more away) on any shot, or on the green while they are making a shot. No, you don't see this happen.

If someone is doing this to you, just tell them. They may not know the rules very well, so, be patient.

And believe me, it will not help your putting accuracy if someone is staring at you from behind the hole, so you need to delay making your stroke until the person stands to the side, out of the way and out of your line of sight.

The same goes for talking when someone is about to hit a shot or is in the process of swinging a club. You should not talk when it is someone else's turn to play. That is very rude, shows no consideration for the other player and may cause others to get very angry with you. Be sure that you and those you are golfing with do not do this.

The reason it's so wrong is because it will surely cause you to lose your concentration and miss the shot.

Consideration for others is a very important, thoughtful habit to get into if you're going to play this game well.

Roadmap to Success

Now that you know many new techniques to improve your game, you are ready for an exact plan that you can use throughout the year to prepare for playing any game, and especially for tournaments such as Club Championships.

You may have practiced a great deal in the past and not seen much improvement, but that is about to change.

The more you practice the following steps, the more you'll improve.

Any level of golfer - man or woman, boy or girl - can do these things with ease and that is why they are so valuable. You don't need special skills, extreme strength or flexibility and not much time at all.

Here's the best part; your game will improve without even taking a lesson!

Your scores will drop if you do these simple exercises regularly and you may just start getting more pars and birdies than ever before.

Practice the following before each round of golf (as time permits):

Putting

(Time required = approx. 15-30 minutes):

- (i). **1 ft. putts** – pick a level hole on the practice green. Your goal is to sink 10 in a row, then stop. This applies to all handicap levels.
- (ii). **2 ft. putts** – using the same hole that you used for the 1 ft. putts, sink at least 4 out of 5. If your handicap is above 10, 4 out of 5 is excellent. If your handicap is 10 or below, try to sink all 5 putts. 4 out of 5 is still very good though. If you have trouble, line up some coins or tees to form a runway to the hole. Putt between these coins without touching any. Try another 5 putts if you have the time.

(iii). **3 and 4 ft. putts** - use the same precision exercise as for the 2 ft. putts. Don't stop until you have holed at least 4 out of 5 putts in a row. If you can sink 5 in a row, congratulations! You are becoming an expert putter faster than you think!

(iv). Try some long putts (20 to 30 ft.) and a few medium putts (10 to 20 ft.) Your goal is just to get within 2 ft. of the hole and nothing else. Get a feel for how fast the greens are on the particular day you're playing. It is not necessary to putt the ball into the hole after you make a long putt since you have already practiced short putts.

Note : If the putting green is very busy, don't putt to a hole like everyone else. Line up 4 or 5 tees together, or use a plastic or aluminum practice putting cup, and putt in an open area away from where everyone else is practicing. This means you don't have to wait to putt to a hole and will save you some practice time.



Here's a revelation for you :

Never finish your practice on a negative note just before you tee off on the 1st hole. That means never miss a putt on the practice green and then go and start your game. Always finish your practice by sinking a putt, even if it is a 1 ft. putt!

This secret will help to instill confidence in your subconscious mind, and that confidence will come in handy when you need to make a 1 ft. putt in your regular game.

Chipping and Putting

(Time required = 10 - 20 + minutes).

This exercise is the ultimate tune-up for your regular game with your friends, or for the biggest golf tournament of the year. Few amateur golfers do this, and yet it will sharpen your short game so much that you will be amazed.

You need 5 golf balls, your sand wedge and putter. You can do this on your practice green or out on the course when it is not busy (e.g. late in the day). Pick

a spot about 5 yards or so off the green (not in heavy rough), and pick a hole about 20 ft. away on the green to chip to.

Chip one shot after the other. Try to get as close to the pin as possible:



Next, drop your sand wedge, pick up your putter and try to knock in each putt.

When you finish, go back to the same area and do this again. This is always best in groups of 10 shots, 5 at a time. Your goal is to be able to “get down in two shots” (1 chip + 1 putt) at least 8 out of the 10 times if your handicap is above 10, and 9 out of 10 shots if you're at or under a 10 handicap.

The main point here is that it is a miniature game of 10 holes, with a par of 20 (1 putt + 1 chip x 10). Every time you do this, try to get as close to a total of 20 as possible.

Why is this important?

This simulates what you must do on the course in a real game. The closer your practice is to the “real thing”, the better. This also has the benefit of “chasing away” any fear of getting up and down when you’re playing, because you know, and therefore believe, you can do it.

Driving Range

(Time required = 15 – 20 + minutes)

Hitting hundreds of balls on the driving range per week is okay if you have the time, but most people have to work during the day and meet family, church or social priorities that do not allow them this opportunity. Actually, unless you are playing on the Professional Golf Tour or are planning to do so in the future, you do not need to do this to improve your game. If you are able to hit at least one small bucket of golf balls before each important game or tournament round you play, that is fine.

If you are rushing from work during the week to get to the first tee for your regular round of golf, you probably won't have the chance to hit practice balls before you play anyway, but that is no cause for alarm.

If time is of short supply, simply stretch the best you can before you play and concentrate on putting and chipping, as noted above. When you do have a chance to go to the range, practice with a purpose.

Your main goal before playing is to warm up and stretch your muscles. Do not hit any shots until you do some stretching exercises. This is to avoid injury. Simply bending at the waist and touching your toes for a couple of minutes, then twisting and turning while standing will help prepare you for action.

Then, you should try and hit a few shots with each club in your bag, but concentrate on swinging slow and building some tempo (timing) for the day.

The major mistake that most amateurs make on the range is trying to kill the ball and hit it 300 yards "like John Daly". Don't try and impress those who are on the range with you. Believe me, they really don't care how well you drive the ball. All they care about is what they're doing.

Your grip pressure (how tightly you hold the club) should be just slightly firm. This means that if you held the club up in the air horizontally, your friend could easily pull the club out of your hands without meeting much resistance.

Also, check to make sure that your hands, wrists, forearms and neck do not have any tension in them when you are swinging. Relax as much as possible. A relaxed swing on the practice tee will lead to a relaxing day on the course.

Finally, how much time should be spent on each club on the range?

Spend around 80% of your time with your driver and pitching wedge. These are the two most critical clubs in your bag besides your putter.

Also, if you have the time and your practice area has one available, try some bunker shots.

Playing from the sand:

Keep the face of your sand wedge more open than you would with a short pitch shot, and try to hit the sand firmly about 1 ½ to 2 inches before the ball. Don't swing too hard and don't stop your swing as you strike the ball. Complete your follow-through, just like with a pitching wedge shot.

If you have trouble with this shot, imagine that your ball is in a puddle of water or in some deep rough, but you only want to hit the ball 25 yards. What would this feel like when you hit it?

The resistance that the water or deep grass would give your golf club is about the same as the sand. When you're in a bunker, imagine that you're just hitting out of the rough but hit the ground (sand) just before the ball, as mentioned above.

If you still are having problems, try this:

Get a small piece of plywood, around 2 ft. wide by 2 ft. long. Put the wood in the middle of the bunker and throw an inch or so of sand on the top of it. Then, place your ball on the sand. Then try a shot, making sure that you hit just before the ball and that you hit the board also.

Did the ball come out easily?

If your answer is no, do this several more times until you are hitting some very good shots. After doing this for a few days, you'll notice that your "divots" in the sand, so to speak, are very well defined and your fear of this hazard is disappearing. When you're ready, remove the board and hit some actual sand shots. It should be much easier for you now.



Here's another revelation for you:

Sometimes it's tough trying to relax because you have other things on your mind, not enough sleep, a tough golf match or you're just not feeling well. Try this technique on the range and on the course if you find your muscles too tense, or if you feel too nervous.

Breathing this way can improve the supply of oxygen to your brain, relax your muscles and give you a feeling of calmness. Most people breathe from their chest, which is not good and often leads to shallow breathing, even anxiety. You should always breathe from your abdomen (stomach) only.

The next two exercises can be done standing up, but it is best to sit down:

(1). Take a slow deep breath through your nose with your mouth closed, but, with all of the air going into you stomach area, like blowing up a balloon. You should see your stomach expand, but not your chest.

Now, exhale slowly and only through your mouth, not through your nose. Do this slowly, take the deepest breath possible and exhale totally. Try this 3 or 4 times in a row and it should provide you with an unusual calming effect.

(2). If you are really tense about a close match or anything else, you'll need to add one more element. Sit down for this one. Close both fists tightly and tighten your arms and forearms so they feel very tense. Keep breathing normally. Hold this position for about 10 seconds, then relax completely, and immediately breathe as detailed in # 1 above.

Next, shrug your shoulders upwards and tighten the muscles in your shoulders and neck. Hold that position for about 10 seconds. Now, relax totally and breathe as in # 1 again. When you relax your muscles and breathe properly, you will feel the tension just leave your body. Finally, if needed, move your head from the left to the right slowly while breathing as noted; in through your nose and out through your mouth.

You should be feeling much better and more at ease after this exercise. The most important thing here however, is to breathe exactly as outlined, otherwise the technique will not work properly for you.

You have just learned a secret that not many people know about. You now have another asset that you can use to your advantage any time you wish.

The 21 Days Leading Up To An Event

Your Club Championship

The twenty-one days leading up to a tournament is critical. You need that much time to prepare wisely. If possible, you need to play 18 holes of golf at least two or three times per week for those three weeks. You need to get your game tuned up and your physical state to a level where you are not tired at the end of a round. You should also be practicing as previously mentioned on the range and on the putting green before each round that you go out to play.

If you want to play your best, and even win your Club Championship or any other tournament, you must do this or you will not be in the correct physical and mental condition to play your best. But don't overdo it either.

Do not play or practice more than 5 days a week for the 3 weeks leading up to an event. If you do, you may run into a slump or run out of energy when you need it in the big event.

For all of the Club Championships that I won, I played 3 or 4 times a week in the weeks before the event. I did not play more than this. I also practiced before I played a round for an average of about 30 minutes.

Follow this plan for the first two of the three weeks, but add the following special secret methods in the last week:

(i) Are you concerned about the tee shots on one or more holes on your course?

For instance, at my club, hole number 7 is a par 3, 230 yards, and most of it is over water. It used to be an intimidating shot for me until I incorporated the equalizer into my practice.

You can get rid of all fear and succeed on holes you dislike by going out late in the day (when you can practice alone) to the tee box in question.

Bring your golf bag and at least 20 golf balls with you. If you have a "Shag Bag", which can hold these balls and pick them up without bending over, so much the better.

You will be hitting 20 or more shots in a row from the teeing area. Before you hit each drive, imagine your shot being hit perfectly and landing in the perfect spot in the fairway (for a par 4 or 5) or on the green (for a par 3).

Next, line up one club (e.g. 3 wood or 3 iron) pointing at the target, where you want the ball to land. This club should be positioned just in front of where you take your stance.

The club is to ensure that you are aligned correctly before you take any shots. Your stance should be exactly in line with the club, just in front of your shoes. Hit all of the 20 or so drives one after the other. After doing this exercise for just one day or, better, a couple of days, you'll stop being fearful of the hole and do much better on it in the future.



(ii). **Here's yet another revelation for you :**

The last three holes on your golf course are the most important.

You need to become an expert at playing these holes, even if they are difficult.

You ask, "Why?"

In almost every Club Championship, whether it is a 36, 54 or 72 hole tournament, the eventual winner is decided on the last three holes on the last day. In addition, if you finish well on the first, second, or third days, you'll have more confidence going into the next round.

It may sound ridiculous, but it is true.

If you are very confident at playing these holes, you have another edge over your competitors.

The best way to become a "genius" at playing your last 3 holes is to practice playing them in their entirety with two or three balls, when your course is not busy, and to concentrate on them when you are playing with your friends.

Give yourself a goal for the last three holes, and try and beat it every time you go out. For example, if you're an A class golfer, imagine that you must par the last 3 holes to win the tournament.

Don't set your goal too high or it may lead just to disappointment. If you are a B or C class player, follow the same plan and try and shoot, say, one over on the last few holes. Also, put some added pressure on yourself when you play with your friends and play one or two of them for a drink or something to eat, based

only on the total gross score of the last 3 holes. This helps you to get a feeling of what might transpire in the real event.

(iii) Think about the score you want to shoot.

At least two times a week in the three weeks before the big event, take 3 or 4 minutes before you go to bed and go through each hole on the course. Think about the score you could shoot if you play at your best.

Once you do this for a while, you will be able to actually see each tee shot, approach shot and putt on each hole but, most importantly, you'll see yourself getting that par or birdie on the holes you want.

For this exercise, you should be as specific as possible in your thoughts.

Believe it or not, we are trying to retrain your subconscious mind into believing that **you have already shot the score you're contemplating**.

Your conscious mind knows that you are just thinking about it, but your subconscious mind does not know this and only records information that you put into it.

The truth of the matter is that you can influence what score you will shoot if you think about it enough beforehand.

Get rid of all negative thoughts; don't think about going in the water or hitting a shot out of bounds. Think positively and believe that what you're thinking is actually happening.

For example, let's say you're in B Class (approx. handicap range 11 to 18) and you know that last year's winner shot 240 (e.g. 3 rounds of 80) to win.

You know that you have to shoot near that total to win this year. So, you might like to imagine shooting 78 in the first round, which is 6 over par. This means that your round might include 12 pars and 6 bogeys. Now, which 6 holes are you most likely to bogey? Include this in your plan.

Go through each hole "**seeing**" yourself getting a par or bogey etc. Your mind can turn your "mere thoughts" into their "real physical equivalent". All you have to do is tell your subconscious what you want.

When you're actually playing your game, do not think about the score you want to shoot "today" or things may not work out for you.

The secret is not to think about it at all, just enjoy the day. You'll be very surprised when your subconscious memories of "how to hit a shot" or "how to get a par here or there" just happen. Amazing, but true.

(iv) Tee markers and pin placements.

The morning or afternoon the day before a tournament, most golf course Superintendents mark where tee markers and pin placements are going to be for the tournament. If you are really curious about where some of the placements might be located, simply go out in the afternoon the day before and look for the applicable chalk marks on the tees and greens. You could even practice from these areas and to these pin positions if you have the time.

Before And After Each Round of the Tournament

Here are some guidelines to keep in mind on each day of your tourney :

(i). Prepare :

On the first day of the event, get there about 1 to 1½ hours early and practice the ways I have previously mentioned.

Make sure that you eat breakfast and have plenty to drink.

Throw one or two bottles of water, Gatorade, or something similar in your golf bag, and something to eat for lunch or a snack.

Be absolutely sure that you have a piece of fruit or something light to eat and plenty to drink before you play the second nine holes. You may need some extra energy on the last nine and this will help.

Always carry a bottle of Tylenol or Advil, or a similar product, in your golf bag, in case you need it. One thing that you don't need is to develop a headache. Think ahead and think wisely, and your game will be a lot easier.

(ii). Golf Balls:

Although this is up to you, a supply of at least six new golf balls, with at least two different numbers on them is a good idea. A worn out golf ball does not fly as well as a new one and does not roll as well on the green.

Furthermore, before you start out, be sure to place a mark on each golf ball to identify it as your own. This will avoid the costly mistake of playing a wrong ball during the round and losing two strokes.

Show your playing partners what ball you're using before you start and how it is marked. For example, I carry a permanent red magic marker in my bag and write a small cross just under the name of the ball to identify that it is mine.

(iii). The First Tee:

Most golfers are very nervous on the first tee either because there are others watching them or it is their first shot of the day. How can you stop your head spinning and hit a good shot off the often dreaded first tee?

I used to fear this shot and sometimes hit a poor shot because of the "butterflies in my stomach." You can eliminate most of the problem this way:

Know that everyone else is also a little nervous on that first tee, so you're not alone. It is a natural reaction but there is no need to let it destroy your first hole.

First, breathe deeply a few times, as previously instructed.

Second, pick a spot in the fairway where you would like to hit your shot. Now align your stance in that direction.

Slowly take a few practice swings, then get up to the ball and concentrate on just two things:

1. Swing smoothly and not fast. People often miss that first tee shot only because they swing too hard at it. Don't be part of the crowd. Be different. Swing at about 75% of your normal speed to ensure good contact.
2. Forget about who's watching because they don't really care where you hit it. They may watch you for a second but they're thinking about their own game and not about yours. Sorry to be so blunt but it is the truth and just another reason why you should never be concerned about what others are thinking.

Try this trick : Pick a small target above the ground to aim at

- a branch on a tree in the distance
- a 150 yard marker in the fairway
- a building in the distance, or whatever.

Now, pick a spot within a few yards of you on the ground that is on the exact path between you and the target. Align your stance and shoulders in the direction of that spot.

In the 2 or 3 seconds just before you take your swing, imagine your ball going in this exact direction and landing where you want it to land.

You might be saying, this is all fine and good, but what if you have a tendency to slice or hook the ball – what then?

In that case, take these two steps :

1) How much do you usually slice or hook the ball? Let's say you often fade or slice the ball 10 yards to the right (10 yards left if you're left handed).

Where do you want your ball to land in the fairway? Let's assume you want the ball to land right in the middle of the fairway, which is not a bad place to be.

2) Pick a spot to aim at (as noted above) that is 10 yards left (10 yards to the right if you're left handed) of where you want to land the shot. If you play your normal 10 yard fade, you'll end up in the middle of the fairway. You should still be okay if you hit it straight.

These are simple steps but, unfortunately, the average golfer does not do them. Don't be a part of the crowd! Become an above average player today. Start by following these suggestions. After you have practiced this for a few weeks, you'll find that your game will love you for it!

(iv). After each round:

Although you may be used to seeing many Professional golfers practice various things after a round, I would highly recommend that you do not do what they do. The very best thing to do is to go home, get something to eat and then rest.

It is not to your advantage to go on the practice tee, or the practice green after a tournament round.

If you do, you could wear yourself out for the next round or, worse yet, injure yourself because you are worn down. Also, your practice will not be as efficient when you are tired and that may lead to you becoming discouraged, so be forewarned. When you're playing in a tournament of any kind, practice only before you play. A simple, but very important rule to follow.

(v). The “Dwelling” principle:

Another error that I see countless players make after a round of golf is to go through each and every hole, even each and every shot and “beat themselves to death” with what they should have done.

Don’t fall into this mind-bending energy waster. It is okay to discuss your game with your playing partners or friends afterwards, but only for 10 to 15 minutes or so. Also, do not think about all the bad shots you made or the stupid things you did. Shy away from this behavior. There is nothing you can do about it anyway. Learn from your mistakes, but do not dwell on bad shots.

Here’s a more positive, subconscious building, honorable way to discuss the day's activities:

Compliment your playing partners, and not yourself, on the great shots or holes that they had. Listen to them and refrain from talking very much about yourself. Buy them a drink or something to eat as a gesture of friendship, and shake their hands.

Also, look at the scoreboard or score sheets and be sure to go out of your way to congratulate others on the fine games that they have played. Do not “rub it in” if they did not play so well. Instead, say how surprised you are that they did not do too well, but remind them that their next game will be much better.

Have you ever done these things before?

It will help to build your character and it is the way to behave for any future “Club Champion”. You should also act this way on the course, commenting on good shots by your opponents and keeping as quiet as possible if they make any bad shots or have any poor holes.

Put the feelings of others before yourself and you’ll be surprised at how these “good thoughts” and “actions” will benefit you in the future. The good Lord knew what he was talking about when he said “Give and it shall be given unto you ...” in the Bible.

(vi). Serenity:

Have you ever heard this word before? What do you think of when you hear it? If you’re like most people, you think of peace, calmness, relaxation and a wonderful sense of well-being.

This is how you should be during every round of a tournament, regardless of what happens on each hole. Whether you get a double bogey or an eagle on a hole, do not get too upset or too excited.

You need to remain calm at all times in order to increase the chances of a good shot.

Concentrate on breathing properly and try to keep yourself as relaxed as possible. The key here is to always remain “in the present”. Don’t start thinking about making a birdie on the next hole (the future), or about how bad you may have done on the last hole (the past).

If you jump into either the future or the past on any shot, you are more likely to swing poorly, or too fast, and waste strokes. Watch the top P.G.A. and L.P.G.A. professionals on T.V. Notice the calm demeanor of the eventual winners.

This is no coincidence.

A Final Word :



Success in any area of our lives takes some effort and patience. Trying to shoot even par in your first couple of years playing golf is not realistic unless you have incredible talent.

However, you now own an asset that others don't; this book.

And you can add another secret weapon to your golf armory:

I strongly encourage you to join a very informative, useful and fun golf newsletter called ***Golf Revelations***. It is published every two weeks and has golf tips of all kinds, golf company information and reviews, custom club articles, travel deals, jokes, contests and much more. We believe that this is the best **Game Improvement Golf Newsletter** on the Internet.

For a limited time only, we're giving away free 3-day and 2-night vacation certificates to new subscribers. These certificates are valid at any one of many fine Resorts across the U.S.A.

You can get a **free** subscription and your bonus vacation certificate by simply sending an email to :

subscribe1@golfrevelations.com

Finally, if you have read through this book faithfully and absorbed the secrets contained herein, you now have all the knowledge you need to succeed on the links.



These techniques work and they will **transform** your game as fast as you put them into action. Improving takes some practice, but you have in your possession a road map to excellence in this world-renowned sport. Follow it and you will achieve your goals and gain the respect of your friends and all others that you play with.

Well done! I knew you could do it!

I wish you all the best in your golfing future and the rest of your life.

God Bless You.

Sincerely,

Ken Black

Editor/Author

Golf Revelations

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