

# HIT THAT BALL!

How to get from A to Point B. Second of a two-part series

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Last month, we showed you some admittedly radical concepts for swinging the golf club. We introduced such key moves (or non-moves) as:

- Don't make any conscious effort to transfer your weight on the downswing.
- Try to "hit from the top," releasing the angle formed by the left arm and the clubshaft as early as possible on the downswing.

We want you to feel as if you are "throwing" the clubhead with your hands, pushing all of your energy out of and away from your body, down the clubshaft and through the ball.

So much for swinging the club.

Now you are ready to grasp the three key principles involved in actually hitting a golf ball:

1. Deliberate hit, from Point A to Point B- You are not, for instance, trying to initiate the downswing with your lower body or delay the hit or other such nonsense. You are just hitting that ball.
2. Direction of the hit- You are pushing the clubhead through the hitting area down and out to the right of the target line. (See inset on this page.)
3. Follow-through- This is not the finish, but the point just after impact. It is interesting to note that seemingly correcting what you do just after impact is the key to striking the ball well. (See following pages.)

Finally, after working with the drills we provided last month and understanding the new information here, you should be ready to forget these mechanical thoughts and use your new swing on the course. You are playing golf when your entire attention is placed solely on hitting that ball: for example, putting something extra into a long drive or finessing and approach shot into a tight pin placement.

You are not playing golf if your attention is on swing mechanics. Think about whatever you like during a practice swing, but starting right now, never again think about swing mechanics when you hit that ball.

## Correct path: Imagine a pool cue

Set up as you would to a golf shot and hold another ball in your right hand. Raising that hand to the top-of-the- backswing position, throw the ball at the ball on the ground. Note the direction of the throw (hit). When your right hand is bent back fully at the top, a line drawn between the ball on the ground and the one in your right hand will be the path the hand will take on the downswing.

The thrown ball will bounce out to the right of the target line. This will give you a feeling for the direction of the hit. The clubhead's target is the ball; the ball's target is the flag or the fairway.

It's like an angled shot on a pool table. Such an orientation in the golf swing will keep your shoulders closer to square at impact and will help to cure the outside-in swing path that often results in a pulled or



sliced shot.

## The Follow Through

### The 6 points just after impact

There are no positions between the top of the swing and the follow-through. To look at, study or try to manipulate any such position is totally destructive to hitting that ball. A key to learning how to hit that ball, however, is contained in a full understanding of what happens just after the ball has been struck. To get to this after-impact position, you must push the clubhead deeply out past your left shoulder.



## Push the toe down

Pushing the tow of the clubhead down through impact is the most successful feeling you can initially acquire as you learn Natural Golf. This Pushing causes the clubface to have a constant rate of closing through impact. There should be no attempt to arbitrarily "roll" the cubhead through the shot.



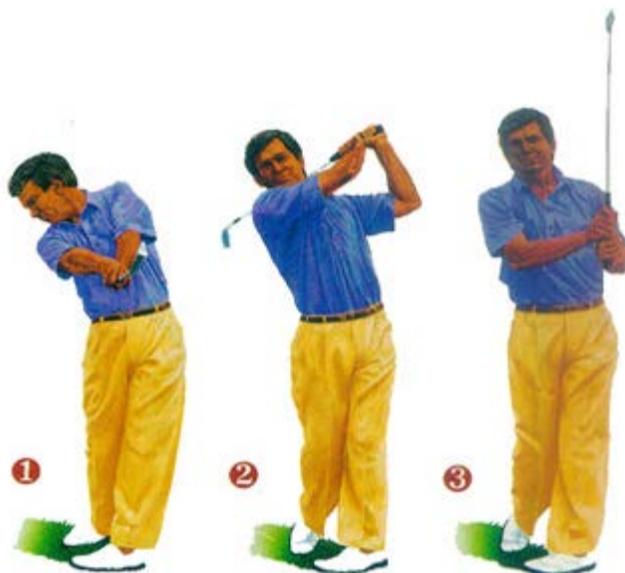
## The Finish

### The look you want at the completion of your swing

The finish of a full swing begins immediately after both arms are straight, when the left arm begins to fold. Before this point, you were principally pushing against the clubhead. From this point on, the club- head is primarily pulling on your body, up to a full finish. These illustrations demonstrate a natural finish, the result of:

1. Having pushed the clubhead through the hitting area.
2. Pushing against your entire body, which follows your hands as the momentum of the swing pulls you up and forward after the follow-through. Your arms will fold naturally and effortlessly as you have allowed the clubhead to pull you up to a full finish.
3. Standing erect and in balance with your weight on your front foot.

It is primarily the momentum of your hands, arms and club pulling against your right shoulder that pulls the rest of your body up to a full finish.



## How to achieve 'The Hit'

Think of the clubhead as a rocket and your body as the launch pad. You are working to keep your body back and steady as you fire the club-head through the ball to a full finish. We call this the Magic Formula, and it's something you can remember easily: "Blast off A to B. Clubhead first to a full finish with no concern for the outcome."

## Two Drills For Hitting That Ball.

### 1. Start with the Impact Gradient Exercise

You can learn anything if you break it down into small enough pieces, where you move at your own pace and gradually acquire personal certainty. Golf is no different. When you work with a short stroke, the impact action is just as it is with a full swing. A full swing is simply more activity tacked onto this exact action, with the goal being more power.

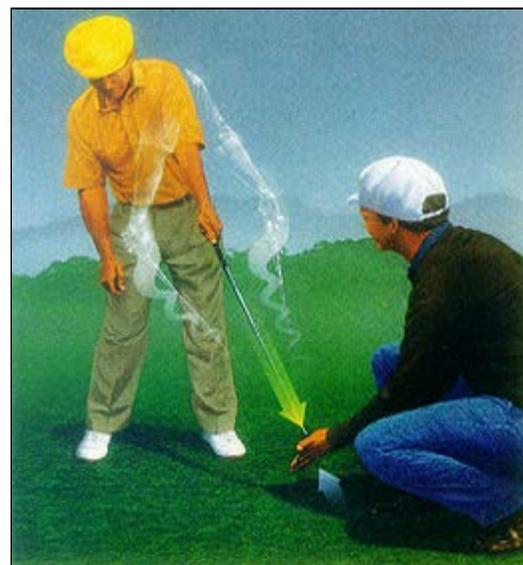
No matter what length the swing is, you must accelerate through that ball-never decelerate. Begin this drill with a pitching wedge. When you have completed steps A and B, move on to a 9-iron and repeat the same steps. In this way, continue on with your 8-, 7- and 6-irons:



1. Hit a ball three yards (distance in the air).
2. Gradually increase the distance you hit the ball until your backswing is such that your right forearm is just past parallel to the ground at the top of the swing.

## 2. Compressing that ball

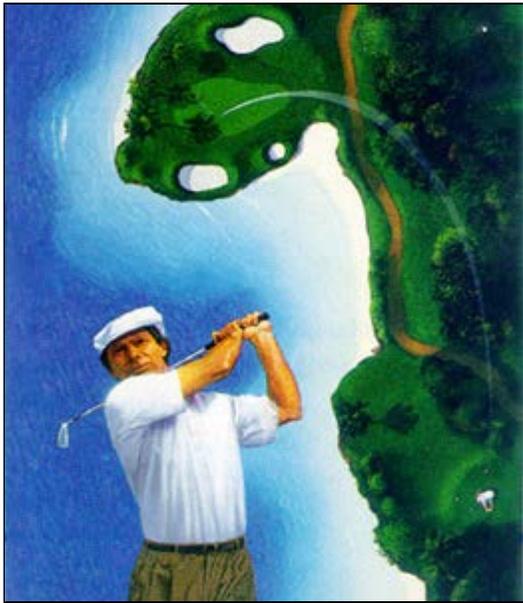
Holding a club in your left hand only, move your left arm to one-third of the way into the backswing. Have a friend apply light pressure to the bottom of the clubhead so you feel the grip end of the club coming toward your chest. Keep a light pressure through the clubshaft against your friend's hand and push the club into the follow-through. To maintain a position of power into the follow-through, you must not allow your hand to pull forward of the clubhead or fall behind it. You must push from your center, right out in front of you throughout the swing. Remember how this feels when you're hitting that ball.



## Mental approach on the course

For many golfers, the pressure of playing on the course only serves to intensify any reactions (tensing up, rushing, getting angry) and makes it tougher for you to be comfortable. From here on out, adhere to the following policy when you are hitting any golf ball, whether in practice or play:

- Hit every shot in one attention span.
- Don't try to hit the ball farther; work to hit it harder.
- Feel soft and hit hard. Put you body at ease.
- Look at the target to initially line up for the shot and then shift your focus of



attention to only hitting that ball. Remember A to B., clubhead first coming down, to a full finish.

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