

Making contact

This month we will take a look at the shot you need when your ball is between 2 to 8 feet off the edge of the green: the basic chip shot

while this is one of the easier shots in golf, many players tend to make it a lot harder than it really is. As with the bunker shot, which we discussed last month, the tendency is often to try to scoop the ball up. This leads to inconsistent contact of the ball, either through hitting the ball in the middle (the equator), or hitting the ground first.

Club Selection

When faced with a chip shot, many players reach automatically for their SW or PW and try to fly the ball through the air. What they fail to realise is that the longer the ball is in the air, the more precision is required. Ideally, the ball should be kept running along the ground for as long as possible, so the best clubs to use are the 7, 8 or 9 irons. An added bonus is that your miss-hits will usually finish a lot closer to the target with these clubs, when compared with shots played using the SW or PW.



Picture 1



Joshua Willard

Stance

When you address the ball, bend from your waist and slightly bend your knees (Picture 1). Your feet should be placed closer together than for your normal stance, and your weight should be leaning slightly into your left side (for a right-handed player) (Picture 2).



Picture 2

Ball Position

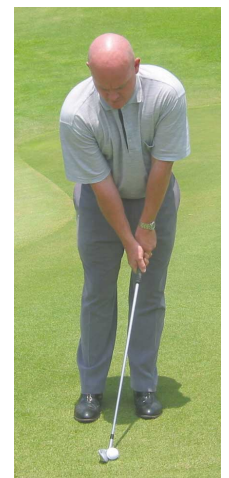
The ball should be in the middle of your stance (Picture 2). This will encourage you to catch the ball first and trap the ball. Many players tend to have the ball too far back in their stance, causing them to bring the club down steeply, leading to inconsistent chipping.



Picture 3

Backswing

When playing the basic chip shot there shouldn't be a lot of wrist action. The wrists should be only slightly hinged, and the backswing should be kept short (Picture 3).



Picture 4

Impact

If your impact position is correct, you should feel as though your body is over the ball (Picture 4). You shouldn't feel as though you are scooping, or flicking, the ball up into the air. The correct contact will feel light and effortless.

Drills

Take your normal stance for the chip shot as outlined above, but place your right foot behind you while playing several practice shots (Picture 5). This will reinforce the feeling of having your weight tending towards your left side, and will force you to keep your body relatively stationary throughout the swing, eliminating unnecessary movement and enabling you to develop a repeatable swing.



Picture 5

Josh has relocated to Bukit Location as of Monday, March 28.