

Little things make all the difference

This month, we will take a look at the most neglected shot in amateur golf—putting

despite the fact that putting is probably the easiest shot in golf, for most amateurs it is the weakest part of their game. This is usually because they prefer to spend time at the driving range smashing woods than on the practice green hitting putts. Touring professionals, on the other hand, spend a lot of time on the practice green, as they realise that putting is the one part of their game that can generate returns on every hole. Touring professionals who cannot putt had better look for a new career.

All good putters have several commonalities in their techniques. I am going to take one of the most successful putters on the PGA Tour as our model: Aaron Baddeley.



Picture 1

Stance

Like all good putters, Aaron's feet are roughly shoulder width apart (**Picture 1**).

Ball Position

The ball should be positioned just inside your left foot. This will encourage you to hit the ball on the up and give the ball a better roll (**Picture 1**).



Picture 2

Grip

Most good putters tend to grip the club in the palm of their left hand (**Picture 2**). This eliminates the wristy, yippy action seen in some putters, and encourages a one-piece action with the hands, arms and

Tee-time with Josh

Joshua Willard



Picture 3

shoulders. The left index finger sits on the outside of the other fingers (**Picture 3**). The right hand is just sitting on for the ride, but at all times both hands work as a team: one hand shouldn't take over the other.

Posture

Bend from the waist, with a slight flex in the knees. Your arms should be nice and relaxed, and they will automatically hang into the right position.

Stroke

The most common mistake amateur players make is to take a big backswing, which leads to deceleration through the ball. Your backswing should be the same distance as your follow through. The path of the stroke should be slightly inside on the backswing, back to the ball, and slightly inside on the follow through, with the club square to the body at all times.

Try these tips, and I'm sure it will only help your putting.