

Golf Lessons

By John Paolino



Basics of a Proper Golf Grip

A good golf swing begins with a proper golf grip and as result you will never play up to your potential without it. Making a change to your grip maybe one of the hardest adjustments to make, but it is the most important.

To begin with open your left hand and lay the club diagonally across your palm. The club should rest between the first joint of your index finger and just under the pad of your pinky finger. Now connect the right hand by either interlocking the pinky fingers or overlapping the right finger over the left. Either method will work so choose what is most comfortable for you.

In the right hand the club lays in the fingers not the palm. The club should lay across the ring and middle fingers and against the index finger. You should notice a small gap between the middle finger and index finger. This gap lets the right forefinger and thumb cradle the club for greater feel and control.

The left thumb should be slightly off center of the club and run down the right side of the shaft. The same should be done for the right thumb. It should lay off center to the left not straight down the shaft. If you put your thumbs straight down the shaft it will be to hard to hinge the club on your back swing and to release it on your downswing.

When you're your hands are together on the shaft you will see a "V" is formed by your forefingers and thumbs. In a perfect grip, the right "V " should point towards your chin and the left "V" should aim towards your right eye. Also, you should see two knuckles showing on the back of you left hand. If you turn your grip clockwise from this point, it's called a strong grip and you will have a less tendency to slice the ball.

As far as grip pressure goes, less is better than more. You should grip the club with enough pressure to control the club but so much as to create tension in your forearm. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the strongest pressure, you should strive for about a 3 to 4. When you are practicing, lighten up on your grip until the club almost falls out of your hand. Then gradually add pressure until you can gain control with out the club slipping in your hands. The left hand should hold the club a little more firmly because it is mainly to guide it. The right hand will give your swing feel and power. Gripping pressure points will come from the last three fingers of your left hand and the ring and middle fingers of your right hand. the left thumb and forefinger will have almost no pressure at all. In addition, virtually no pressure will come from your right forefinger and thumb. Also try to apply the same amount of pressure through out your entire swing , from take-away to follow-thru.

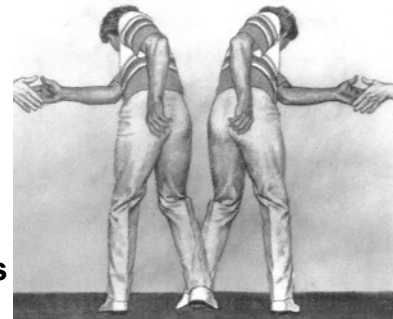
Keep in mind a grip change is perhaps the most difficult change to make and it will feel uncomfortable for awhile. Try to keep a club near you to practice on when your just relaxing, watching television or any time it may convenient. The more you can practice the sooner it will not seem so awkward. With a proper grip you will be amazed as to how the rest of your swing will fall into place.

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IMPROVE YOUR GOLF SWING WITH SWING IMAGERY

It only takes less than two seconds to make a golf swing, so how in the world can a golfer concentrate on all the elements of a good golf swing at once? In reality he can not, the mind can only focus on one thought at a time. Concentrating on each different component of your swing is great when your on the practice tee but on the course it's time to put all the parts together into one complete and cohesive swing. The great Bobby Jones had said that he would play well when he thought of only one thing but would play excellent when he thought of nothing at all. Here are a few swing imagery thoughts that you can implement to improve your swing. Keep in mind when your on the course only use one at a time.

I found the best image technique to keep my golf swing on the proper plane is to visualize myself shaking hands. By following this simple tip your shoulders, hips and knees will fall naturally in place from your take-away to your follow-through. Basically on your back swing you'll imagine shaking hands with your left hand and on your follow through with your right hand. You set up to the ball with your upper body slightly bent over and knees bent and then pretend you are going to shake hands with someone to your right. At address the back of your left hand will be facing the fairway but as you shake hands to your right the left arm will extend until you are shaking someone's hand at waist high. At that point in the swing the front of your left hand will be facing forward. Your left arm will be extended and your left knee comes inward and your hips will move out if the way. Now do the same thing in the opposite direction by shaking hands with your right hand with somebody to your left. A key point to keep in mind is at hip level the toe of clubhead should be pointing up. A good practice exercise is to take half swings in slow motion.



Another swing imagery technique is imagine you are looking down at yourself from above. Visualize yourself swinging around the back of your neck. At the top of your swing the club will be aiming directly down the fairway and your hands will be about half way between your head and your right shoulder. Your shoulders and the shaft of the club will be making a L-shape or 90 degree angle. This imagery will help keep you from swaying and maintaining balance. You will also be at the proper position to begin your downswing.



Finally, think of your clubhead making an imaginary circle. Visualize yourself making a circle with the clubhead around your body at about a 45 degree angle. This technique will help you have the proper swing plane and enable you to hit the ball straighter and further.

Experiment the next time your on the course with one of these swing imagery techniques. They will also help with your timing and tempo and allow you to better enjoy the game. Remember, a good golfer needs to take all the parts and blend them into one smooth cohesive swing.

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