

On track, & on line

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Whatever standard of golfer you may be, investing in a Putting Alignment Mirror is the quickest route to better fundamentals and a repeating stroke. There are numerous ways in which it can help you (visit my website for the comprehensive lesson!) but here are just a couple that will improve the path of your stroke and the quality of your impact with the ball – both of which are vital to hitting better putts more often.



DRILL 1

Groove a better swing-path through the 'gate'

Improve the path of your stroke and eliminate inconsistent heel/toe strikes for more accurate and solid impact

Tiger Woods is renowned for the way he can stand on a practice putting green and hole out from four to six feet or so, running the putter-head through a 'gate' of tee-pegs. I have watched him stand and hole putts like this for half an hour and not miss a single one. He often favours using just his right hand/arm, and it's like watching a machine. Apart from anything else, it's an incredible feat of strength – which putting is to a much greater degree than you might imagine.

Here is my own take on that drill. As I advocate the right hand low putter grip, I encourage my students to practice with the *left* hand only, as this engenders a terrific sense of feel for pulling the left hand/arm and the putter *through* the ball and down the target line. Placing the right hand gently on the upper part of the left arm reminds you that the stroke is created with the

gentle rocking of the shoulders, the left shoulder moving down to create the backswing and then up to return the putter to impact and through to the finish.

To start, square your putter face to the target line, and then place a couple of tees just outside the toe and the heel of the putter (there are slots in the mirror specifically for this purpose). Thus you create a 'gate' to test the accuracy of your stroke (you can narrow it as you become more proficient). The aim of the drill is to make a full stroke without touching either of the tees on the through-swing. Keep your eyes fixed on the back of the ball, your right hand comfortably on the upper part of the left arm, and gently rock the shoulders to create momentum. The left arm and the putter work in tandem. Gradually bring the tees closer together to reduce your margin for error and to test the path of your stroke even more.



1. With your shoulders level, square the putter face between the line of tees within the mirror. The right hand is then placed gently on the left shoulder



2. Feel that the unit of your left shoulder and left arm works as one to draw the putter back smoothly



3. Left shoulder rocks up to swing the putter through the line of tees for solid contact with the ball



4. Putter and left arm maintain relationship all the way to the finish



I advocate the left-below-right grip, as that helps you to keep the shoulders level



The putter head remains low to the ground on the way back, the face square to the path along which it is moving



As putter-head tracks low to the ground through the gate, the face makes solid impact with the ball



'Connection' of arms and torso is maintained and the putter just clips the two forward balls as it is swung freely down target line



This sequence above shows a good backswing, the putter nice and low away from the ball, but it then rises a little too steeply for my liking into the follow through, causing the putter to miss the two forward balls. This type of stroke is often the result of a player believing that stroking 'up' on the object ball imparts extra topspin to give a better roll on the green – a common misconception that only distorts the overall shape of the putting stroke. So work on this drill until you achieve the perfect 'rise' angle for solid putting

DRILL 2
Identify the correct putter 'rise'
 Stay low to the target for a solid, consistent strike

Take your normal address position and square the putter to the target. But in addition to the ball you are aiming to hit, place two further balls at the end of the mirror, as you see above. According to the symmetry of a good stroke the putter-head should just clip the very top of those two balls as it swings through to the finish. If your putter passes up and over the two forward balls, you have too much of an upswing or 'rise angle' in your stroke (this often occurs in the mistaken belief this type of action enhances topspin). As you rehearse this drill, make sure that you maintain the 'connection' in your stroke, the arms and the body working together and maintaining their shape. Your eye position must also remain in the same position – and remember equal distance back and through equal's good pace control....



GET ON A ROLL...
Online now!

Visit our website today to watch Dr Paul Hurrion run through each of these drills step-by-step in a series of video lessons – The Paul Hurrion Putting Studio. With commentary and further invaluable insight from one of the world's leading putting experts, this is an opportunity too good to miss. For more information on the Paul Hurrion Signature range of putters from GEL Golf, and details of your nearest GEL fitting centre, visit www.GELGolf.co.uk