

LINE UP

YOUR PUTTS

To groove a reliable stroke, make sure your set-up has these three lines

PUTTING SHOULD BE SIMPLE. After all, I have yet to meet a player who can't swing his arms back and forth. This is all the putting motion requires—no weight transfer, no body turn, no great clubhead speed. The trick is getting into a perfect set-up position, allowing the stroke to repeat time after time. For best results, consider getting custom-fitted to ensure your putter is the right length.

To develop a proper set-up, focus on three imaginary lines: 1) a vertical line from your eyes to the ball; 2) another vertical line, from your shoulders to your hands; and 3) a line from the grip up through your left forearm. Set these three lines properly and your arm swing will stroke the putter on its natural arc every time—and you'll start making more putts.

BY TODD SONES WITH GREG MIDLAND • PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRED VUICH

LINE

1

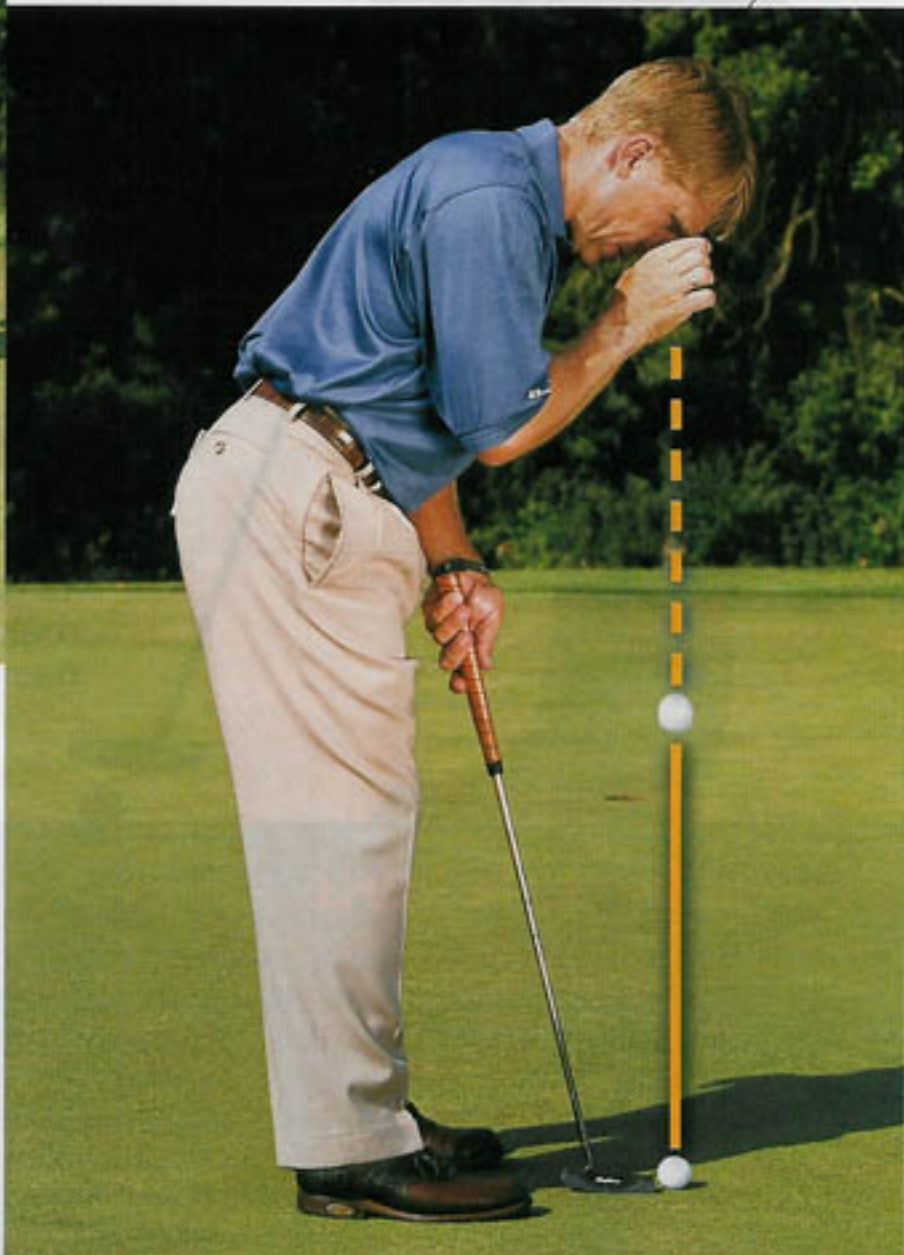
EYES OVER BALL


SETTING YOUR EYES directly over the ball at address allows for a clear view straight along the target line (photo, left). This helps you aim the putterface correctly and align the body parallel to the target line.

Bend from the hips, not the knees, so that your spine tilts diagonally and your weight is on the balls of your feet. Check your eye position by setting up to a ball, then dropping another ball from the bridge of your nose (photo, below). The dropped ball should hit the one on the ground. If it misses inside or outside, adjust your forward tilt accordingly.



Allow your eyes to trace the line from the ball to the hole.





Let your hands hang naturally for a tension-free stroke.



LINE

2 HANDS UNDER SHOULDERS

YOUR HANDS SHOULD HANG directly under your shoulders (photo, right), allowing the arms the freedom to swing straight back and straight through. Notice I didn't say that the *putterhead* swings straight back and straight through. When the arms swing correctly, the putterhead makes an elliptical arc due to the lie angle of the shaft. This path promotes center-face contact.

Check your position by setting up to a ball, then removing your right hand from the grip (photo, left). Holding that stance, let the hand dangle free for a few seconds, then check its position: It should still be in line with the grip. If it has moved closer to or farther from your body, your hands are not directly under your shoulders. Adjust your distance from the ball.

GRIP TO FOREARM



Grip the club in the palm (photo, right), not the fingers (inset).

NO MATTER WHICH putting grip you use, a third putting line helps promote consistency. Unlike the full-swing grip, which positions the club more in the fingers, the putting grip should place the handle in your palms. This reduces wristiness for more control and consistency.

Think of the putter grip as an extension of both arms. Held properly, the butt end should point on a line up your wrists and left forearm, ensuring that the putter is resting in the left palm. Add the right hand, being sure to also use the palm. Now you're lined up and ready to go.



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