

Most poor swings go offtrack due to an unbalanced set-up. Here's the remedy

Address the Cause



DOCTORS DON'T TRY to fix the symptoms, they try to cure the disease that causes them. In golf, poor shots are the symptoms, while poor mechanics and body positions are the disease. My experience watching thousands of golf swings has convinced me that 90 percent of poor shots are caused by a poor set-up. Often, the swing goes offtrack because the body is not in balance at address.

Once balance is compromised, the club will become harder to control, resulting in increased tension in the hands and arms, which reduces clubhead speed and control. It is also harder to focus on your target when your mind is consumed with trying to manipulate the club during the swing.

Todd Sones is the teaching professional at the Vintage Club in Indian Wells, California.

PERFECT BALANCE

Here my upper body is bent forward from the hips with the angle of my spine and head identical. To counter-balance the upper body, my rear sticks back just far enough so my weight is centered over the balls of my feet. From here, my arms hang straight down, which allows me to swing with the club in front of my body as I turn away from the ball. In the far right photograph, my body is balanced over my feet and the club is on plane with the butt of the shaft pointing at the target as it passes horizontal.

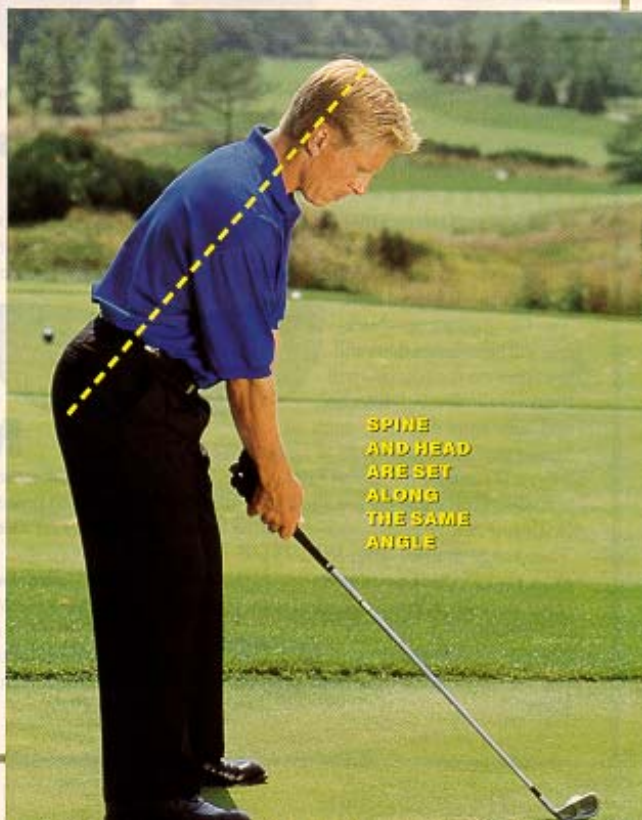
Touring pros' swings look effortless because they start with a balanced set-up, the lower body supporting the weight of the upper body over the balls of both feet, the upper body bent forward from the hips, the spine and head set along the same angle, and the arms hanging straight down from the shoulders. From this address, the arms have plenty of clearance to turn away from the ball with the club on plane and the body weight coiling fluidly over the right leg on the backswing and then uncoiling back to the left on the downswing.

Do a little doctoring on your set-up position and you will eliminate many painful shots from future rounds.

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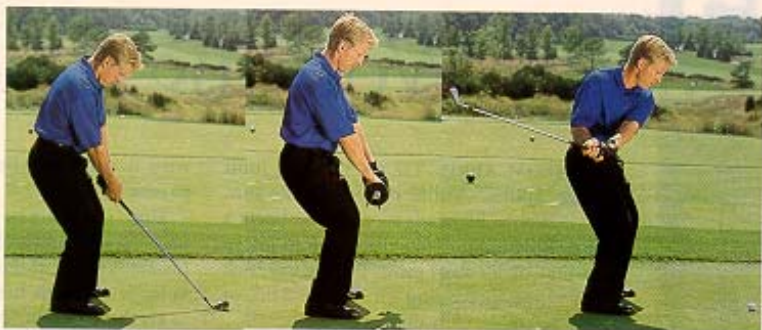
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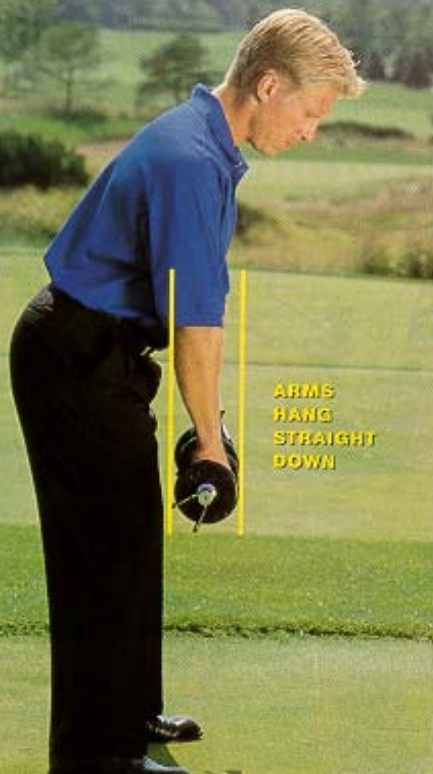


SPINE AND HEAD ARE SET ALONG THE SAME ANGLE

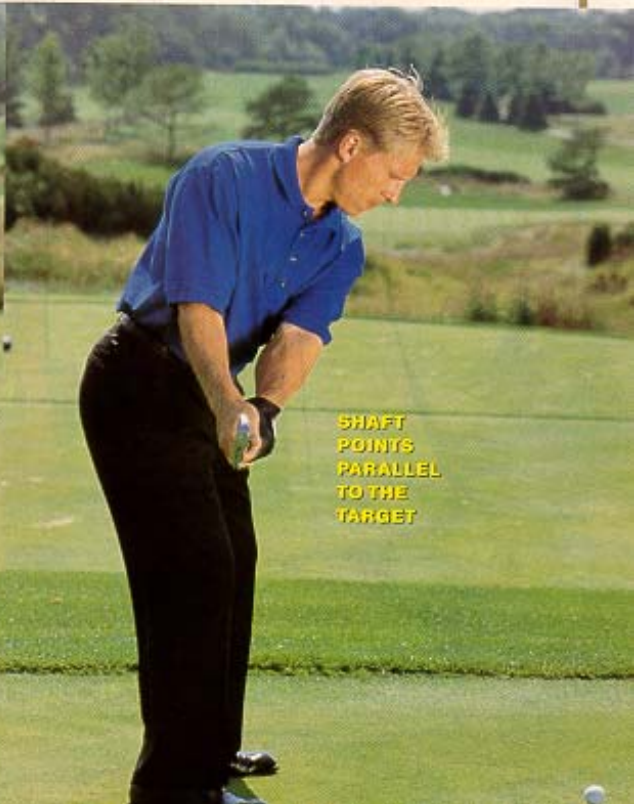
WEIGHT OVER HEELS
Here my upper body is too upright. I've overflexed my knees and slumped at the shoulders, causing weight to move over my heels. The resulting backswing pulls the club too far inside the target line. The result can be a slice, pull, or block.



WEIGHT OVER TOES
My upper body is bent too far forward, with my weight over my toes. The resulting backswing is too steep and my shoulders tilt left rather than turn over the right leg. This reverse weight shift causes an out-to-in downswing and either a pull or a slice.



**ARMS
HANG
STRAIGHT
DOWN**



**SHAFT
POINTS
PARALLEL
TO THE
TARGET**