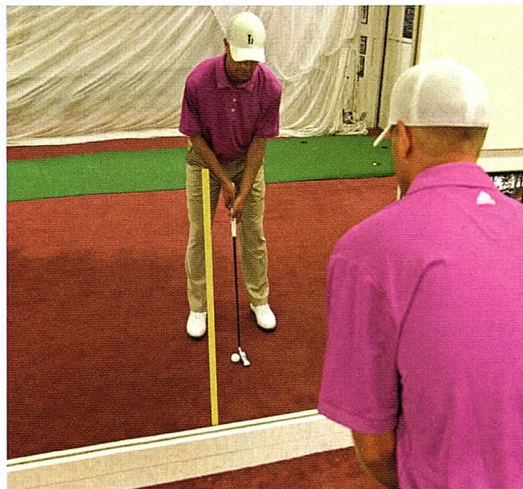
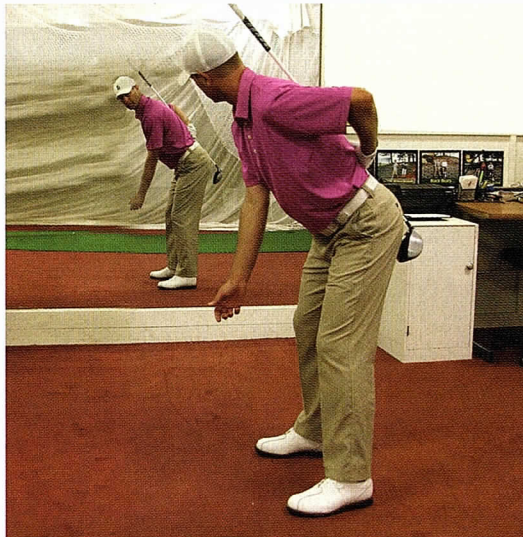


MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

Winter gives you time to reflect on three ways to improve your game.

By Trent Wearer



DURING THE “OFF-SEASON”—and especially for those who sit often—don't let your posture and other fundamentals of your golf swing slide. Take a good, long look at yourself in the mirror before you do anything else.

POSTURE PERFECT

Most people unintentionally avoid proper posture simply because they think their rear end is pushed way out. But after seeing themselves in a mirror they say, “Hey, I actually look like a golfer now.”

- Position yourself so that you would be hitting a ball at a 90-degree angle away from the mirror (a right-handed golfer would see his/her right side in the mirror).
- While keeping the shaft of a club touching your back and rear, tilt from your hips. You will notice how much straighter your back stays.
- Add a little knee bend while keeping your rear out and be sure to keep your shoulders back instead of caving in your chest. Sustain that posture as you put the club down as if to hit a ball.
- Do this a few times until you can feel how to get into such a posture and you no longer need to place the club behind your back. The mirror will tell you.

BABY GOT BACKSWING

Squaring up the clubface and other downswing problems often stem from inconsistent backswing position. Get off to a great start by making a backswing that sets up a simpler downswing.

Starting with the same posture you've developed above and the same position to the mirror, swing the club back trying to allow the club and hands to pass through the following checkpoints. Do it very slowly at first then speed up the motion to your normal pace:

- With a mid-iron it's likely you'll see about three inches of space between your hands and your legs at address. Keeping that same three inches of space, turn your body and swing the club so that the clubhead passes through your hands. A slight hinge of the wrists has likely already occurred.
- The club shaft continues up the right forearm via wrist hinge and shoulder turn to a position at the top where the shaft is short of parallel and pointed down at the target line.
- From there the club shaft is so much more ready and so much easier to be swung down on the correct plane.

PUTTERING AROUND

- Tape a string to your mirror vertically.
- Face the mirror and address a ball with your putter.
- Your ball position should favor the foot closest to the target.
- Relax your arms and bend your elbows.
- Using the string (or tape as you see here) as a gauge, make sure the putter shaft is either perfectly vertical or leaning forward a couple of degrees at address.
- As you take the putter back and through, maintain the angle of the putter shaft.

Trent Wearer, PGA, is the 2014 Colorado PGA Golf Teacher of the Year. He also won the award in 2004. Golf Digest ranked him the #1 teacher in Colorado the last two years, and his book, Golf Scrimmages, remains a blueprint of purposeful practice. He runs the Trent Wearer Golf Academy at Meridian Golf Club in Englewood. trentwearergolf.com; 303-645-8000.



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