

Hit It High or Hit It Low

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Quite frequently during a round, golfers find themselves around the green and in need for the ball to travel at a certain height in order to get close to the hole. Hitting shots around the green not only calls for proper distance control but also at an appropriate trajectory for the situation. The bottom line to the ball's trajectory is the loft of the club when the ball is struck and while there are some techniques one can use during the swing to hit it high or low, properly executing the shot starts with a proper setup and understanding what influences the trajectory.

Things that influence a high shot:

Setup

- Ball forward
- Shaft vertical
- Weight equal with upper tilted behind ball
- Right toe/foot turned out



Things that influence a low shot:

Setup

- Ball back
- Shaft leaning forward toward target
- Weight on front foot with upper positioned over the front foot
- Right toe/foot turned in



Having only one process for hitting shots around the green is limiting. Being able to add a new shot makes the short game much more fun and realizing that you have control of the ball's trajectory will enhance your ability to get up-and-down from the countless situations we face around the green. Next time your ball is close to the green take a look at the situation and ask yourself whether the ball needs to come in high or low and adjust your setup and club accordingly. Typically, the setup and swing for a lower shot produces more consistent contact but is only worthwhile if you have enough area in which the ball can land on the green and then roll to the hole. If there's not much green before the hole, then you can either land the ball short of the green risking an awkward bounce or hit a higher, softer shot that safely lands on the green and consequently rolls less than a lower shot would.

These setup items can be used in a variety of ways. Mix and match some of them or alter the degree to which the ball is positioned, the shaft is leaning, or your weight distribution to create your own special way of hitting shots that you feel comfortable performing.