

“POSTURE” Yourself for a Better Swing

by Scotty Hofer

The quickest way to improve your golf swing is to improve your golfing posture. Golf is a much more athletic endeavor than most people think. “Posture” your body similar to ready positions found in other sports -- linebackers, shortstops, basketball players playing defense. These athletic positions allow athletes to perform more effectively.

To “posture” your body into an athletic position, begin by standing erect and looking straight ahead. Allow your arms to hang from your shoulders and note the natural roll of your upper back and how the neck vertebrae allow your head to come out of your shoulders. Keep these relationships the same as you incline the upper body forward.

Unlock your knees slightly and produce flex in your knees by thrusting your buttocks rearward towards an imaginary wall about six inches away. The shin bones should remain vertical, or almost so. Many golfers produce too much flex in the knees by moving them forward and “sitting”. This flex produces a hinge at the ankles and is incorrect.

To counterbalance the rearward movement of the buttocks, incline your upper body forward (toward the ball) by hinging at the hip joints, not the waist. Most golfers get down to the golf ball by bending at the waist. A waist bend is sloppy, produces a rounding of the shoulders, and makes it much harder to rotate your body. A correct hinging from the hip joint will stretch the ligaments and muscles of the lower back, which is why most golfers do not do it. The upper back should maintain its natural roll, and the chin should be up. You should have a “tall” feeling.

As the upper body is inclining forward, allow your arms to move away from your body. Use your right hand with fingers spread apart to measure the distance from your thigh to the left hand. You will incline your upper body forward to achieve a distance of four spread fingers between your left thigh and left hand. The club makes up the distance between your body and the golf ball. You will never again be too close to or too far away from the ball! Your weight should be evenly distributed on both feet and suspended over your arches.

This posture may feel uncomfortable at first. Practice in a mirror for five to ten minutes every night to stretch the ligaments and muscles of the lower back. “Posturing” your body this way will improve your golf swing.

