

# Lower Your Golf Score in the Off-Season

By Doug Hendricks, President and Founder of RDH Enterprises, Inc.

For golfers living in the northeast, the golf season runs from May through September. Even diehards are usually forced to put away their clubs for a few months ... except for trips when we sneak to warmer climates to play eight rounds of golf in four or five days. Therefore, maintaining a respectable game and decent score during the off-season could be a losing battle.

Is it possible, instead of losing ground, to gain ground during the winter? Would we play better golf if we stayed in better physical condition? Can we add distance and lower our handicap without striking a ball, especially in the off-season? My response to those questions is a resounding "YES!" Although it could be argued that today's equipment is better and balls fly further, I believe the fundamental reason for "greater distance" on tour is because today's players stay in better physical condition.

All golfers should commit to a program that emphasizes **strength training, stamina building & flexibility**. Efforts in these three areas will increase your power and ability to make shots, and will reduce your risk of injury.

The single most important characteristic of your golf swing is **flexibility**. "Stretching" and increasing your range of motion are vital. There are two kinds of stretching exercises—"dynamic" and "static." "Dynamic" stretches are ideal for warming up before a round or practice session. "Static" stretches—to increase your range of motion and minimize risk of injury—are best for the off-season and days without golf—right now. For best results, stretch consistently over a period of time.



*Inflexible- wrists (no binge), shoulders- (minimal turn), left arm- (collapsed)*     *Flexible- wrists (full binge), shoulders- (full turn), left arm- (extended)*

## 10 Daily "Static" Stretches

Each "stretch" should be applied slowly, completed with proper breathing (don't hold your breath), held for at least 20 seconds, and executed on a daily basis. Proper stretching should include the feeling of tension in your muscles, but not pain.

- 1 **Lower Back.** Lie on your back, grasp both knees and pull them to your chest. (1 x 30 sec.)
- 2 **Abdominal muscles.** Keep your hands and feet on the ground and create an "inverted V" position with your pelvis and back. (1 x 30 sec.)
- 3 **Hip Flexors.** Kneel in a lunge position with front leg at 90-degree angle. With your back hip at a 45-degree angle, lean forward and contract your "glutes"—gluteus or buttock muscles. (2 x 20 sec. each leg)
- 4 **Seated Hip Rotation.** Seated on the ground, cross one leg over the other and pull your knee towards your chest. (2 x 20 sec. each leg)
- 5 **Seated Torso Rotation.** Cross one leg over the other and rotate torso in opposite direction. (2 x 20 sec. each side)
- 6 **Seated Torso Rotation with Club.** Sit up straight in a chair, hold a club behind your neck and rotate torso. (1 x 30 sec. each side)
- 7 **Standing Lateral Bending.** Spread feet double-shoulder-width apart and bend torso to each side. (1 x 30 sec. each side)
- 8 **Seated Hamstring Stretch.** Straighten one leg in front of you and place opposite foot against the inside of your knee or thigh. Bending forward at the hips, slowly lean toward your foot, keeping your back straight. (2 x 20 sec. each leg)
- 9 **Calves.** In a push-up position, cross one foot over the other while flexing your foot toward your shin. (2 x 30 sec. knee straight; 2 x 30 sec. knee bent, each leg)
- 10 **Standing Quad Stretch.** Keeping your thigh perpendicular to the ground, pull your heel toward your butt until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh. (2 x 20 sec. each leg)



## Food for Thought

"How difficult is it to hit a golf ball properly? Next time you go to strike a ball, remember this..."with a hitting area on the clubface of 2.5 inches, you have to strike a ball only 1.68 inches in diameter. The 14.25 ounce club, which builds up a dynamic pulling weight of approximately 100 pounds during your 1.5 seconds of motion, has to be swung at a speed approaching 90 miles per hour at an arc of approximately 18 feet. The ball is on the clubface for just .00035 of a second and to be hit the desired distance in the right direction it has to be launched at an angle of 42 degrees."

—David Leadbetter

## About Doug Hendricks

Doug Hendricks has over 30 years of experience as a Professional Golfer and entrepreneur in the Philadelphia area. He has served as Head Professional at White Manor Country Club (1987-2001). As an instructor, Doug has given over 17,000 private and group lessons with clients ranging in ability from professional athletes to physically disabled children. Doug's been nominated 3 times for "Teacher of the Year" in the Philadelphia section and received the "Children's Champion Award" for his instruction and dedication to children with disabilities. His expertise in the golf industry has earned him recognition in over 300 television and radio programs.

Doug continues to serve as the "Golf Director" of the Desmond Hotel & Conference Center in Malvern, Pa. where he conducts golf "Team Building" events for corporations, schools, and churches. As a PGA Teaching Professional, he provides private lessons at Penn Oaks Golf Club in West Chester. He serves as the Head Coach of the Women's Golf Team at West Chester University and earned PSAC Conference Coach of the Year honors in 2010. Finally, Doug has co-hosted the Emmy award winning television program "Golfshots" viewed on Comcast Sportsnet.

rdhgolf.com • 610-513-0029

doug@rdhgolf.com

**RDH Enterprises Inc.**



Building a Swing For Life