



Practicing A Drill Properly

Please pay special attention to this section.
This could be the key to your success!



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*The purpose of any drill is to **isolate** and develop one aspect of your swing motion. You must concentrate on improving only one motion during each chosen practice session.*

Most amateur golfers practice ineffectively. They don't bring enough deliberation, concentration and focus into their practice. This doesn't mean practice has to be tediously demanding. It simply means that it requires your continued attention. You should relentlessly pursue a very specific goal during practice. Instead of a sensation of arduous work, practicing properly will bring the much greater satisfaction of rapid progress.

You may feel the practice plan we prescribe is more time consuming than your usual method. However it will produce the desired results far more rapidly. It is the same kind of practice used by touring pros everywhere. That's because it is the only way to really produce the results you want.

“Cognizant” Practice

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Time and again we see students with the golf version of Attention Deficit Disorder go to the driving range and smack balls away hoping to impress their neighbors. Even those with good intentions, who begin a practice session with a specific goal, soon get lost in the consuming process of striking the ball and watching it fly. Or they begin watching their neighbor, or talking to their buddy. It's OK to have a good time; you should enjoy your time at the driving range. However, if you want to improve, you have to give the process some focus.

Even students in our school, who are clearly there for the purpose of improving, have to constantly be reminded to practice the given drill. They lose focus quickly, and soon are hitting the way they always have without being aware of it. Very few of you can afford, or would even want, to take a coach with you every time you go to the range. So you have to be your own coach -- a good coach. A good coach prods and encourages, with relentless focus on the task.

We will teach you the method of “cognizant” practice. With a specific routine, you are more likely to stick to the process. Cognizant practice means you will take inventory of your motion every time you hit the ball. This will help you develop awareness of your swing motion. The more you develop self-awareness, the better you will be able to develop and maintain your own swing.



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The Process

Before beginning any drill motion, be sure you are set up properly. As you now know, good alignment and address are prerequisites for a good swing motion. By the time you practice your swing, you should have developed these setup skills (through the same kind of deliberate, conscientious practice procedures).

Some of these drills can be practiced anywhere. Some can be practiced without a club, some with a club but no ball. You will be surprised by the results of this “dummy” practice. However, for your time at the range we recommend practicing in the following manner.

Before we begin to analyze your swing motion, we need to agree on the method for making repairs. You must trust our years of experience in golf instruction and follow the plan as prescribed. Also, practice means just that, practice. **NEVER PRACTICE WHILE ATTEMPTING TO SCORE ON THE GOLF COURSE!** Let the practice and drill work merge into your golf game naturally.

With a specific routine, you are more likely to stick to the process.

First, isolate the problem motion or position. Assign a repetition drill or “antidote” motion that will replace the current swing fault. This can only take place through careful, thoughtful and disciplined repetition of the assigned drill. Doing the drills without hitting a golf ball can be preferable.

Range Practice

At the driving range, begin each drill with a “ghost” motion. This is a slow, deliberate run-through of the motion you intend to develop. This motion serves as a dry run. You should perform the ghost motion three times before hitting a ball.

Next, practice the drill itself using a ball. Then incorporate the drill into a full swing motion as you hit the ball.

After hitting a ball, DO NOT immediately reach for another golf ball. Instead, take inventory of your swing motion. First observe the flight of the ball. Watch it all the way to the ground. As you are doing this, analyze your finish position. Did you finish in balance? Do you have good posture? Is all your weight resting comfortably on your front foot? Is your chest facing the target? Is your grip in the same position as when you started the swing?



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This self-critique is vital! The information you gain makes all the difference in the world. If you don't ask these questions, you will soon be practicing without focus. Repeating the drill improperly, without awareness, will do more harm than good.

Don't be embarrassed to practice this way at the range. What you are doing is far more effective than unconsciously banging away at range balls as most players do. We call those guys "basket-cases," because they are constantly dragging from the basket another ball with which to bury their swing potential. Perhaps, one day, everyone will have enough understanding to practice properly. Until then, be willing to be a maverick.

Always hold
your balance
after a shot
and take
inventory of
your swing
motion.

Once again, the range practice method is as follows:

(1) Check your setup position before beginning the drill.

Pound the importance of good preparation into your head every chance you get.

(2) Perform the drill three times without using a ball.

Visualize the motion and absorb the physical sensation of doing it properly.

(3) Perform the drill with a ball. This means you will execute only the drill, not a completed swing motion. *DO NOT worry about ball flight! Most people try so hard to hit the ball far, they lose sight of the drill on which they are working.*

(4) Hit with a full swing. Incorporate the motion practiced in the drill into your full swing motion. Concentrate. When you finish, take the time to evaluate your motion. A proper finishing position is just as important as a proper address. The address is a forecast of what will happen — the finish is a summary of what happened. The finish is a history lesson. *It is a lesson you must learn if you are to improve!*

This practice procedure may sound laborious. It does take a little work to hold your focus. However, we promise you will find the whole thing much more enjoyable and rewarding than the old "grip and go." *A "mindless" attitude can help on the golf course, not on the practice range.*



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A Word About Ball Flight

The bad habits you learned in the past may have temporarily helped you hit the ball straighter. They may have ruined your swing, but they gave you the small reward of getting the ball closer to the target. So the bad habit persisted.

Remember that we are asking you to accept some discomfort, some initial awkwardness, even some negative results in ball flight. Don't worry about it. You must simply concentrate on improving the motion, trusting that the changes will eventually produce the results you want.

Imagine how difficult it is for professional golfers to make fundamental swing changes. They rely on their swing to win tournaments, to pay for the hotel, to buy their kids braces. Tinkering with a swing motion that has produced professional success is dangerous. Yet many players have recognized the need for fundamental change, and have paid the price of temporary discomfort for a far greater gain down the road

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