

POSTURE IS THE KEY TO PUTTING

PLANET GOLF **G** PUTTING WITH DR PAUL HURRION

A TIP FROM THE TOUR

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Standing correctly to the ball is the foundation of my putting instruction – get this right and the rest falls easily into place. Your goal at address is to establish a posture that allows your shoulders to rock in a pendulum motion without any need for excess hand action or other compensations which won't hold up under pressure.

The main issue I find with many amateur golfers is that their putter isn't fitted correctly (they have either bought the latest model, borrowed a putter from a friend, been given one as a 'hand me down' or even looked through the second-hand bin to find the secret!). As a result, the golfer fits their posture around the putter, rather than correctly fitting the putter to their posture. Would you play with irons that were too long or too short? Or with the lie angle too upright or too flat?

Custom fitting for putters is lagging considerably behind what is available in the long game. This is something I believe you have to get right in order to improve performance on the greens. In association with GEL Golf I am working to give everyone the chance to address this problem. The fitting process only takes 30 minutes from start to finish...but the results on the greens are there for all to see long afterwards.

In the diagram here I have highlighted the key parameters I look for in the posture of a golfer at the set-up – in this case LPGA tour player Beatriz Recari. If the set-up is not correct, there will be unwelcome compensations within the stroke as a result. I am looking to create a consistent and repeatable putting action that enables you to start the ball on the line that you have read – every time and under pressure!

Looking from the 'Ball to Target Line', the first aim is to have the top of your back flat and horizontal to the ground; it is not a tilt from the hips but more from the mid section of your back. Imagine a DVD case or even a glass of water resting on this top section of your back. As a result your face is flat and looking directly to the ground.

This horizontal position allows your shoulders to rock on a 'square to square' path. If your top of spine angle isn't horizontal, you will start to create an arc in the path of your shoulders. And if you consider that with a medium putt length (say 15ft) the ball stays in contact with the putter face for approximately half a millisecond (0.005 second), you will realise that with an arc in your putter path there is only slight opportunity to get the putter face exactly square at impact.

Please check that an imaginary line can be extended from the shaft of the putter, through your forearms. This will ensure that even the slightest wrist break will not cause the putter face to rotate.

If you are standing the correct distance from the ball, your left hand will be sitting underneath the top of your back. You are looking for the left hand to be directly underneath the pivot point (Cervical Joint No 7) at the base of the neck – or where the label is on the collar of your shirt! (In the example image here, Beatriz could extend her arms a fraction more to be directly under her pivot point, this is a small compromise, however given the fact she likes the feeling of 'connection' with her arms to her rib cage, is one I am willing to allow...)

Finally, your knees should be slightly flexed, with your weight even between heels and toes. As a result, your body is in a very efficient biomechanical position to create the desired pendulum stroke with the posture enabling the path of the putter to be dictated by the shoulders and not the hands! www.getgolf.co.uk



Tilt forward at the top of your spine to create a horizontal line

Arms hang underneath the rib cage

Beatriz putts her best with her eyes a fraction 'outside' the ball to target line – this is where she sees a straight line

Check that a line drawn up through the putter shaft extends up your forearms

Knees flexed, with your weight even over your heels & toes

GEL Putting Mirror – great check for alignment