

HOW TO PUTT LIKE A CHAMPION

TOUR TIPS

HOW TO

Putt Like a Champion

The 5 putting keys Padraig Harrington used to dominate Carnoustie's greens will help you putt like a major winner, too

PADRAIG HARRINGTON'S 2007 BRITISH Open win was a tale of two putts: The six-foot slider he drained on the 72nd hole to save double-bogey, and the knee-knocker that Sergio Garcia missed from nearly the same place minutes later, forcing a playoff. Majors are all about putting under pressure, and Padraig and I have worked hard to build a stroke that eliminates manipulation and promotes trust, no matter what the situation. Here are



the five keystones Padraig uses every time he steps into a putt. They've made him one of the game's elite putters, and they'll help your game, too.

By Paul Hurrion, Ph.D.
with David DeNunzio

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TURN THE PAGE
AND NEVER 3-PUTT AGAIN!

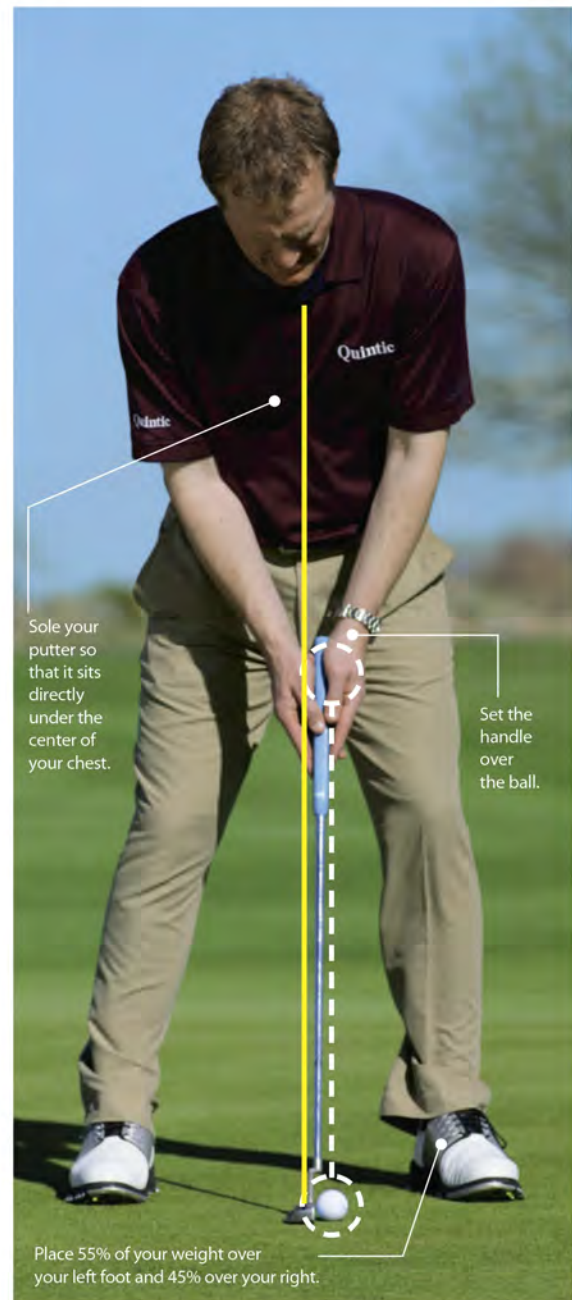
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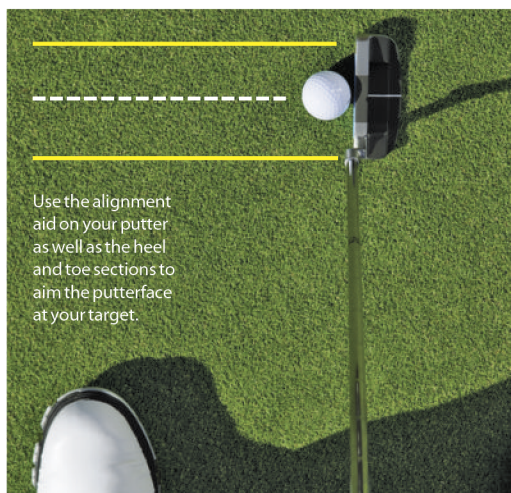
KEYSTONE

1

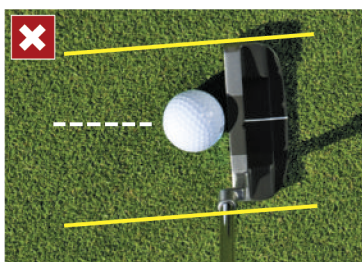
Set Your Foundation

Standing correctly to the ball is the centerpiece of my putting instruction—get this right and the rest of the keystones fall 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 that won't hold up under pressure. Copy the positions below:





Use the alignment aid on your putter as well as the heel and toe sections to aim the putterface at your target.



A closed putterface at address will cause you to miss left or to make stroke adjustments that are difficult to time.



Even a slightly open putterface at address can cause you to miss your intended target to the right by several feet.

KEYSTONE

2 Get Square at Setup

The direction your putterface points at address largely determines where the ball will go, so it's vital that you set your blade perfectly square to the line of the putt. Don't look only at your putter's sweet spot when aiming—use the lines created by the heel and toe to make sure you're pointing it in the right direction.

KEYSTONE

3

Re-create Address at Impact

Just like it did at address, your putterface should make a right angle with your intended line, both 2 inches before and 2 inches after impact. If you're off here you'll put either hook or cut spin on the ball and it will roll offline. This is especially true on slow greens where the thicker grass amplifies the effects of sidespin.



Set your putterface perpendicular to your intended line at address...



...and make sure it's perpendicular just before, during and just after impact.



The loft of your putterface at address...



...cannot be increased more than 1 degree at impact or the ball will "hop" off the putterface with zero forward spin. The ensuing roll is impossible to control.

Correct ball position gives you a slight upstroke and the optimal amount of forward spin.



KEYSTONE

4

Make an Upward Strike

Your ball comes off the face with the perfect amount of forward spin when you swing your blade up at a 1-degree angle through impact. Of course, this is impossible to get exactly right, but if you set up correctly, then your strike will take care

of itself. The key is to play the ball an inch ahead of where your stroke bottoms out—do this, and you'll strike it at the correct angle. And where is this spot? An inch ahead of the spot on the ground that is directly beneath the center of your chest.

KEYSTONE

5

Putt with Rhythm

Great putters stroke the ball with a free-and-easy movement. To copy this rhythm, make a fluid transition from your backstroke to your forward stroke. Don't rush this part of your swing! You want to almost pause your clubface at the end your backswing, then smoothly

accelerate into impact. To further promote better rhythm, match the length of your backstroke to the length of your forward stroke. This motion allows you to hit the putt with the right speed without jerking your hands forward or decelerating through impact.



Match the length of your backstroke with the length of your forward stroke for better tempo and rhythm at any distance.



On a Roll

The five keystones gave Padraig a boost at the '07 British Open, and have since vaulted him into the putting stratosphere.

	2006	2007 British Open	2008*
Putts Per Round	29.04 (73rd)	27.75 (8th)	27.25 (1st)
Putting Average	1.758 (41st)	1.723 (14th)	1.706 (2nd)
1-Putt Percentage	40% (41st)	44.4% (11th)	47.5% (1st)
Birdie Average	3.72 (40th)	3.25 (23rd)	4.40 (1st)

*Through Verizon Heritage
Statistics courtesy PGA Tour ShotLink



THE PERFECT PATRÓN MARGARITA

1 1/2 oz. Patrón Silver or Reposado
3/4 oz. Patrón Citrónge
3 oz. fresh lime juice
Splash of orange juice
Lime wheel for garnish

Method: In a mixing tin full of ice, combine Patrón Silver, Citrónge, lime juice, and orange juice. Shake well, strain, and serve on the rocks. Garnish with a lime wheel.



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The perfect way to enjoy Patrón is responsibly.

SQUARING DEVICE

Most of the putterhead is made from aluminum, giving you a softer feel (good for keystone #5). We pair this light metal with heavy tungsten in the heel and toe sections, creating a higher MOI for less clubhead twisting.

ROLL MODEL

Our special face grooves are set at an angle that imparts the optimal amount of forward roll to your putts (which is the function of keystone #4). Run your thumb down the face and you'll feel the grooves; run your thumb up the face and it feels perfectly smooth.

CONTROL CENTER

We use a shaft designed to go into an iron head—it's heavier and has much less torque than a standard putter shaft. This means the putterhead won't twist as much on mis-hits, helping you lock down keystone #3.



Putting It Together

Great putters like Padraig, to borrow a phrase thrown around Tour practice greens, "really get into their putts." By that I mean they read the green to establish an ultra-specific target and then turn all of their attention to getting the ball to that spot. Compare that to how you approach putting, where your reads are typically of the "I think it goes right" variety. Your goal should be to develop a stroke that you don't have to worry about, so you can devote more time to judging slope and break. Here's how we got to that point with Padraig:

Find a straight 8-foot putt on the practice putting green and...

1. Line up your putterface so that it points straight at the hole. Once you can do that consistently...
2. Make the putt. Once you can do that...
3. See how consistently you can roll the ball into the cup. From eight feet you should be able to make 10 in a row. Once you get to that point...
4. Try the putt from 4 feet and 16 feet. Your tempo stays the same—only the length of your stroke should change.

This system makes any putt a straight 8-footer, hit with either a longer or shorter stroke. The only variable is your read, and with a reliable stroke, you can give that part of your putting game the attention it deserves.

A unique aiming line tells you when you have the putter pointed in the right direction when your eyes are in the right position, satisfying two keystones (#1 and #2) at the same time.



THE PERFECT PATRÓN SILVER ON THE ROCKS

2 oz. Patrón Silver
Ice
Lime slice

Method: Pour over ice in rocks glass.
Garnish with a lime slice. Enjoy.



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