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Darrell...

I just purchased your book and reveled in your solving a problem which even effects those of us who use the simpler "sidesaddle" technique ... Short putts can still be problematic so I will adopt and recommend to my customers "Target Putting" for "at least" short putts as I am confident it is the very best solution.

Thank you for the info.

Regards,

Karl Higham

~the Putt Guru

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Golf Tips from Target Putting

Your Right Hand, Man

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

The vast majority of all golfers have a problem with their right hand taking over the swing. They are told the right hand is where

the power comes from, and who doesn't want maximum power?

The problem with this is that no one has ever said exactly how the right hand works in the swing and how to use it to generate that power without overpowering the left hand and causing the whole swing to break down.

Jack Nicklaus used to say that for the purposes of the golf swing you could cut off your right thumb and forefinger. But take a look at Vijay Singh just after impact and you will see that his entire right hand is off the club except for his thumb and forefinger.

You must hit with the right hand to get power, but the only part of the hand that you should feel is the underside of the knuckle of the right index finger. In other words, the part of the right hand that is entirely below the left hand on the shaft.

As it turns out, Jack Nicklaus was wrong. The right thumb and forefinger are the only parts of the right hand that you should be using to generate power.

Here's the test. Get into your impact position and hold it. Now move the club through the impact position using only your right index finger knuckle. You will notice the left hand turns thru without resistance.

Now try it again, but this time try to move the club through the impact area with your entire right hand. You will feel some significant resistance to the turning of the left hand.

That resistance slows the clubhead, prevents it from squaring up, and causes the left wrist to break down instead of correctly turning through the impact zone. All of these things lead to the weak slices and wild pull hooks that plague the average golfer.

Hit with the right hand, to be sure. But only hit with the part of it that is totally below the left hand on the shaft. The knuckle of the right index finger.

Give this a try and you will find yourself hitting it farther and straighter than you ever imagined.

The Quiet Body

By Darell Mckissick

I see many players try to get maximum power by allowing maximum body movement. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that

way.

I recall reading a tip book by Billy Casper many years ago. One of the many tips went something like this:

The man who stands still will hit the ball far and true.

It was as true then as it is now. Work hard on keeping your body still. You should really feel as though you are only swinging your arms. The body will follow naturally.

Next time you are out on the course and having a hard time hitting that ball, just think about keeping your body still while swinging your arms. You too will hit the ball far and true.

You're Not On TV

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

I wish I had a quarter for every time I've heard that the sand shot is the easiest shot in golf. Or better than that, a nickel for every time I have seen the average golfer prove that statement false.

Sure, if your a professional that practices the shot for hours it does become relatively easy. Add to that the fact that every bunker they hit into is in perfect condition with only the best grades of sand and a bunker is not really a hazard at all.

Every time I play with a mid to high handicap player and they hit into a bunker they immediately pull out the sand wedge and jump in. Often, this is not their best option. I guess after watching the pros on TV they think that must be the only way to play it.

When was the last time you saw a professional on the tour chip out of a bunker? My guess would be never. But for the average player it is often much easier to chip it out than it is to blast.

Especially on longer shots with a lot of green to work with and not much lip to get over, why not take out you eight iron or nine iron and just hit a chip shot? Just lightly sweep the ball off the sand and let it roll to the hole. It's not as impressive as blasting out all that sand, but you will end up a lot closer to the hole. Isn't that the point?

Another thing that I see a lot of is hitting drivers off of the tee on really short par 4's. Sure, the pros will have a rip at a green 330 yards out, but they also have a chance to hit it.

On many short par 4's the driver will hit it just far enough to get you in deep trouble, whereas a three wood or an iron has a much better chance of putting you in the fairway with an easy shot to the green.

The moral of these stories is this: you are not playing on TV and you can't do what the pros do. If you could you would be on TV.

It is always better to say you shot a 78 than to say you shot an 81 but it would have been better if you had done this or that.

If you want to score your best, play your game at your level. Take the easiest shot with the best chance of success rather than trying to impress the gallery that only consist of your three partners who want to beat you.

I would bet at the end of the day, if you beat them by a couple of shots they won't pick on you for chipping out of that bunker or hitting an iron off the tee of that 300 yard par four. They would probably rather watch you hit that explosion shot over the green or leave it in the bunker so they could beat you.

Next time your are in one of those situations, think about this little golf tip. When you have an opportunity to waste shots, you also have an opportunity to save them. And remember, your not on TV, you're just a guy (or gal) out to shoot the best number you can shoot on that day.

The PRE-Preshot Routine

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Most golfers who have seriously thought of improving have come to realize the importance of the pre shot routine. You can't be consistent without one.

But it is just as critical that you have fully considered everything about the shot before you start your pre shot routine. Do you have the right club? Are you playing the right shot? Can you feel the swing you need to make?

How many times can you remember hitting a shot and immediately realizing that it was a dumb shot to hit? Or maybe you just hit it before you were fully committed and failed to execute.

I tell students to establish a pre pre shot routine, during which they fully consider the shot options in an organized manner. Doing this

will help you separate the planning and execution of the chosen shot.

It creates a stronger commitment to the choice of shot because you have already considered the other possibilities before you stand over the ball, and not during your pre shot routine, when you need to be committed.

Develop a routine for your shot selection and you will become consistent about your thought processes. You will avoid the mid round mental lapses that affect many players.

The pre shot routine for your swing and planning your shot are two different things, and should be thought of and practiced accordingly.

Finding Your Putting Feel

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Anyone who plays golf knows that putting touch is different every day. Some days you seem to hit everything a little too hard, while others you are always short. Then there are the rare days when every putt is hit the correct speed.

If you play different courses it can really be a problem adjusting to the different speeds of the greens.

I have found the best way to find your daily touch is to adjust your grip pressure on the putter. While it is best to do this on the putting green while warming up, it is also a good way to make an adjustment while you are playing if you find yourself hitting all of your putts too short or too long.

If you are leaving all of your putts short, you may find that an increase in your grip pressure does the trick. If you are hitting them too hard, loosen up the pressure a bit.

Once you find the pressure that is allowing you to hit your putts the right speed, keep it consistent throughout the day.

Most three putts are caused by leaving the ball way short of or well past the hole. Once you get your distance down for the day you are well on your way to eliminating the wasteful three putts from your score.

Aim for the Trees?

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Many times when standing on the tee it is difficult to pick an aim line. This is especially true with doglegs, downhill holes and those holes where you can't see the landing area.

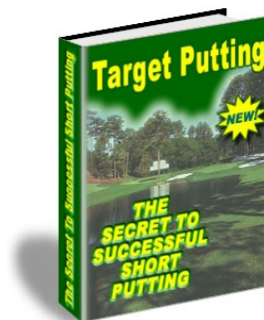
To overcome this, and get your attention off the ground, pick a concrete object on the horizon to aim at. It can be a tree, a house, or anything else that stands out in the distance.

This gives you a good aim line regardless of the situation. Once you have that object identified, it is easy to pick your intermediate target when you are standing directly on the line behind the ball. All that is left is to line up to it and go.

It doesn't matter how straight you hit the ball if you are not lined up correctly. Often the tees are lined up to put you in the woods. Never trust them or use them for your alignment. Next time you get to that hole you never seem to hit the fairway on, think about this little tip and aim for the trees.

Get your copy of Target Putting today at

<http://www.targetputting.com>



Really Short Putting

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Now that old man winter is here, how do you get to improve your score without suffering through a cold, windy practice?

You don't have too. If you follow the tip below and practice just 30 minutes a week, at your convenience, I guarantee you will be a much better short putter when spring arrives, and your scores will reflect it from the very first round.

Most people with putting problems only experience them when they are close to the hole. As Target Putting explains, this is for the most part a result of the impact reflex. So logically, this reflex must only take over when we approach our minimum stroke speed. The point when the body controls the entire stroke rather than the momentum of the clubhead.

If you want to be a great short putter, you should start by learning to control the ball on the shortest of putts. By that I mean the distance you actually hit the ball.

How good are you at hitting a putt exactly twelve inches? Probably not very good. You have never tried to hit the ball that far.

Take some of the indoors time you have this winter and practice hitting the ball very short distances with your putter on a regular putting matt. Try six inches, a foot, and everything in between.

Just do it for a few minutes a day. Five or ten should be plenty.

What this does is effectively lower what your body considers your minimum stroke. It will gradually become accustomed to handling the task of hitting a ball a very short distance. Your two foot putts will no longer be your minimum stroke. If you are not a target putter, that will help you minimize the impact reflex and its effect on your stroke.

Even if you are a target putter and don't have to worry about the impact reflex, you will be better able to control the distances on your short putts if you have a bigger distance gap between the shortest putt you can hit and the one you have to make.

In all of putting, speed is king. You should have full control over the ball whether you need to hit it six inches or sixty feet. The

better you are at hitting the ball a foot when you need to, the more three footers you will make.

Unlock Your True Power

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Almost every golfer I see, and I see a lot of people playing and hitting range balls, reach for the ball with their shoulders and arms at address. Sounds reasonable, after all you have to use them both to hit the ball. But it's not.

The biggest culprit is the right shoulder because the right arm has to reach a little farther to grip the club. Most players also reach with the left shoulder, but to a lesser degree.

What happens when you reach out with your shoulders is that your pectoral muscles contract. This creates a tension throughout your upper body that resists your swing, not only going back but going through.

So much is written about light grip pressure to reduce the tension in your swing, but the forearms are not the problem. The truth is, you can grip it just about as tight as you want to within reason.

What is really important is that your upper body muscles be relaxed. If you reach for the ball with your shoulders this can't happen because reaching contracts the pectorals, which cause many other muscles to follow.

Here is what you do to over come this problem. Place your feet in your normal stance and stand erect, with your arms hanging relaxed at your side and touching the outside of your thighs. In this position your pectoral muscles are naturally relaxed. Note how it feels.

Take your club and grip it in either hand and assume your complete address position, taking care not to let your pectoral muscles contract even the slightest amount. Their purpose is to pull your shoulders forward so you must make sure your shoulders stay in the same position they were while you were standing relaxed.

I grant you, it will feel very strange at first. But very relaxed. You will have to stand a little closer to the ball than you are used to to make up for the lack of shoulder reach.

If you move the shoulders at all from the relaxed standing position

described earlier the pectoral muscles will contract. That is, after all, their job. Keep the pectoral muscles relaxed at address and you will unleash the power you have been wasting fighting against them.

Now if you have a big belly to reach around you may not be able to avoid some pectoral contraction. You may have to live your limitations until you decide to get healthy again.

Give this a try. You may just amaze yourself at how far you can hit the ball once you stop fighting contracted pectoral muscles.

The "Two Piece" Takeaway

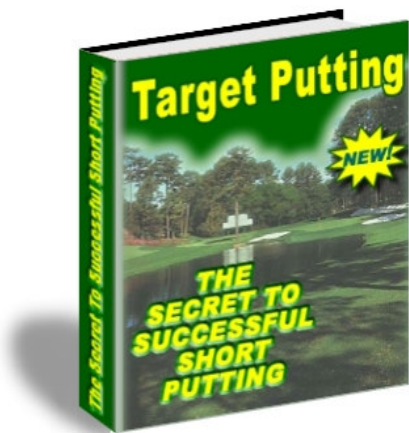
By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Almost everyone who plays golf has heard of the One Piece Takeaway. That is, the hands, arms and clubhead all starting back at the same time.

For most people, this thought leads them to take the club back without rotation in the left forearm. The result is anything from coming over the top to a power robbing blocking action at impact. In fact, most people seem to block on the back swing as well by trying to keep the club face square.

In reality, you should look at the takeaway as a two piece movement, although both parts are done at the same time. The first part is the swinging of the arms back away from the ball. The second part is the rotation of the left forearm.

Almost every player I see fails to rotate on the way back. Work on that rotation as a separate part of the takeaway and you will improve your ball striking very quickly.



You can be a great putter. Prove it to yourself.

<http://www.targetputting.com>

Master One Distance

By Darell Mckissick

[TargetPutting.com](http://www.TargetPutting.com)

When the pros have to lay up, they usually have a distance in mind for their next shot. They know exactly how far they hit all of their clubs, but especially their favorite wedge.

The average golfer is far different. Not only do they hit their favorite wedge a variety of distances with seemingly the same swing, but they seldom attempt to leave the ball a specific distance from the hole when laying up on par 5s.

For most, it's just a matter of trying to get as close as possible to the green. Often this lead into trouble.

One of the leading amateur players in my city is also one of the shortest hitters. He rarely drives the ball more than 250 yards even with a tailwind. However, he has mastered the 100 yard shot and often gets up and down from that distance.

When it is time for him to lay up, his target is the 100 yard marker. So is mine. Adjust that for pin position, of course.

So if want to really improve your scoring, learn and master the 100 yard shot. Rather than working on your driver, hit your favorite wedge shooting for 100 yards each time.

To get a real feel for what 100 yards is, drop a ball or two on the 100 yard marker next time you are out on the course just hitting it around.

When you are 275 yards out on a par 5, leave that three wood in the bag and hit your 175 yard club trying to leave the ball at that magic number.

The same is true on short par 4s. If you are playing a hole that is 310 yards you only need to hit the ball 210 yards to leave your magic number. Leave the driver in the bag and take your long iron or hybrid.

The more you are able to do this, the better you get at leaving the ball at 100 yards and the better you will get at hitting it from 100 yards.

You will also find yourself avoiding a lot of the trouble that you have been hitting into. Getting the ball as close to the green as possible is not always the best strategy.

Master the 100 yard shot, and laying up to that distance. Before you know it you will find yourself at the 100 yard marker on a lot of holes with a confidence in the shot you never felt with any other shot.

You will also notice something else...smaller numbers on your scorecard.

A Thought About Swing Thoughts

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

What is a golf tip, anyway, but something to think about while you are swinging? A swing thought.

Whether you get a lesson from your local pro or read an article in a golf magazine or on a website like this one, all you really get is a swing thought to work with.

The problem I have with giving anybody a swing thought is this: If you think about doing something particular in your swing it is usually exaggerated in the swing when you do it. That exaggeration tends to cause other problems if it is done for too long.

Still, that is fine for practice or during a lesson when your goal is

to improve a single aspect of your swing and you will only be hitting a few shots with the thought. But what about when you play for real, when your goal is to swing consistently all day and shoot a good score?

When you are playing a round that counts for score, you need a different type of swing thought than when you practice. And it is better if you can find one or two that work for you every day.

I tell people to find a swing thought that will keep their mind from influencing the physical aspects of the swing in any way so they can just let it happen.

Try this some time. As you address the ball and look at it just before you swing, let the only thought on your mind be how much you are focused on the ball. Let nothing enter your mind but the ball. Think to yourself, "boy, I sure am focused on the ball".

The mind should be on something outside of your body or else it will influence the swing, which is why thinking about your focus on the ball seems to work well. The ball is the only element of the shot you can see that doesn't have to move as a part of the hitting process.

If this thought doesn't work for you, find something else, but make sure it does not focus on any single physical aspect of the swing. It may be the overall rhythm of the swing, swinging back and forward at the same speed, or something like that. Just avoid swing thoughts that focus on one particular part of the swing when you are out on the course. At best they will only work for a few shots until they throw off some other part of your swing.

Two Club Chipping

By Darell Mckissick

Thanks to the skill displayed on television every week, many average players are finding themselves wasting a ton of strokes around the greens by chipping with the wrong club.

Sure, those guys on the tube are chipping everything with their 60 degree wedge. But they are also chipping out of high rough on to some very fast greens.

For the rest of us who play on slower greens with almost nonexistent rough, we need to learn to chip with less lofted clubs.

I suggest that you use only two clubs for chipping. Of course you will want to use your most lofted wedge as one. For most this should be a 56 degree sand wedge. Most players should leave the 60 degree out of the bag all together, but that is your choice.

Leave your 60 at home the next couple of times you play to see how much you really need it. I suspect you will save yourself a couple of shots.

You should also learn to chip with your 8 iron for those shots that don't require a lot of air time or spin. You will find it a lot easier to control the overall distance of the shot.

The big secrets to controlling the distance on a chip shot with a less lofted club is to control the trajectory and the spin. The trajectory control will come from your own experience with the club.

The spin, however, is controlled by the angle the clubhead approaches the ball from. A steeper approach will put more spin on the ball. Spin that can only throw the ball off line when it lands on the green and unpredictably affect the speed at which it rolls.

When chipping from low cut grass, the club should pass through the hitting area traveling level to the ground. No descending blow is required or desired. Simply sweep the ball off the turf.

On grass that is above half the ball, you will need a slightly descending blow to avoid hitting the grass first and chunking the shot.

On short shots from rough the lofted club is usually a good choice, but on longer shots with more green to work with the less lofted choice is preferable.

It is much easier to hit a target ten feet in front of you with an 8 iron and watch the ball roll than it is to hit a spot 15 yards away with a 60 degree wedge while trying to predict the roll.

Jack, Tiger, and YOU

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Watch Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods on TV and you will see one thing they do on EVERY single shot they hit. Before you read any further, do you know what that is?

You will never see Tiger Woods hit a shot without seeing his eyes working back and forth between the ball and his intermediate target.

He always picks out that spot in front of the ball by several feet and directly on his target line. He works on lining himself up based solely on that spot, the actual target is secondary until he is comfortable with his alignment in relation to his intermediate target.

You should do the same, and do it on EVERY single shot.

Learn to line up with an intermediate target and you will improve the consistency of your shot making. It's that simple.

Swinging the Shoulders

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

One of the biggest problems I see in the swing of the average player is dropping their right shoulder at impact. Once the shoulders have returned to square on the downswing, they stop turning.

The swing does not stop at impact. The shoulders must continue turning well past the ball.

For a player's right shoulder to drop at impact they must actually stop turning the shoulders before impact. That's why the tour pros hit it 300 yards and you only hit it 220. They continue turning their shoulders past impact.

As you pick up the clubs for a new year, try practicing with the following thought. Use it for at least one full bucket of balls and it will definitely improve your swing through the golf ball.

As you stand over the ball to start your swing, think about swinging your left shoulder back over your right foot. Begin your swing by doing just that.

As you approach the top of your swing, shift your thought to swinging your right shoulder back over your left foot.

By doing this, at impact you will not even be close to the end of your swing thought. You will be consciously swinging past the ball, not to the impact point itself.

You will improve your weight shift, making things much easier on your back. You should also hit the ball farther because you will be swinging through it instead of to it.

Give it a try and see what it does for you.

Stick With What You're Working On

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

Now that golfing season is in full swing, you need to know how to improve your full swing.

Quite often I hear people saying they are working on their swing. Most people don't play or practice enough to groove their swings so I wonder what it is they are working on.

In fact, most people don't work on whatever it is they say they are working on long enough to show any improvement because of it. When Tiger Woods, and more recently Sergio Garcia made their swing changes it took a year or more for them to get the benefits. But they stuck with it and became better players.

For the average golfer it is the norm to go from swing thought to swing thought. Most of them work well for a shot, possibly even a round. Then the thought no longer works and the player moves on to the next one that does.

Each time the player finds a new swing thought that works, they tend to say they are working on the part of the swing the thought pertains to. It may be using the hands or swinging the arms. Whatever thought seems to work best.

If you want to improve your swing this year, you must first start by identifying the weakness you wish to correct. It may be your address position or your takeaway. Anything that you feel needs improvement.

Whatever it is you decide to work on, consider it a year long job. Start working on it now and don't quit until you hang up your clubs for the winter. By years end, any changes you have been working on will be pretty much natural when you pick up the clubs again in the spring.

Don't try to change your setup, grip, and takeaway all at the same time. Work on only one thing, but choose the one aspect of your swing you think will help you most if changed.

Then **STICK WITH IT ALL YEAR** even if you seem to be going backwards. Keep working on it every time you hit balls.

Move Your Chipping Circle

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

How many times have you been told to chip to a three foot circle around the hole? I have heard it a million times. I have also had a lot of tricky downhill three footers because I chipped it to the wrong side of the circle.

I don't know about you, but I would rather have an uphill five footer than a curling downhill three footer.

You are obviously not going to chip in many balls, especially if you are a weekend player. So make things easier on yourself by chipping to give yourself an uphill putt rather than trying to hole the chip shot.

Move that circle they keep telling you about. Chip to a three foot circle below the hole with the idea of leaving yourself an easy putt. You may even hit it a little offline and hole it out anyway.

And what about those long downhill putts? Isn't it a lot better to go five feet past the hole leaving an uphill putt than to leave it three feet short and still have a downhill nightmare to contend with?

Keep these thoughts in mind the next time you play, and by leaving yourself easier short putts you will find that you make a lot more of them with a lot less stress.

The 75% Rule

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

When those "what will Phil do next" commercials came out, who would have thought the answer would have been to become a great shot maker? But that's exactly what he has done.

No longer does Phil just stand up and swing hard. He finally learned that it is more important to control the ball than it is to bomb it. The result is we now get to call Phil Mickelson the

Masters Champion.

Now, what you should do is learn a little from Phil. You will see him hitting a lot of 3/4 shots without the full around follow through that you see from most all the younger players on every shot.

The main idea is to control your distance and direction, and the only way us mere mortal amateurs can do that is to stop trying to hit our mid and short irons maximum distance.

If you can hit your 9 iron 140 yards 2 out of 10 times, that is not your club from that distance. You can probably hit it that far 10 out of 10 times with your 7 iron using a 3/4 swing.

Always select a club that will make you ask yourself "How much do I need to take off of this?" , at least from 150 yards in. From there, use the 75% Rule. Make a 3/4 back swing and follow through, focusing on controlling the direction and distance of the shot.

You will find yourself making consistently solid contact with the 3/4 swing and probably start hitting the ball farther with your controlled swing than with the full rip.

So now that he's taught us all a little about the finer aspects of playing the game, as opposed to just hitting the ball as hard as you can, the only question left is "What will Phil do next?"

You can be sure that winning a few more majors is a good possibility.

Chipping and Pitching Practice

By Darell Mckissick
TargetPutting.com

The pros hit chip shots and pitches every day for hours on end as a major part of their practice. They know that chipping and pitching is what pays the bills. And it shows when they appear on your TV screen every weekend.

Most golfers are truly weekend golfers. That is, they play only on weekends. That means they never do any golf practice during the week. And it shows on their scorecards every weekend.

Yet nearly every one of those players would like to shoot better when they do play. Most will tell you they can never get to the golf

course or range to practice during the week, so they don't practice at all.

Those same golfers have some daylight time after work, they just don't think of practicing golf. After all, there is no green to putt on and even a short iron shot is out of the question for most. It's just not real golf to them.

To those people, I promise you will save at least three strokes a round if you would spend just ten minutes a day pitching and chipping golf balls in the yard. Even one day would help a lot, but if you set aside that ten minutes of time every day you would still be spending less than an hour a week.

I have a five foot diameter kiddie pool that I use as a target and it works great. I recommend you get one. They are about \$6 at Walmart.

There is no great secret practice method I can tell you about that would work better than just throwing balls around and pitching them into the pool. Hit shots from 5 to 25 yards or so. Longer if you have the room.

Hit the balls from random distances instead of hitting them all from one place. Chipping and pitching the ball is mostly feel, and moving around will give you the feel for various distances instead of locking yourself into a single shot.

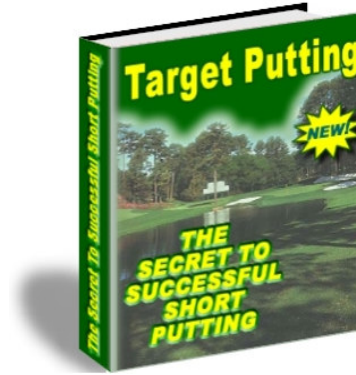
It is OK to use different clubs as well, but I would suggest that you find a "favorite" that you can use for most pitch shots. I spend a lot of time using my 56 degree R90 sand wedge, both on the course and while practicing in the yard.

Work on controlling the trajectory as well as the distance the ball will carry. Hit some high flop shots, hit some low skippers, and hit some in between. Any shot you can imagine you would ever need to hit on the course is a good one to practice.

Hit shots how they lie. Chances are the grass in your yard is much higher and thicker than the grass on your course, but you will be amazed at how easy it becomes to hit pitch shots out of the rough. If you are really lucky and throw yourself a bunch of perfect lies, step on the ball or push it down in the grass.

If you spend a few minutes a day at home learning how to hit out of bad lies in your yard, the bad ones on the course will probably seem quite easy to you. You will lose your fear of bad lies and be able to hit from them with confidence. And your good lies will be a piece of cake.

So take just ten minutes a day and hit some pitches. Just an hour a week could mean the difference between an 85 and a 79. But if you are happy with your average score, you can always watch TV instead.



You can learn the secret today at

<http://www.targetputting.com>