



GET THE FLIP OUT!

Two drills to solve this chipping fault
By Debbie Doniger



+ EVER WONDER WHY the majority of your chips never reach the hole? It's most likely because you're trying to help the ball in the air instead of hitting slightly down on it. The instinct to lift the ball can cause you to flip your wrists at impact, like a scooping motion. When that happens, the ball rolls up the clubface adding loft to the shot, reducing spin and inevitably keeping the ball from reaching its destination.

To improve your distance control and hit solid chips, you need to move the club with your body's pivot—not your hands. Pivoting allows you to strike down on the ball with a firm lead wrist and the shaft leaning toward the target. When your hips, chest and shoulders stop rotating, your hands take over and you get that flippy, scooping motion that ruins the shot. The feeling you want to have when chipping is that your upper and lower body are pivoting slightly toward the target through impact (*left*). It's the same motion you would make if you were rolling a ball to a target with your dominant hand.

Here are two drills to help you learn how to pivot and get rid of that flip for good. First, take your lead hand and grasp the club midway up the shaft. Then slide the grip under your lead armpit so that the shaft rests

against the inside of your forearm (*bottom, left*). From this position, pivot your body back and through, maintaining contact between the shaft and your forearm. As long as you maintain that connection when you chip, your hands and arms can't take over the swing and make you flick at the ball.

Another way to improve your pivot is to grab the face of a wedge with your trail hand, and angle the shaft so the grip end is lodged between the side of your torso and your lead arm's bicep (*bottom, right*). The idea is to pretend your trail palm is the clubface, and you want to move it toward your target, maintaining the connection between your lead arm and rib cage. As long as that shaft stays put, you have to pivot your body toward the target to complete the proper chipping motion.

I love these two drills because you can practice them anywhere, even while you're watching the pros hit amazing chip shots on TV. Then when it's your time on the course, remember the feel and motion they create and you'll hit these shots close more often.

—WITH DAVE ALLEN

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DITCH YOUR LOFTY WEDGES

Adding loft to a club that already has 56 or 60 degrees of it is not a good strategy for the average golfer. You should defer to a less-lofted gap or pitching wedge when chipping. This way, if you mis-hit the ball slightly, you'll still get a fair amount of rollout, and the ball could wind up near the hole. It's also easier to predict the amount of carry and roll you'll get, rather than trying to fly the ball most of the way to the hole.

