

The 5 shots around the green every golfer should know.

The short game makes up the majority of shots in our overall score. Learning to play 5 different shots around the green will give you the ability to get up and down from just about any situation. Playing the most efficient shot when required should yield the most consistent results. The following shots can be played with a 7 iron down to a 60 degree Lob Wedge; they will all just fly and roll different distances and have a different amount of backspin.

Firstly, learning the 5 shots in order will ensure we know how to impact the ball properly. A downward blow on the back of the ball ensures we compress the ball on the sweet spot of the clubface. Once that is achieved and then maintained for each of the shots, we should be able to perform all of the shots with consistency.

1. The Bump and Run Shot

A shot which flies low, carries less than 3 metres and has little backspin on the green is the most useful shot when close to the greens edge. The ball carries the uneven ground and lands on the putting surface rolling.

The Set Up – With a narrow stance and the front foot turned out, the ball is positioned toward the rear of your stance. Your weight and hands forwards so the club is de-lofted. You should feel like your head, hands and weight are directly over your front foot.

The Swing – Maintaining the angle of your wrists and keeping your body and head nice and still, draw the club back and hit down on the back of the ball. The hands always stay well ahead of the clubhead. It will not require much power to get the ball rolling all the way to the pin.



1. Set Up

2. Backswing

3. Impact

4. Finish

When to use – When you are within 3 metres of greens edge when there is a fair distance between you and the hole. If putting from off the green the ball can be affected by the longer grass and uneven ground so hitting a low shot which lands just on the green and then rolling can be much more effective.

2. The Carry and Run Shot

A shot which flies higher and longer than the previous shot but still has little backspin and will roll when it lands on the putting surface.

The Set Up – With a narrow stance and the front foot turned out, the ball is positioned toward the front of your stance. The weight and hands forwards but now the club has more loft than the previous shot.

The Swing – Like the last shot, maintain the angle of your wrists and keep your body and head nice and still, draw the club back and hit down on the back of the ball. The hands always stay well ahead of the clubhead. The ball will now take off higher than the previous shot but still roll.



1. Set Up

2. Backswing

3. Impact

4. Finish

When to use – When you are 3 – 10 metres from the greens edge and when there is a lot of green to work with. This is basically the same as the previous shot but with a forwards ball position the ball will fly higher and a little further to carry the longer grass but then still roll up the length of the green.

3. The Pitch

A shot which has a mid-trajectory but will have a moderate amount of backspin when it hits the green.

The Set Up – The stance is now a little wider than the previous two shots and the front foot is still turned out, the ball is positioned toward the middle of your stance. The weight and hands forwards a little to ensure a downward hit on the back of the ball.

The Swing – Instead of maintaining the angle of your wrists like the first two shots, we now cock and roll the wrists so the clubhead travels a little further around the swing arc. Still keeping our body and head nice and still, hit down on the back of the ball. As the wrists uncock through impact you will impart more backspin on the ball as long as you hit down. The result should be a flighted shot with spin.



1. Set Up

2. Backswing

3. Impact

4. Finish

When to use – With a lofted club, you can use this with a small swing from close range to produce a shot which checks up or from further out with a bigger swing to achieve some distance which should also check up.

4. The Lob Shot

A shot which flies high and short and will have a fair degree of spin.

The Set Up – The ball is positioned toward the front of your stance. The weight is forwards a little but the hands will be central. The shaft will be vertical, not leaning forwards. The club face can be square or open but aiming left if the face is open.

The Swing – For this shot we are thrusting the clubhead well past our hands through impact and making sure the clubface points toward the sky on the follow through. The idea is to use the bounce of the club on this shot. We need to try and thrust the back edge of the bottom of the club down into the ground under the ball. Remember: As long as you are hitting down to a point under the ball, you will not blade this shot across the green.



1. Set Up

2. Backswing

3. Impact

4. Finish

When to use – I only ever use this when the only way is up and I have to stop the ball fairly quickly. Over bunkers or mounds close to the green.

5. The Delicate Shot

A shot which comes off the face very soft and with maximum spin. Not for the feint hearted it is quite a difficult shot but one that can get you out of a very tight situation.

The Set Up – The set up for this shot is similar to the Lob Shot. The ball is played forwards but this shot does require an open face. The shaft is kept vertical so there is maximum amount of loft.

The Swing – To execute this shot we play with “dead arms”. If I take my backswing and then let the hands drop as if I had “dead arms” the clubhead would hit the group a foot behind the ball, there is no arm thrust at all. We simply now turn the body and feel like we are dragging the clubhead through the ball while my arms just drop. The hands will end up leading the clubhead thus the feeling of dragging the clubhead. The clubface needs to remain open through impact and the clubhead will not follow through much at all. If executed correctly, the result will be a mid trajectory ball flight that stops pretty quickly.



1. Set Up

2. Backswing

3. Impact

4. Finish

When to use – If you have short sided yourself and have very little green to work with this shot can work wonders. The downside is however that it takes a lot of practice and precision to get it right.

SUMMARY

We can use these shots as a good basis for our short game. With each of the 5 shots, we can still vary things like club, ball position, length of swing and loft to achieve the exact result required for the shot at hand.

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