

# PERFECT PITCHING

## IT'S IN THE SET-UP!

**What is a pitch shot? A pitch shot is a golf shot that generally occurs from a distance of around 10m-50m. This shot is not to be mistaken with a chip shot which occurs closer to the green generally within 5m or less. Although the goal of getting the ball down in two is the same for both shots the set-up and technique differs slightly between the two shots.**

**A**ll professional golfers dedicate a high percentage of their practice time to focusing on this area as they expect to get the ball down in two almost every time once they are inside 50m.

With the US Open & British Open played on tight and narrow courses many of the PGA Tours top players will know if they want good results in these tournaments this is an area of their game that needs to be strong.

Below are a few set-up tips to focus on next time you are working on your pitching at the driving range. Great pitches of the ball all possess one thing in common, they all have great set-ups.

### WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION:

55-60% of your weight on your front leg so you get the feeling as if you're setting up more 'on top of the ball'. Incorrect weight distribution can make getting solid contact and a correct swing path difficult to achieve.

### CLUB POSITION:

In-line with the ball, slightly forward of centre. With the correct swing path this encourages a more downward attack on the golf ball and helps ensure you achieve clean contact without hitting the ball to 'fat' or 'grounded'.

### BALL POSITION:

Middle or slightly back of the stance depending on your desired trajectory. If you wish to play a pitch shot with a lower ball flight you can play the ball slightly back from the middle of your stance. This shot is often preferred if you are playing a pitch into the wind or you would like your pitch to bounce and run a little more.

### STANCE:

Slightly open to the target and no wider than shoulder width apart.



This is a set-up common with golfers who are having problems pitching the ball in the air. Often golfers try to set-up with their weight more on their back leg to try and assist or 'scoop' the ball up into the air. To get a golf ball to go in the air a golfer must hit down on the ball in order for it to fly up.



This is a set-up position that seems to be exaggerated normally among golfers who are trying to generate as much spin as possible on the ball. This picture illustrates a set-up with too much weight on the front leg, hands too far in front of the ball resulting in the club decreasing in loft and the ball position too far back in the stance. This set-up position will result in an angle of attack on the ball which is much too steep and often cause the player to chop down and hit the ball fat or grounded.

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## PITCHING DO'S & DON'TS

### DO'S:

- Maintain your posture throughout your pitch shot. Don't lift your upper body up with the intention of scooping the ball up into the air. The result of this will be contact that is 'thin' or 'topping'.
- Focus on the length of your swing, however far back you intend to swing the club make sure your follow through is to the same length. Don't take a ¾ length backswing and then stop once you have made impact with the ball. Controlling the length of your swing will lead to improved distance control.

### DON'TS

- Generate too much weight transfer, the purpose of transferring weight is to create power. You are only trying to hit a shot 50m or less so you want to try and keep your body as stable as possible over the ball in order to create good contact.
- Let your hands get too close to your body at set-up. Ensure that you have adequate room between your hands & body, having your hands too close will result in your body needing to move during your swing to create more room. With the unnecessary body movement this will then result in inconsistent ball contact.