

THE FORE DO'S OF THE GOLF GAME

What is with all the excitement around taking a tiny white ball, following it around for several hours to see how many times it takes you to knock it into a spec of a hole. If that's not enough you have to repeat it 18 more times! Ask a golfer and they will tell you discipline, control, solitude, achievement, socializing, mastering precision, athleticism, gratification and for the majority golf is therapeutic. You see, the game of golf can be played by anyone who can walk and hold a club. It brings to each individual a multitude of pleasures and benefits. You don't have to understand why you play the game. You just play it. When you are in the mode of 'play' you can be anyone you want. You are no longer the executive with a deadline, a single mom, the disgruntled employee, or angry teenager. You can get lost for hours under a blanket of warm sun, engulfed in a serene landscape and the smell of fresh cut grass. You choose your company and your conversation. Your mood is whatever you want it to be. If you are one of those golfers who comes off of the course more frustrated than elated then maybe these tips will help you enjoy the game and improve your golf score.

Weight loss

If you are carrying an extra 10 pounds or more, especially in the mid drift your game is suffering. If you can drop even half of your unnecessary pounds, you will improve your score! Not only will a sleeker waistline assist you in your ability to rotate your torso, improving your swing, you will also relieve your lower back and hips of excessive pressure and the needless back and hip pain that comes with it.

Strength

You only have to see the results the pros are attaining due in part to the condition of their bodies. Tiger Woods and David Duval's frequency at the top of the PGA tournaments is no accident. What you may not realize is that it doesn't really take a lot of time to make gains from strength conditioning that will impact your game. 20 minutes of isolated exercises, three times a week can improve your game. These exercises can be done in front of the T.V. while you pick up stroke tips from the golf channel. In fact, time shared between exercise and range practice has reportedly improved golf scores and decreased the occurrences of injuries, allowing golfers to experience lower levels of frustration and greater enjoyment.

Flexibility

Lower back, hip and shoulder flexibility are necessary for a proper swing. The only way to become flexible in these areas is to consistently stretch these joints. Ten minutes every time you hit the course or the range as part of your warm up routine will do wonders for your swing and hopefully your score! Stretching is even more important for those of you who spend much of your day sedentary. Golf is one of the only sports that require torso rotation with the feet anchored. The stress on the lower back is thus magnified. When you work on flexibility you reduce the stress load to the lower back on swing rotation.

Posture

This one thing will do wonders for your game and thus your spirit. Learn what it should look like and feel like and then work on strengthening the muscles that will help keep you in good posture throughout your swing.

It is never too late in the season to work on conditioning yourself for the game. Every level of player can meet with reward by doing so. Part of the commitment to the game is physical preparation that starts long before you swing the club. Give it a try. The only thing you have to lose is that handicap!

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