

# Focus



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## Transference, moving from the gym to the golf course

By Trent Malcolm

The best golfers in the world understand the importance of a well conditioned body and the influence this can have on their game. Players like Tiger Woods, Annika Sorenstam and Adam Scott epitomise the modern golfer; they “work out” most days to enhance their game and avoid injury. Of course they also have access to highly knowledgeable exercise physiologists who tailor their programs to suit their individual needs for golf, and this is crucial.

Research clearly demonstrates the importance of making your gym program specific to the needs of your body and your sport if you are to gain optimal benefit from your hard work in the gym.



In this article we are going to discuss some key concepts that will help you (or your trainer...) modify your exercise program to make it more beneficial for golf. You will learn the importance

of exercise in standing, good postural stability, stretching the right areas for golf, building core strength as you rotate and how training tools can be used to build strength and power for golf.

## Stand Up!

The orientation of your body during exercise is very important. Gravitational forces act on the body quite differently when you compare an exercise in a seated or lying position with one in standing; the activation of your postural muscles will vary greatly between these three positions. Golf is played in a standing position so consider modifying some of your exercises to incorporate more positions on your feet.



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## Focus on Good Posture

Good posture is fundamental for golf. If the shape of your spine deviates into a rounded back posture, the load on your muscles, connective tissue and discs of your spine increase significantly, placing you at an increased risk of injury.

Good posture is also the foundation of effective swing mechanics, most professional golfers and coaches work on, or monitor this regularly.

If you don't work with someone who can monitor your positions throughout an exercise use a mirror instead. Regardless of the exercise, good posture must be reinforced as much as possible throughout your exercise program.



## Stretch areas that relate to your golf swing

Tight muscles and connective tissue can seriously impair your golf swing. Do you feel tight around your hips or is it around your lower back area? Perhaps it is restriction around your shoulders that is limiting your rotation or maybe it is stiffness around the middle of your back? You can feel this for yourself when you make a few swings. Identify the areas you feel tight and work on these as priority areas first.

## Add Rotation

Virtually every shot in golf involves spinal rotation to some extent. So do you rotate much in your exercise program? Whilst exercise programs that don't involve rotation can be very beneficial, an element of your program should be dedicated to rotation. This is fundamental to golf.

There are three important rotational components; the first is increasing the range of motion of your shoulder turn. In doing so, this will increase your capacity to develop coil in your backswing to produce greater force through impact. The second is building up the strength and power of the muscles involved in the turn for greater distance, control and back support.

And the third is maintaining your spine angles throughout the exercise. This reinforces good postural stability as you turn dynamically around your spine, a desirable swing concept in all golfers.



## Add Resistance to the actual motor pattern for explosive power

There a number of tools on the market that can add resistance to your golf swing, with the objective being to build strength and power specific to golf. The tool shown attaches to the golf club and provides wind resistance to the golf swing. This is the same concept you see when a sprinter is running with a small parachute behind them. It challenges your body to produce more force in the same motor pattern as the golf swing. Try adding this to the end of your workout to help transfer gym strength to golf power!

Golf has evolved. Conditioning your body for golf is now commonplace, particularly amongst golf's elite, but it must be golf-specific and address your own personal needs for maximum results. Try incorporating the above concepts into your exercise program and you will see for yourself the power a more golf specific strength and conditioning program can have on your game.



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# Golf Tip

## Playing when it matters

By Craig Bishop PGA Professional

Players often ask me when they start to play well. How do I handle the pressures associated with competing? This can be first tee jitters or breaking their handicap or just playing at a different course. It has a lot to do with perspective and implementing a few rules when the heat is on.

### My rules are:

- + Never hit a shot you haven't practiced with success
- + Enjoy the moment, you have probably done something right to be in this position
- + Miracle shots come off about once every millennium on a golf course (plan smart, swing aggressively)
- + Take it easy on yourself. You will miss a fairway, hit it in the odd bunker and probably three putt now and then, so will every other player out on the course
- + Enjoy your good shots, disassociate yourself from the bad ones (you can have your cake and eat it too.)

Every golfer knows what to do under pressure, often it's a matter of asking themselves the right questions. These rules will help you make the decisions quickly and confidently.

Good luck and good golfing!

