

# TIPPING POINTS

The best advice is an idea that's easy to repeat

One of the constant things about golf is tips. Whether they come from your brother, buddy, instructor, magazine, TV or the guy bagging your groceries, they seem to pop up all the time. But there always seems to be one that sticks with you. It can be mental or physical or easy to remember because of its simplicity. Regardless, it's a security blanket for you during times on the course when you need it most.

## DO YOUR BEST



The best tip I ever got was from Dr. Fran Pirozollo, a sports psychologist who has worked with professional athletes and assisted the Houston Cougars during my first year of college golf. (I played my final three years at UCLA!) After a bad outing at a college event, I called Dr. Pirozollo and he simply said: "You cannot control the outcome, just the effort and execution." He challenged me to play the next day repeating that sentence before and after each shot. I did and shot a 1-under-par 71 to help Houston win the event. On the last hole, I had my toughest shot – 210 yards over water to a tucked pin in front of a large gallery. Although I was nervous I repeated my mantra and hit the shot to 20 feet and made the putt for a birdie. It proved to be our margin of victory.

**Eric Lohman, PGA**  
General Manager  
Monarch Beach Golf Links

## DRAW IT UP



The best tip I ever got was really simple but effective. To hit a nice draw, move the ball back a little in your stance and aim your shoulders slightly right to help create an in-to-out club path. If you continue that motion through the impact area and keep the clubface slightly closed to that path, the ball will curve left with a consistent draw. This tip has worked beautifully for my game, so I always make sure to pass it along to my students.

**Kris Moe**  
Kris Moe Golf Schools

## REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY



I was 21, had just graduated from college and had Monday-qualified into a Web.com event in Wichita. Needless to say, I was nervous and very naive! Two experimental sports psychologists introduced themselves to me on the putting green and offered their services. They advised me, when visualizing my putts, to stand behind the ball and look at the line with my eyes level, just as we look at everything else in life. Next, they said to visualize the ball coming out of the hole and working its way back to where it rests. Their research showed that the mind could better sense the slope if the putt was visualized like an instant replay in reverse. I went on to make everything that week and, to this day, I use the rewind visualization on every putt.

**Marty Jertson, PGA**  
Senior Design Engineer II  
PING Golf

## KEEP IT SIMPLE



The best tip I ever got came from Tag Merritt at Rancho Santa Fe Golf Club in 1980. I was traveling the mini-tours and hitting the ball really solid and seemed ready to shoot some low numbers. Just finishing a tournament and heading toward the next event I called Tag from a phone outside Denver Country Club and told him I was hitting the ball really solid but a bit to the right. After a short silence he said, "Aim left," which is what I did, and at the next event I had one of my best finishes on the mini-tours – a tie for third at a tournament in Waterloo, Iowa. Most of the time the simplest things are the hardest to do, but they're often the best advice you can get.

**David Emerick, PGA**  
The Crossings at Carlsbad

## PURE PUTTING



I've received a lot of swing tips in my 35-year career as a player and teacher but there has been only one that has stayed with me when it comes to putting. This tip will work for anyone regardless of ability level: keep your head down and listen for the putt to drop. It's a tip that does a couple of things to improve your putting. First, it keeps your body still, which is one of the main causes for putts to go off line. Second, it promotes finishing your stroke, which allows for a better roll to the hole. If you tend to leave putts short and miss a lot of short ones, try this simple tip and watch for immediate improvement.

**Randy Chang, PGA**  
Director of Instruction  
Journey Golf Academy, Journey at Pechanga

## STRENGTH AND SPEED



Back in the late 1990s I received a great tip from Paul Runyan, the 1934 and 1938 PGA champion. Because of my slight build, he suggested I use a Swing Fan to build strength and swing a shaft without a clubhead to gain speed. His suggested regimen called for up to 100 swings a day with each. I took his advice and gained 15 yards on my drives and was a club longer with my irons. To increase your distance I suggest you do the same and begin a workout routine using the Swing Fan and headless club. As with all workout programs, consult your physician before starting to make sure you don't have a pre-existing condition that would prevent you from undertaking such a regimen.

**Michelle Dubé**  
LPGA Master Teaching Professional  
Tijeras Creek Golf Club

## THINK POSITIVELY



My college coach at Purdue always harped on the team about the importance of having a great attitude. I never understood it until I left college and turned pro. Golf is so much like life and will give you good and bad things over the course of a round. The way you perceive these events will usually dictate your future successes or failures. Can you stay positive and grind it out when you don't have your 'A' game? Can you keep playing aggressively when you have your best-ever round going? Can you dig deep when you don't feel like playing? All of these things require a great attitude and a conscious choice to be positive.

**Chris Mayson**  
Director of Instruction  
Maderas Golf Academy

## NATURAL BEAUTY



Once upon a time I'd get frustrated during and after my rounds, and my caddie would shake his head and smile. Finally after another disappointing round he could no longer hold in the bubbling truth. Most golfers believe that once they perfect the mechanics of the swing they'll shoot some amazing scores, and I was no different. What he told me that day didn't truly emerge into my narrow-minded brain until years later when I became an instructor. He said, "You don't trust your natural ability; great golf can't be manufactured." So laid out in front of me was the secret I had been looking for. It's too bad I was too naive and stubborn to figure it out for myself.

**Kris Brown**  
Director of Instruction  
Trump National Golf Club, Los Angeles

## BE CONFIDENT



The best tip I ever got was from a pro at my local course. I remember one day he was watching me on the practice tee and I was struggling to hit a fade. No matter how hard I tried my results would either be a snap hook or a big slice. My intention was to be like Tiger Woods and have an arsenal of shots I could hit on the course. He stopped me and asked, "Why would you play a shot that has very little chance for success?" I couldn't answer his question. Instead, he told me to play to my strength, so I started to play my natural shot more often and quickly gained confidence on the golf course.

**Josh Kelley**  
Assistant Golf Professional  
Sandpiper Golf Club