



PERSONAL LESSONS

LISA NEWLING
TEACHING PROFESSIONAL
ROYAL SYDNEY GC, NSW

GOOD CHIPPING STARTS WITH A 'Y'

The short game has the biggest impact on scoring, and yet it's the least practiced part of the game. Most people get excited about hitting the ball a long way and short-game practice requires a fair amount of patience and creativity. It's not just about picking a club up and banging away at balls.

I have found so many golfers get confused, when to play a chip and

when to play a pitch shot. So what's the difference?

A chip shot will carry a short distance and run the rest of the way to the hole while a pitch shot will carry further in the air and will stop quicker on the green.

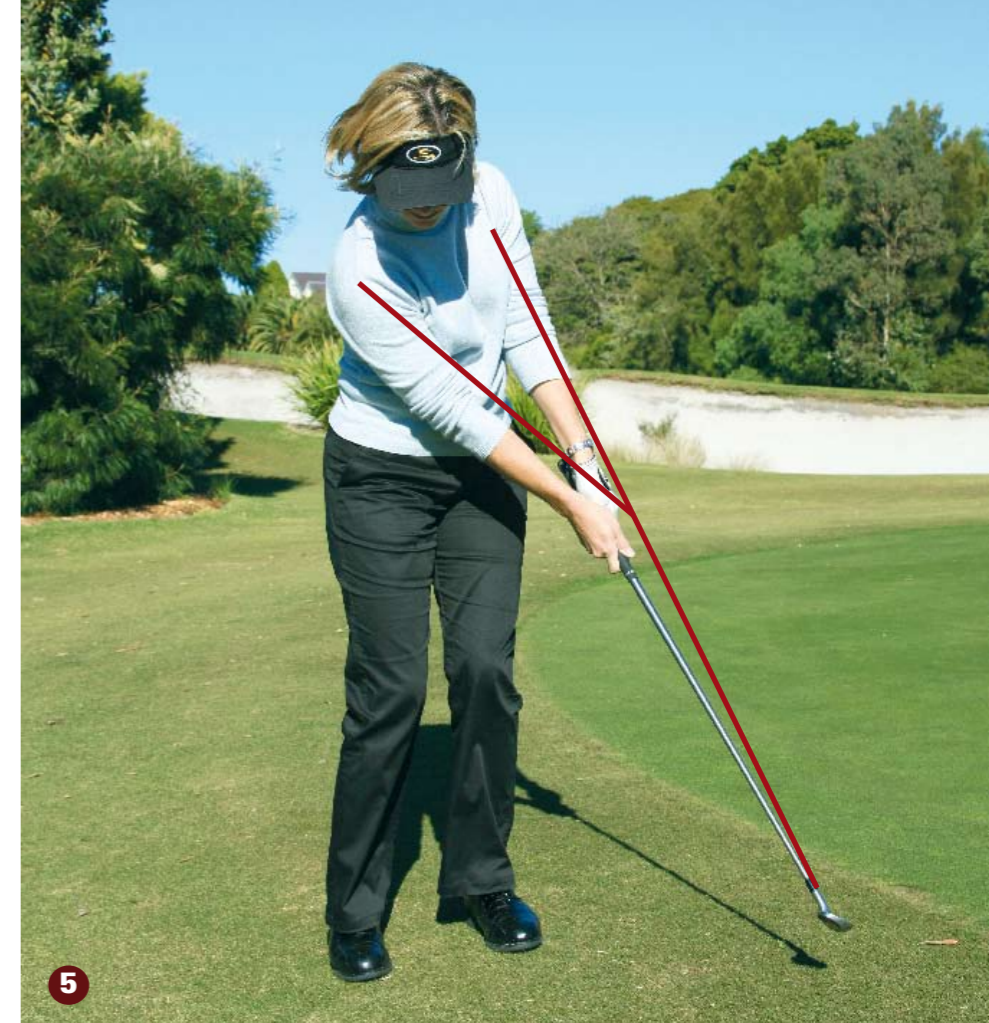
In saying that, I tell all my students to remember this quote: "Putt when you can, chip when you can't putt and, pitch when you have to."

Of the three short game shots at your disposal, it is usually the chip shot that gives mid- and high-handicapped players the most problems with mis-hits.

The chip shot should be used only when there is no trouble between you and the hole and the key to playing the shot well lies with your set-up.

Set up to the ball with a narrower than normal stance and the ball

PHOTOS: BRENDAN JAMES X 5



positioned in the centre of your stance. Your weight should be on your left side (for right-handers) and your hands forward or level with the inside of your left thigh. A good set-up like this should resemble a 'Y' shape, with your arms and the club's shaft forming the letter (pic 1).

If your weight is on your back foot this will encourage you to try and scoop the ball (pics 2 & 3).

The best way to get the feeling of weight in your left side is to practice chipping on a slight upslope beside a green (pic 4).

Your feet should be slightly open (aiming left) to the target to allow the arms and hands to swing past the body on the through swing. It is also important to keep your arms close to your body because this gives you a better connection between the arms and upper body rotation during the

chipping swing.

Once you have established a good set-up, it is important to maintain this 'Y' shape on the backswing, downswing, impact and into a follow through where the clubhead remains low to the ground (pic 5).

If your 'Y' breaks down and you let the clubhead pass the hands and lag too far behind, you will hit erratic chip shots.

To practice keeping the clubhead low through impact, place a tee 10cm in front of your ball on the target line and try to clip the tee on the follow through. If you clip the tee you will hit a nice solid chip shot. ▶

Lisa Newling is a teaching professional at Royal Sydney GC, Sydney. She is available for lessons and can be contacted by calling (02) 9371 4333.

10-19 HANDICAP

Once you have established a good 'Y-shaped'

You are capable of good scores but inconsistency

set-up, it is important to maintain that shape on the backswing, downswing, impact and follow-through.

stops you playing to your potential. You need to identify and solve swing faults.