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THE IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE IN YOUR GOLF SWING

by Sue Powers

Are you looking for more consistency in your golf swing? A balanced set-up position and proper balance/weight transfer during your swinging motion are key contributors for consistency. I believe good balance is the key to creating better tempo and smooth rhythm in your swing. Being out of balance causes jerky movements and sudden acceleration at points in the swing where you don't want them.

Are you balanced? Let's start by checking to make sure you have a solid foundation in **your set-up position**, using a 7 iron.

- Your weight should be evenly balanced between your right and your left foot.
- Your weight should also be evenly balanced between your heels and your toes, feeling stability on the balls of your feet or your arch. If your weight is more settled toward your toes, you will tend to pull the shot to the left. If your weight is more settled toward your heels, you will tend to push the shot to the right. (for right handed golfers – opposite ball direction for left handed golfers).
- Ask yourself this question – could someone push me off balance with two fingers? Your weight should be back far enough so that you can wiggle your toes, yet not be pushed over in any direction.

SET-UP BALANCE DRILL:

After you have addressed the ball, close your eyes and intentionally move your weight to the left, then move your weight to the right and then settle into an even balance between your right and your left foot.

To maintain your solid balance during your swing, your weight moves in the same direction the club is travelling. At the top of your backswing, you should feel about 80 percent of your weight on your back foot. The weight at the top of your swing should be on the instep of your back foot, not on the outside of the back foot.

As you swing down into your impact position, your weight should be shifting to your front foot with about 80% of your weight moving to your front foot before you make contact with the ball. At your finish position, you should have 100% of your weight on the outside of your front foot and your back heel should be pointed to the sky.

SLOW MOTION BALANCE POINTS DRILL:

- Start this drill swinging in slow motion - about 10 percent of your normal swing speed for 5 repetitions. Repeat the drill, increasing your speed to 20 percent, 30 percent, etc. until you reach 80 percent of your normal swing speed.
- After you have addressed the ball, close your eyes and feel your balance.
- Keeping your eyes closed, make a backswing (at 10% of your normal swing speed) and stop at the top of your swing, feeling your balance on the inside of your back foot.
- With your eyes still closed, start your downswing by feeling your weight move to your front foot and then stop at impact. Your weight should be about 80% on your front foot in this position.
- Continue your swing with your eyes closed to your finish position and hold that position. Feel your weight 100% on the outside of your front foot. Checkpoint: If your weight is fully transferred, you should be able to tap your back toe on the ground. If you need to push forward to

be able to tap your toe, your weight is not completely transferred and you will not be perfectly balanced.

AT-HOME SINGLE LEG STAND BALANCE DRILL:

- Practice this drill at home daily without shoes to improve your overall balance. If you are not able to hold the position for 25 seconds, use a chair or golf club to stabilize yourself until your balance improves.
- Stand tall with your arms hanging down by your sides, but not touching your sides.
- Place most of your weight on your left leg, engage your core muscles and then lift your right thigh so it is parallel to the ground.
- Try to hold this position for 25 seconds without wobbling or using your arms to maintain your balance.
- Repeat with your right leg.
- To make this drill more difficult, close your eyes once you are stable and hold for the count of 25.

All great players have the ability to swing every club with a consistent tempo and great balance. Some players have faster tempos; others have slower tempos, yet all have one thing in common – they remain balanced throughout their swings.

