

NEW ORDER

Alistair Davies, senior teaching pro at The Belfry, shows how to sequence your swing to boost power and accuracy

All the top golfers in the world swing it differently, but almost all have the same sequence to their actions. From the top, the front hip and knee lead the way with a lateral drive towards the target, coupled, a heartbeat later, with a rotational motion. The trunk and the body are next, followed by the hands, and finally the clubhead. They follow this sequence because it's the most efficient path to controlled power. It ensures your centre of pressure is moving in the direction you are hitting; it helps put the club on the correct plane; and it allows you to release your stored force at the right time. We will look at four ways to sequence your swing like a pro's and then let three club players put them to the test.



2. Crank that torque It fires the downswing

If you can get your left leg and hip driving towards the target just as you are reaching the end of the backswing, then you can create the so-called 'X factor stretch' - a de-coupling of your hips and shoulders that expands your coil, making it more 'sprung'. It causes your downswing sequence to fire at a faster speed, giving you more clubhead speed and distance.



1. Don't sway It stops a powerful coil

A sway away from the target during the backswing costs us any chance of a powerful coil. It shifts weight to the outside of the right foot - a truly powerless position. To beat this, place a shaft or grip under the outside of your right foot and make a normal backswing. The club will force your weight to find its proper place - along the inside of your right foot.

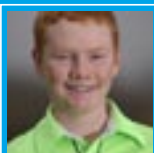


3. Lower body first Use the 'step-and-hit'

The downswing should start with a drive forward from your left hip and knee. It shallows the plane, promoting an inside angle of approach. It also helps preserve your wrist and shoulder angles for release at impact. Get it right with the step-and-hit-drill; at the top, lift your front foot off the ground and then plant it aggressively to start the downswing.

OUR AMATEUR GOLFERS

Turn the page to see how they get on using the tips...



Freddie Sheridan

Handicap: 4



Dave Musgrave

Handicap: 9



Henry Sheridan

Handicap: 19



4. Delay the release Buckle ahead of hands

'Clubhead throwaway' is when you lose your powerful wrist angles before you need them at impact. If your hands beat your torso to impact they will apply a weak, lofted face to the ball. Instead, feel the right move by threading a clubshaft through a belt loop on your left hip. Practise the feeling of your hips rotating to keep the shaft ahead of your hands.



SWAYING ON THE BACKSWING

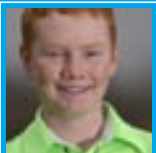
Quick fix: swing with a club under the right foot



Alistair Davies

Our pro said...

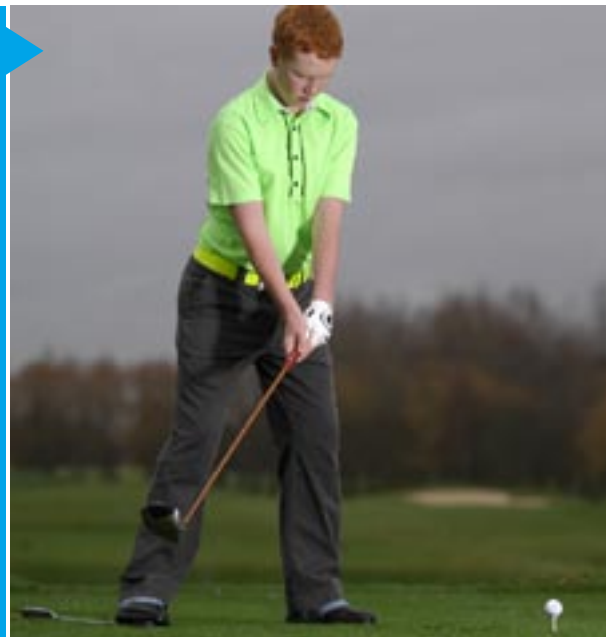
“Freddie is a cracking little player, but he can get into trouble by swaying laterally away from the target on the backswing. This transfers too much of his weight too early, and it moves incorrectly and powerlessly to the outside of his right foot. This can cause Freddie’s upper body to fall forward, and gives him inconsistency. But we can sort this by reducing the amount his hips slide as he takes the club back.”



Freddie Sheridan

He said...

“I knew I had this tendency to sway away from the target, but couldn’t work out how to stop it. I think it stems from my set-up position – I tend to have the ball a little too forward and my weight too far behind the ball, which encourages me to move to the right. But this clubshaft drill, as well as being foolproof, instantly cut down on my movement, tightened up my swing and gave me extra coil and power.”



SHOULDERS INITIATE THE DOWNSWING

Quick fix: create the ‘X-factor stretch’



Alistair Davies

Our pro said...

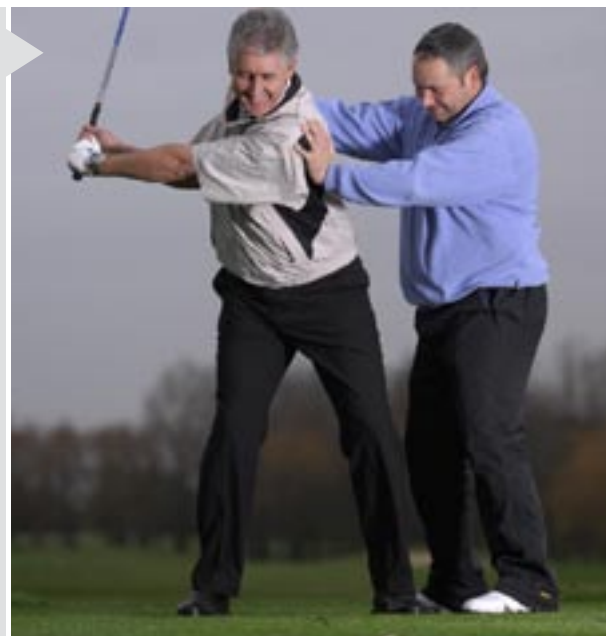
“Clive’s shoulders work too early in the downswing. In fact they tend to start it, which throws the club on an out-to-in path, causing pulls and fades. It also costs Clive his ability to create pressure on the ball because it forces him to lose powerful wrist cock too early. If he can start down more with his legs and lower half, and leave his upper half behind, he will improve his path and his power.”



Clive Mcgregor

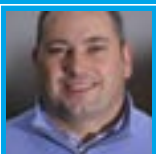
He said...

“I can see how Alistair’s advice will help me – and I certainly hit the ball more powerfully and crisply when it worked. But this X-factor stretch basically requires more twisting between hips and shoulders, and at 52 I’m not as young as I was, or as flexible. I don’t think it would be a problem for younger, more flexible types. But I’m doing some extra stretching to help me achieve this powerful move.”



NOT ENOUGH LOWER BODY MOVEMENT

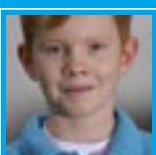
Quick fix: use the ‘step-and-hit’ to wake up the lower half



Alistair Davies

Our pro said...

“Henry shows plenty of promise but he doesn’t use his legs enough at the start of the downswing – there’s no creation of powerful angles or dynamic late hitting. Henry won’t generate as much power as he would if his left leg and hip lead the downswing; he could also develop a tendency to develop a steeper angle of attack, resulting in pull shots, slices and even skies. The step-and-hit drill should sort this out.”



Henry Sheridan

He said...

“This drill made me feel like I was leaving the club way behind – although I know this is partly the point – but sometimes it’s hard to get the timing right. You also have to be careful not to simply lift your foot up and down on the same spot. But it’s a drill that certainly forces me to move through the ball with more purpose and I definitely hit the ball further. It’s just a question of learning to synchronise it.”



