

## Wood Shots

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Woods are easier and simpler to use than irons. For one thing, they generally are used off the tee or from only good lies in the fairway. A wood club has a wide, flat sole which is designed to right the club to some extent if it should be swung a little too deeply into the turf. Hence, with the right mental disposition, your wood play should be up to, if not excel, your iron game.

The position of the ball on wood shots should be to the left of center. I like to play my drives off the left heel, with each of my other woods down to the No. 4 moved slightly back towards center. I also recommend a slightly closed stance, with the right foot pulled back about one inch.

The ability to relax is an asset to all strokes, but particularly to wood shots. Often, when a golfer picks up a wood, he has a vision of hitting the ball a country mile, and he tries to fulfill his vision by brute force. He forgets that each wood is designed for distance, just so he won't have to break his back to hit a 250-yard drive. You will get more distance out of your woods if you are relaxed when you shoot.

Balance is important throughout the entire swing. Develop the swing gradually. Don't rush it. Keep in mind that you are swinging the club. Don't lift it or you may lose some of your precious balance. Take your time on the backswing, pause when you reach the top and then start the downswing smoothly and unhurriedly.

As the backswing is started, your body naturally turns with your arms and the left knee bends slightly. About halfway back, your wrists start to cock, and at the top of the swing the club should be back over your shoulders and just about level with the ground.

Some golfers have the idea that if you don't hurry the downswing right at the start, you will lose power in the stroke. This is not true. Speed and



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timing produce distance, and most of the speed of the clubhead is generated when it is only three to three and one-half feet from the ball. This is the point at which you begin to unleash the power in your wrists.

I use the word "unleash" to describe the uncocking of the wrists, because the wrists do not roll. Instead, they come through with a whipping action, the hands returning to the position they had at the address. That is the only position for the hands if the clubface is to meet the ball squarely.

One more point—I don't think it is stressed enough in modern teaching—is to keep your head behind the ball. This will cure many of the faults of trying to force the ball by pulling your body or hands in front of the clubhead.

Just relax and let the club do the work.