

HOW TO

Play Precise Pitches

Most Tour pros get it close like this—and you can, too

THIS STORY IS FOR YOU IF...

- Your pitch shots consistently fall short or fly too long
- You consider a pitch swing to be a small full swing
- You use the same pitch shot for every situation

The Problem

YOU DON'T know how to control the distance of your pitches, so from 30 yards and in you almost never get up and down.

The Solution

Tour professionals pitch the ball so well because they all use the same technique, but it's one that the rest of us rarely practice or put into action on the course, primarily because we tend to think of our pitch swing as a miniature full swing. The pro way—the “set and hold”—is hardly that, and it's much easier to pull off.



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How to Pitch It Tight Every Time

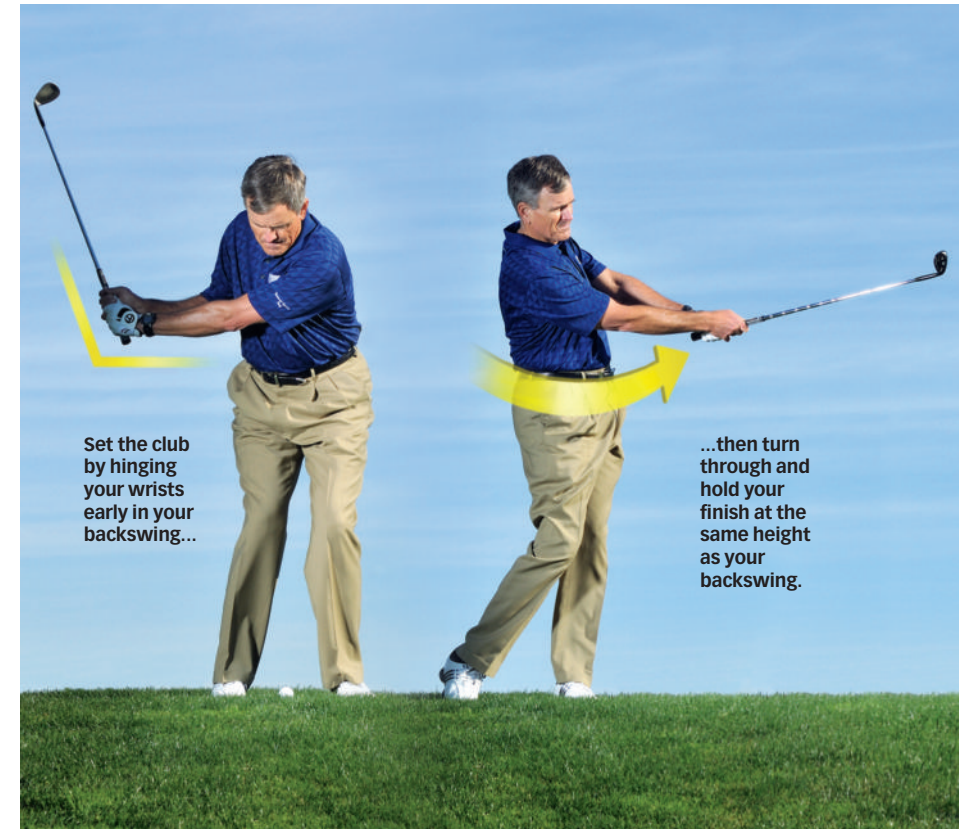
This two-part technique gives you consistent contact and consistent distance control. *Follow these steps:*

Step 1: Set

Take the club back as you normally do, but hinge your wrists very early in your backswing. For a 30-yard shot, you shouldn't have to take your hands back more than hip high.

Step 2: Accelerate & Hold

Once you establish the angle between your left arm and the clubshaft, commit to accelerating through the ball. The real key, however, is to keep the angle between the clubshaft and your left forearm intact. Just turn your body through the ball and finish at the same height as your backswing.

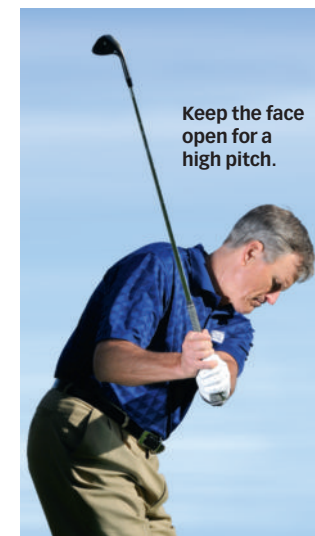


Set the club by hinging your wrists early in your backswing...

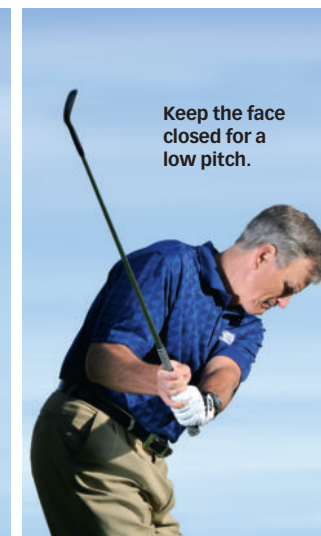
...then turn through and hold your finish at the same height as your backswing.

How to Vary Trajectory

The “set and hold” technique gives you a very predictable shot—you don't need to release or use a lot of arms. Your body turn takes care of that. But if you want to hit the ball high or low, you'll need to make the changes shown at right. ■



Keep the face open for a high pitch.



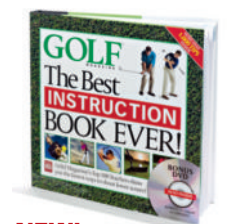
Keep the face closed for a low pitch.

For a high shot, play the ball a bit forward in your stance, set the clubface open a few degrees at address and aim a few feet to the left of your target.

For a low shot, play the ball more toward your right foot, close the clubface down a few degrees at address and aim a few feet to the right of your target.

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