Tip for the Knee-dy

HUNKED. CHILI-DIPPED. Fat. Heavy. Whatever term you use to describe hitting behind the ball, there's no doubt that the majority of poor chip shots are mishit this way. Almost always, the problem can be traced to a faulty address. In other words, before you even start the club moving, poor body positioning significantly decreases the odds of hitting the ball crisply.

To assume a reliable chipping position, start with your heels four to five inches apart. Pull your left foot a few inches back from the target line, and then play the ball just inside the big toe of your back foot. Now comes the key move: To angle your body properly, take your left hand off the club and touch the outside of your left knee.

What happens? Your body and head will move slightly to the left, most of your weight will shift onto your left foot, and your right hand will move toward the target, just past the ball. Hold that position while putting your left hand back on the club. Your weight is forward and your hands are slightly ahead of the ball—the perfect position to make solid contact with a descending blow.

