



Mastering Your Putting Stroke with a Yardstick

Putting is often considered the most critical aspect of golf — for good reason. On the green is where the game is won or lost, making a solid putting stroke essential for lowering your scores. Although there are many tools and techniques you can use to refine your putting, one of the simplest and most effective is a yardstick. This unassuming tool can significantly enhance your alignment, stroke path, and consistency. Here's a detailed guide on how to use a yardstick to improve your putting stroke.

Understanding the Basics

A yardstick is a straight, flat measuring tool that is 36 inches long. Its primary function for putting practice is to serve as a visual and physical guide for your stroke. By practicing with a yardstick, you can achieve a better sense of direction, ensure a more consistent stroke, and develop a reliable putting routine.

Step-by-Step Guide to Using a Yardstick

Setting Up
Start by finding a flat, even surface to practice on. Ideally, this would be a putting green, but a carpeted floor at home can work as well. Place the yardstick on the ground, aligning it with your intended target line. The yardstick will act as a guide for your putter, helping you visualize the straight path needed for a successful putt.

Alignment

Place the golf ball on one end of the yardstick, ensuring it is centered. This positioning will help in aligning your putter face correctly. Stand over the ball and line up your putter so that it is square to the yardstick. Your eyes should

be directly over the yardstick so as to promote proper alignment and posture.

Stroke Path

Using the yardstick as a guide, make your putting stroke. The goal is to keep the putter head moving along the length of the yardstick. This practice helps in maintaining a straight stroke path, reducing the chances of an inside-out or outside-in swing. The yardstick's edges serve as a tactile reference, providing immediate feedback if your stroke strays off line.

Feedback and Adjustment

One of the key benefits of using a yardstick is the instant feedback it provides. If your putter deviates from the straight path, you will feel and see it. This feedback is crucial for making the necessary adjustments to your stroke. Practice repeatedly until you can consistently keep the putter moving along the yardstick without veering off.

Benefits of Yardstick Drills

Improved Alignment

Using a yardstick helps you develop a keen sense of alignment. By consistently setting up and practicing with this tool, you train your eyes and body to recognize what

proper alignment looks and feels like. This skill is transferable to the course, where precise alignment can make a significant difference.

Enhanced Stroke Path

A straight stroke path is essential for accurate putting. The yardstick drill encourages a linear motion, which is particularly beneficial for shorter putts where a straight back-and-through stroke is most effective. Over time, this practice can lead to a more natural and reliable stroke.

Consistency

Consistency is the hallmark of a good putter. By incorporating yardstick drills into your practice routine, you will develop muscle memory and a repeatable stroke. This consistency can breed confidence, allowing you to approach each putt with the assurance that you have a solid, dependable stroke.

Advanced Yardstick Drills

Distance Control

Once you have mastered the basic yardstick drill, you can incorporate distance control into your practice. Place several balls along the yardstick at different intervals and practice putting to a specific distance.

This drill will help you fine-tune your feel and control, which is crucial for varying lengths of putts on the course.

Breaking Putts

To simulate real course conditions, practice with the yardstick on a surface with a slight slope. This setup will help you understand how to adjust your stroke for breaking putts while still maintaining a straight path. It will challenge you to balance the straight-line stroke with the necessary adjustments for break and speed.

Conclusion

The simplicity of a yardstick belies its effectiveness as a putting practice tool. By providing a clear visual and tactile guide, it helps golfers of all levels improve their alignment, stroke path, and overall consistency. Whether you are a novice golfer or a seasoned player looking to refine your skills, incorporating yardstick drills into your practice routine can lead to significant improvements on the green. Remember, the key to becoming a great putter lies in consistent practice and attention to detail, and the yardstick offers a straightforward yet powerful way to achieve that.




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