

The Worst Piece of Advice in the History of Golf Might Surprise You

Keept your head down. That is possibly the worst golf advice and the most inaccurate diagnosis of a problem I've ever heard. Either you're guilty of saying it to others or even listening to someone who tells you to do it.

Unfortunately, that simple piece of advice has been passed down from generation to generation to say to somebody after they hit a bad shot. When a student of mine hits a bad shot during a lesson and proclaims "I didn't keep my head down" we will stop everything and have the following discussion.

Let's first understand why that's bad to say, why you shouldn't say it, and then what you should be trying to do if someone is telling you keep your head down.

The reason you don't want to keep your head down is because it limits how you move through impact and the follow-through, and creates a lot of havoc at impact with a couple different variables including not only where you hit the ground, but the path you swing on.

Keeping your head down into the follow-through limits how much you can bend yourself backwards, tilt your shoulders, turn through the shot, and keep your arms really straight. When your head is down, you stay more forward bending, you're limited on the amount that you can turn, your elbows begin to collapse, and then you start hitting the ground all over the place. It's a game of chance on whether you will actually hit it well or not.

What you want to do is allow your head to turn through the shot and actually watch the ball in flight. Therefore, at least saying, "keep your eye on the ball" is a bit of a step in the right direction with regards to advice.

What you want to do to is make practice swings, without a ball, and allow yourself to turn or even slightly tilt your head and neck, as if you're watching the ball fly all the way into your follow-through. That's what you see the best players in the world on television do.

You never see them keep their head down—that would be ridiculous.

Turn through the shot so that you feel yourself bending backwards a little

bit more. Feel like your follow through is much further and swing towards right centerfield. By doing so, you'll be able to stretch everything out. Those are the pieces that you want to put in place.

Try that a couple more times. Feel like you're turning your neck, watching the shot fly towards your intended target, and stretching everything out. It'll look a little something like the photos here.

Now, from here on out, say it with me: "I won't tell anybody else to keep their head down." If you don't know

what to say, tell them to go get some instruction from their local professional.

In addition to serving as our editor, Dave is a PGA Associate and teaches more than 200 lessons every month at GOLFTEC in Vernon Hills. A Certified PGA HOPE instructor, providing complimentary instruction for veterans, Dave has taught more than 15,000 lessons and serves as varsity boys golf coach for Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein.

