

# Getting your posture right and aligning the clubface to the target

**IN THIS** month's section we continue working with Pecanwood's head coach Philip Joubert on the key steps to ensure correct alignment.

In May's section with Philip on the driving range we selected the target line and set the clubface square to it and the next steps will be to build the stance parallel to this same target line and ensure that the body posture is correct.

**Stance width** - The heels will be about the same width as the shoulders. Body weight will be inclined towards the balls of feet with the front foot set slightly open to allow for a full release of the swing through impact and on into the follow through.



*The goal is to try to create a stable but dynamic base on which to swing the club and transfer weight through the shot. Standing too narrow at address will create instability. If you stand too wide (like a giraffe having a drink!) you will be very stable but unable to turn properly and this type of wide stance will only be ideal if you are going out to play in a 'black' south westerly at the Wild Coast!*

**DISTANCE FROM THE CLUB** - With slightly flexed knees, the top of the club's grip should fall about 4 inches above the knee of the front leg. The only variable will be the shaft length, which will determine your actual distance from the ball.

*The goal here is to try to create a consistent distance between the body and the end of the club with the actual distance from the ball being controlled by the length of the shaft of the club you are using.*

**BALL POSITION** - The ball will sit opposite a point about one club-head length inside of left heel, which will be opposite the lowest point of the swing's arc.

*The exception would be for a teed up shot with a wood where we would want to sweep the ball away off the top of the peg and should therefore put the ball opposite a point from somewhere just inside the heel to the instep of the left foot.*

*Some experimentation will be needed to find the 'right' position for you as variables such as the depth of the clubface and the height at*

*which the ball is teed will determine the ideal position.*

*Some of the new utility woods from a fairway lie are also best played with the ball slightly further forward than for an iron shot.*

*If you want to de-loft the club face to hit the ball lower i.e. into a headwind or under a tree branch move the ball slight further back towards to back foot. It takes some experimentation to find the right ball position for these type of shots, but the key is not to vary your standard ball position at address accidentally.*



**POSTURE** - Keep a nice flat back, a straight spine, bend slightly forward from waist and your arms will hang down under the line of the shoulders.

*As an exercise, put a club's shaft flat against your chest when bending forward to remind you to keep the back and spine as flat and straight as possible at address. The spine's function is rather like the axle around which the whole swing will rotate so that it needs to be as straight as possible.*



**WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION** - The body's weight will be set towards the balls of the feet with the weight evenly balanced between both feet.

*Weight distribution at address is important - the swing and transfer of weight is a dynamic 'thing', so if you think you can sit back on your heels imagine trying to dance on your heels.*

**BODY ALIGNMENT** - Set the stance parallel to target line and ensure that the shoulders, hips, knees and feet are also on same line.

*You need to compensate for the fact that for most of you your arms are the same length and*



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*that one hand will be lower on the grip than the other, which will open the shoulder line to the target.*

*To compensate make a slight turn of the shoulders (It feels almost as if you are starting your backswing) which should be accompanied by a slight complementary turn of the hips.*

*Don't 'overdo' the movement or you will end up shut to target with your upper body tilted at address and your weight will start to favour your front foot making a proper transfer of weight more difficult to achieve.*



Tournament players, who are at the top of their profession, take no chances with any aspect of their set ups, as they cannot afford to miss targets due to sloppy clubface or body alignment.

This is one of the keys areas related to the golf swing which has no moving parts which makes it essential to ensure that you are positioned and aligned correctly.

There is no guarantee that a correct set up and stance will make you swing well and hit the target, but it will mean that when you do make a good swing you will be set up on line and get the results that the swing you have made deserves.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** John Cockayne is the author of 'How to Practise Less More Often'. He is a founder member of the PGA of South Africa and he has spent over 30 years coaching this frustrating game! A key current focus for John is as the Programme Director at Corporate Golf Academy and The Green Pages Golf School. The Golf Academy provides innovative tailor made clinics and golf academies for companies and The Green Pages provides coaching for individuals.