



THE GRIP

Part II : Grip pressure

The proper grip pressure is consistency's best friend...

If your swing is correct, there should be no need to hold the club very hard, it should easily follow your body movement.

The club should definitely not move in your hands during your swing. If you feel you are losing your club at some point during your movement, you probably have the wrong swing path, or the wrong rhythm. Or both... Please understand that this swing problem needs to be corrected before you can attempt to relax your grip. Otherwise, you will simply lose control !

The whole purpose of a good grip is to allow you to feel the motion of the club. This feedback, which you get from a relaxed hand pressure, helps you adjust your swing rhythm according to the club, and not the other way around...

If your hands are too tight, your wrists will be blocked, and you can say good bye to power...;-)

In fact, in a good golf swing, the hands are not very active. They are only a connection, which transmit the movement of the body to the club head. It is the rhythm of the swing which dictates the hinging of the wrists. Not a voluntary hand action.

That is why it is extremely important that your grip allows your wrists to remain tension free.

That is also why I like to get my players to learn to swing one-handed. Because with limited hand control, they are much more likely to search for an optimum body movement, and placement. They are also more likely to start using the momentum of the club head for power, rather than trying to manoeuvre the club with their hands.

HELPFUL TRICKS

How tight should I hold the club ?

On a scale from 1 to 10, your grip pressure should be about 3 or 4. We often use the image of the club being a little bird, and the hands being firm enough to hold him, but without hurting him. You can also imagine a tube of toothpaste without cap, hold it only so that no paste comes out...


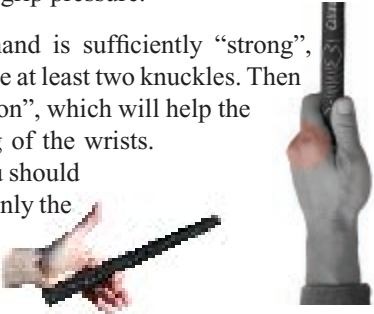


In all cases, the wrists should remain soft.

Should my grip pressure change during my swing ?

Try to keep an even grip pressure throughout the whole swing.

If it changes during your movement, you will probably lose feel and control. The only moment when you should feel a slightly firmer pressure, is at the change of direction (top of the back swing). But that feeling is in the fingers only, the wrists, as I mentioned before, should remain very relaxed.

FOUR PRECIOUS TIPS

- ① Make sure the position of your hand (and wrist) on the club is as close as possible to the position in which your arm relaxes naturally.
 
- ② A good posture will help a good grip. For example, if you are too far from the ball, or if your hands are too high, you cannot set your wrists in the optimum relaxed position, and consequently, you cannot achieve the ideal grip pressure.
 
- ③ Check that your left hand is sufficiently "strong", meaning that you can see at least two knuckles. Then you can have the "lever action", which will help the natural and relaxed hinging of the wrists. With the proper "lever", you should be able to lift the club with only the index, while the butt of the club rests against the back of the hand.
 
- ④ Hold the club in front of you, standing straight, with the club to the sky. This is the most natural way for the hands to position themselves on the club, therefore with minimal tension. Trying to maintain this level of relaxation, now bend over and address the ball without any adjustments to the grip.
 

Here is one final image to help you commit to a lighter hand pressure: a good golf swing is primarily a throwing action of the club towards the target, with the club head incidentally catching a ball on its course. So, just as you should throw your club, have you ever tried to throw a stone with a stiff wrist or a tightly closed fist ??? It all makes sense now, doesn't it...!

Good luck, and love the challenge of the game...

a.pascalie@eden-golf.com