

WOODIES' WORKSHOP

SMART PRACTICE SERIES | VOL. 5

The Grip

Both hands, one unit. The foundation of every good swing.

FREE GUIDE

How to use this guide

Most golfers try to fix their swing before they check their grip. This guide reverses that. Run through it before you make any other change to your game, and come back to it every season to make sure the foundations are still solid.

This guide is written for right-handed golfers. Left-handed golfers should reverse all hand references throughout.

The 3 rules of this guide

- The grip is your only point of contact with the club. Everything you generate with your body either reaches the clubhead through your hands, or it does not.
- Both hands must work as one unit. Anything that fights that unity costs you shots before you have even started your backswing.
- Check your grip before you change your swing. Nine times out of ten, it is the right place to start.

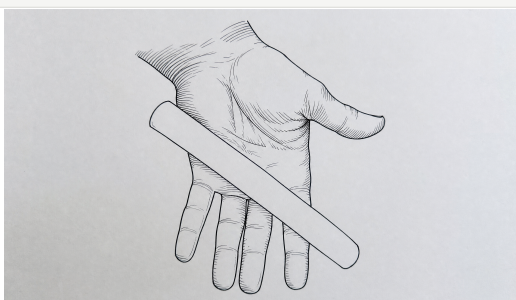
What you'll need

- Any club. An iron or mid-iron works well for grip practice.
- This guide: printed or on your phone.

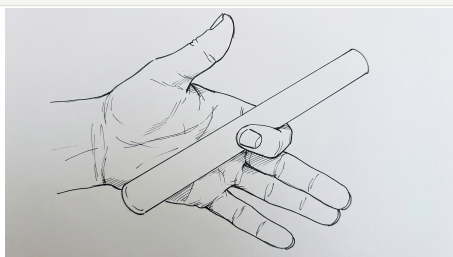
The Left Hand

PLACEMENT

With the back of your left hand facing the target and the club in the general position it would be at address, place the club in your left hand so that 1) the shaft is pressed up under the muscular pad at the inside heel of your palm and 2) the shaft lies directly across the top joint of your index finger.



Once the club is in the correct position, crook your index finger around the shaft. You will find that you can lift the club entirely using just the muscular pad and the index finger. If you can lift it cleanly, the placement is correct. Now close your hand: fingers first, then your thumb.

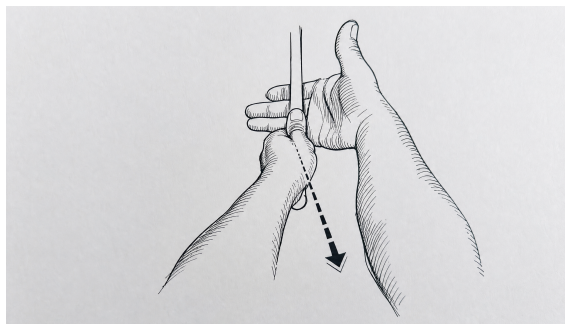


THE LEFT THUMB

Your left thumb should sit very slightly to the right of the top of the shaft, not directly on top of it. This provides additional support at the top of the backswing, where the club can otherwise feel loose.

THE V-CHECK: LEFT HAND

With a correct left hand grip, the V formed by your thumb and forefinger should point to your right eye. Check this every time before your first swing.

**WOODIE'S TIP**

Most golfers hold the club too far into the palm. Move the shaft into the fingers and under the pad and you will feel the difference immediately.

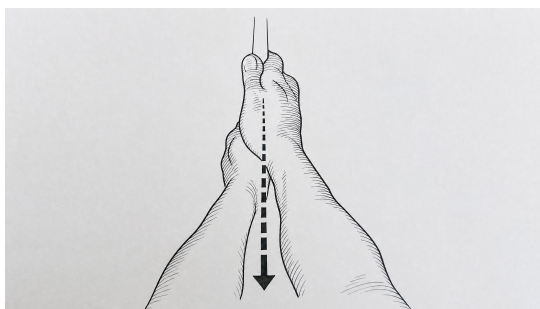
The Right Hand

PLACEMENT

Hold your right hand extended with your palm facing the target. With your left hand correctly in place, lay the shaft of the club across the top joint of the four fingers of your right hand. It must sit below the palm. The right hand is a finger grip, not a palm grip. The two middle fingers apply most of the pressure. Now fold your right hand over your left thumb. The left thumb should sit snugly in the crease of your right palm.

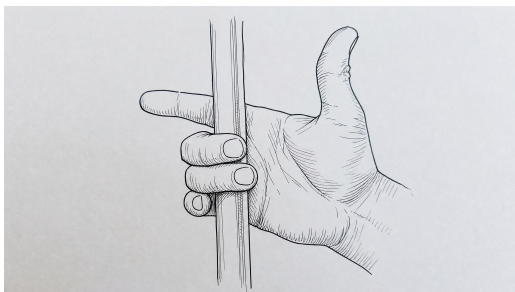
THE V-CHECK: RIGHT HAND

The V formed by your right hand forefinger and thumb should point to your chin. Both Vs are now correctly set: one to your right eye, one to your chin.



THE TRIGGER FINGER

Allow a slight separation between your right index finger and your middle finger. This is the trigger finger. It helps stabilise the club through the backswing and gives your right hand a secure point of reference.

**WOODIE'S TIP**

The most common mistake is letting the right hand ride up the shaft instead of folding cleanly over the left thumb. If the left thumb is not sitting in the crease of your right palm, the hands cannot work as one unit.

Putting It Together: The Unified Grip

Good golf starts with a good grip. The grip is the heartbeat of your swing: your only contact with the club is through your hands, and if they are not working together, all the power you generate with your body never fully reaches the clubhead. When the grip is correct, the left thumb fits snugly into the crease of your right palm. The two hands fit together like puzzle pieces. Hold the club firmly enough to control it through the swing, but not so tightly that you lose feel in your fingers.

WOODIE'S TIP
Grip pressure should feel like holding something you do not want to drop but do not want to crush. Keep the pressure consistent throughout the swing. The grip never tightens mid-swing.

Get both hands working as one unit and everything else in your swing has a better chance of working too. This is where Saturday starts.

Grip Check Card

LEFT HAND	RIGHT HAND
- Shaft under muscular palm pad - Shaft across top joint of index finger - Close fingers, then thumb - Left thumb slightly right of centre - V formed by thumb and forefinger points to right eye	- Shaft across top joint of all four fingers (finger grip) - Two middle fingers apply most of the pressure - Fold right hand over left thumb - Left thumb sits snugly in crease of right palm - Slight separation of index finger (trigger finger) - V formed by thumb and forefinger points to chin

Take It to the Course

Before your next round, take 30 seconds on the range to check three things: shaft in the left hand pad and across the index finger, both Vs pointing correctly, and the left thumb sitting in the crease of your right palm. If all three are in place, the grip is ready. Stop thinking about it and play.

Notes & Reflections

Which hand needed more attention -- the left or the right? What felt off about it?

Did running the V-checks change anything about how your shots felt?

What one grip thought are you taking onto the course this weekend?

The club hasn't changed. Your hands have. Go enjoy yourself.

Keep an eye out for the next guides in this series:

- > Vol. 1 -- The 45-Minute Session That Gets You Ready for the Weekend
- > Vol. 2 -- Attack or Lay Back? Breaking Down Tee Shot Decisions
- > Vol. 3 -- The Chipping Framework -- Simple Decisions That Get the Ball Close
- > Vol. 4 -- The Ideal Putting Setup
- > Vol. 5 -- The Grip: Both Hands, One Unit