

# GOLF'S MOST-WANTED!

## SIX SHOTS THAT WILL KEEP YOUR SCORECARD IN ONE PIECE

### YOUR COACH



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How often do we come off the course having posted a disappointing score, without quite knowing where all those dropped shots came from? This is where stat gathering comes in. Data capture allows us to see exactly where we are dropping those shots; and with sophisticated systems like Shot Scope, we can even trace those dropped shots back to patterns in our driving, ironplay,

chipping or putting. Change the pattern, lower the score.

Here, we asked our friends at Shot Scope to detail the six shots that have the most serious implications for our score. *TG* coach Adrian Fryer then shares some tips that will sharpen up in these vital areas. Start with your weakest... but the more you can work on, the better the numbers you'll end up writing on the card.

PHOTOGRAPHY BOB ATKINS



### HOW SHOT SCOPE WORKS

Shot Scope is a lightweight GPS smart watch that allows you to track every facet of your game. The latest version, V3, is sleeker, offers a new daylight-readable colour screen and has dual GPS for increased accuracy. For more information visit [www.shotscope.com](http://www.shotscope.com)



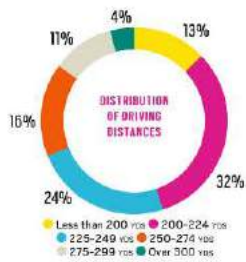
**MOST-WANTED  
#1  
SHOTS**

**A Draw With  
The Driver**

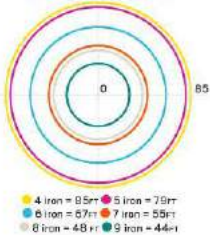
**O**f-the-tee data presents a very simple and very clear picture: the nearer a golfer is to a green, the closer they hit their approach. Shot Scope data shows this through 'average proximity by club' statistics. The typical 8-iron, for example, ends up 19ft closer to the flag than the typical 6-iron.

If a golfer were to gain an extra 15-20 yards with their driver, it would mean hitting two less clubs for the next shot and improving proximity by 18ft on average. Stats suggest this would lead to 0.6 shots saved per round.

With the data clearly suggesting that longer drives can save you shots, adding yards to your tee shots is an effective way to lower scores. For many club players, the best way to find these extra yards is by turning a weak, high-spinning cut into a hotter-flying, longer-running draw.



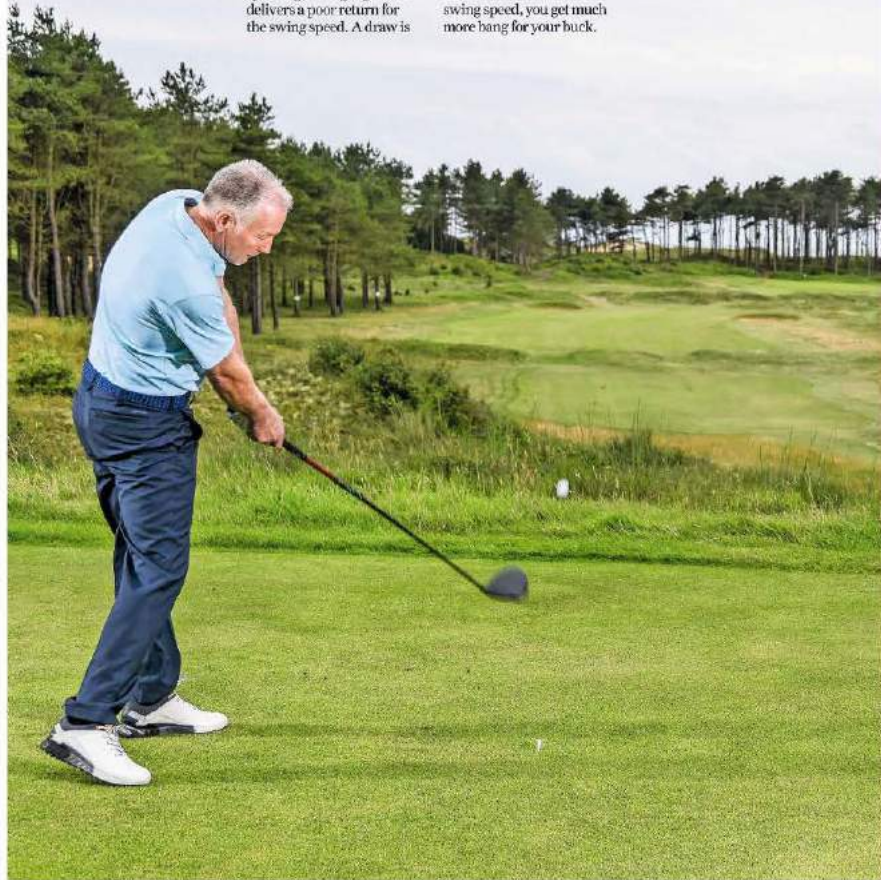
**AVERAGE PROXIMITY BY CLUB**



**HOW TO HIT IT**

To develop a drawing tee shot, you'll need to make adjustments to both the swing path and the clubface. The typical club player gets steep with the driver, swinging down into the ball from high to low. Invariably, this produces a swing path that cuts across the ball from outside to inside the ball-target line; the result is a weak, high-spinning, slicing flight that delivers a poor return for the swing speed. A draw is

pretty much the opposite. This time the club swings through impact on a much shallower plane, an attack angle that creates a stronger flight and promotes an in-to-out path. The clubface now needs to be closing through the ball to avoid pushing the ball right – a much stronger move that piles extra pressure into the ball. From the same swing speed, you get much more bang for your buck.



**STEP 1**

**PATH GET SET FOR IN-TO-OUT**

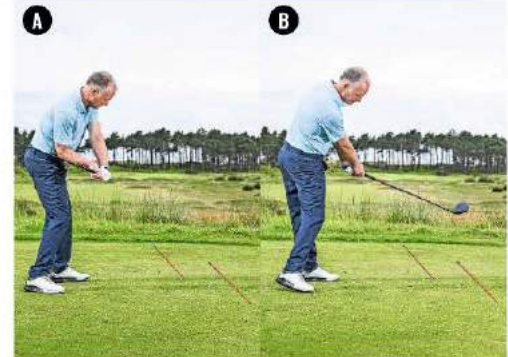
For this drill, swing to a tee peg. The idea here is to build an in-to-out gateway, one obstacle behind the ball and slightly outside the ball's target line, and the second forward of the ball and slightly inside the line. Ideally you will use two short cones or dowels, set at a similar angle to the clubshaft at address. But you could also use two pegs of balls to create your 'gateway'.

**A Inside delivery**

Very simply, all we are going to do here is get used to delivering the club through the gate – the clubhead missing the back and forward obstacles. As you swing down, the presence of the rear obstacle, just outside the ball target line, will encourage you to attack the ball more from the inside... and on a shallower angle.

**B Exit right**

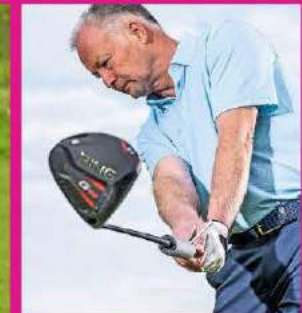
Similarly, the forward obstacle works to stop you pulling the club left through impact (right-handers). Retraining your path won't happen in five swings, but spend time with this drill – swinging over a tee peg – and you will develop the mechanics that will help you straighten out that old, cutting action.



**STEP 2**

**FACE CHANGE YOUR GRIP TO SQUARE IT UP**

For right-handed golfers, turning your hands clockwise on the grip – gloved hand more on top of handle, lower hand more underneath – will help you square the face up. Use your thumb/forefinger crease as a guide; make sure it points up towards your trail shoulder when the clubface is square. Put some old pipe lagging on the shaft and stick a tee peg into it to help you.



**Downward-facing Big Dog**

With your grip in place, practise rotating your forearms and clubface through impact. Work on getting the clubface to look down at the ground as the clubshaft swings through horizontal, again using the peg in the lagging as a guide. Experiment with blending this closing face with the in-to-out path... and turn a fade into a draw.



**MOST-WANTED  
#2  
SHOTS**

**Accurate hybrids**

**S**hot Scope stats are unequivocal in detailing how the hybrid gives the regular amateur player better results than a long iron. On average, greens in regulation jumps from 13% to 19% for golfers choosing a 4-hybrid over a 4-iron, with an average proximity of 5ft closer to the hole.

The difference is even more marked from the rough, where so many drives end up. The hybrid's curved, sleek profile helps it glide where a more angular iron snags... and that means a squarer face and more ball speed from tangy lies.

Hitting a hybrid from the rough improves GIR by 8%, which is equal to hitting 1.5 more greens per round. Overall, this would save 0.4 shots per round.

**4 IRON AVERAGE PROXIMITY vs 4 HYBRID AVERAGE PROXIMITY**

|    | FROM FAIRWAY | FROM ROUGH | OVERALL PROXIMITY |
|----|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| 4I | 74ft         | 95ft       | 85ft              |
| 4H | 69ft         | 82ft       | 76ft              |

**4 IRON GIR vs 4 HYBRID GIR**

|    | FROM FAIRWAY | FROM ROUGH | OVERALL PROXIMITY |
|----|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| 4I | 13%          | 7%         | 10%               |
| 4H | 19%          | 15%        | 17%               |

'On average for amateurs, GIR jumps from 13% to 19% using a hybrid rather than a 4-iron — ending 5ft closer to the hole'

**HOW TO HIT IT**

Even once you make the wise choice, there are still some technical elements to consider when playing a hybrid from the rough. While it is especially effective in light rough, the thicker grass will still try to muffle impact and slow the clubhead down. Minimise

its effect by cutting the ball up and out. The out-to-in path of the fade promotes a more squeezing attack angle that helps you get more clubface on the back of the ball... and the low-CG design of the hybrid will help with launch, even from this slight downward strike.



**1 Set-up: Aim open**  
As you address the ball, aim feet, hips and shoulders left of parallel to the ball-target line (right-handers). This programs in a leftward path for the club through the ball, helping you play the cut shape this lie and shot demands.



**2 Set-up: Ball opposite lead chest**  
A downward, squeezing strike may seem to warrant moving the ball back in your stance, but this can encourage a straighter path and a shallower attack. Instead play the ball under your lead chest, and set your weight 55%-45% under your lead foot.



**3 Backswing: Feel 'stacked'**  
As you swing back, feel your upper body rotating on top of your lower half; your head remains between your feet, not over your trail foot. This more 'stacked' rotation helps create a slightly steeper downswing that lets you squeeze down on the ball.



**4 Throughswing: Punch it out**  
Commit to the shot, swinging left along your toe line. But keep your throughswing short and punchy. This feeling delays the full release of the clubhead, helping you find that compressing, squeezing strike.



**MOST-WANTED  
#3  
SHOTS**

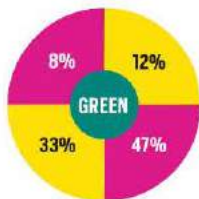
**Flag-hunting approaches**

**S**hot Scope data reveals that 72% of danger is at the front of the green – usually sand or water – with just 28% lurking behind. So missing long is typically significantly less of a problem than missing short.

However, the data also shows how 80% of misses inside 150 yards are short... with 60% of those misses ending up right of the pin (right-handers). Adjusting your strategy by playing for the back of the green yardage, and aiming slightly left, would increase your greens-hit percentage and reduce the most common short right miss.

Implementing this would mean more shots hit the green and will save on average 1.3 shots per round. Playing more for the back of the green yardage also means that if a shot is mishit or not struck 100% perfectly, it will be more likely to still make it to the green.

**WHERE GOLFERS MISS GREENS**



**HOW TO HIT IT**

Our stats show just how common a short right miss is with the short irons. We can tackle this from a couple of directions – first by reassessing our target, and secondly by learning the weight shift that will help you strike these shots crisply and with enough power to get pin-high.

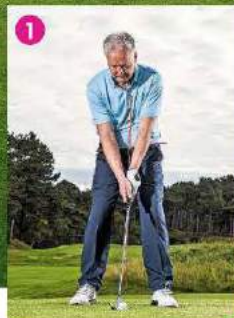
Unless you're playing on a firm, running course, you will be looking to carry the ball most of the way to the pin with the scoring clubs. But Shot

Scope shows us that when we target the pin with this mission, the typical miss comes up short and often to the right (right-handers).

So for an easy solution, adjust your targeting. Picture two upturned umbrellas flanking the flag, but left or so beyond it. If you tend to miss right, shift the umbrellas left of the flag. Visualise landing the ball between the two. You will be surprised how this simple change of goal will help get the

ball back to the flag more often.

Technically, a big reason club golfers come up short on short shots is a reluctance to get forward through the shot. When your weight or centre of mass remains static – or even falls back – you can't compress the ball properly, and your quality of strike suffers. The two canes below help illustrate the ideal motion; their crossing point – near the belt buckle in the centre of your pelvis – represents your centre of mass.



**1 Address: Central**  
Play the ball in the middle of your stance and spread your weight evenly across both feet. Set the shaft in a neutral position, as the clubmaker designed the club. Here, the centre of mass is broadly central.



**2 Impact: Over the lead heel**  
To create an effective, compressing strike, you must shift your pelvis and centre of mass forward through the ball. By impact it should fall a few inches ahead of the ball, around your lead heel. This creates increased shaft lean and delofts the club, creating a stronger, crisper strike.



**3 Finish: Over the lead ankle**  
As you continue to shift and rotate, your centre of mass continues to move forward. By the end of your action you should aim to feel your pelvis over the outside of your lead foot as part of a solid, straight lead side. Keep working on this forward shift to add power and penetration to your scoring-club shots.



**MOST-WANTED  
#4  
SHOTS**

**Find the magic circle from sand**

**G**reenside bunker up-and-down percentages increase significantly when the bunker shot gets inside 15ft. This should be the aim for higher-handicap golfers (10 and above). As soon as a golfer gets up and down out a greenside bunker one in three times, they are ultimately saving one shot per round.

That said, the goal for the average double-digit handicapper should not be aiming to get up-and-down but to get the ball in the hole in three shots or fewer. Simply ensuring they get the ball out of the bunker on the first attempt will improve their ability to do this. Do not compound the error.

**RESULTS FROM GREENSIDE BUNKERS**

|     |            |          |            |             |                |
|-----|------------|----------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| PRO | 46%        | 9.4ft    | 2%         | 49%         | 0%             |
| 2   | 32%        | 12.5ft   | 10%        | 34%         | 1%             |
| 8   | 21%        | 15.1ft   | 19%        | 29%         | 4%             |
| 14  | 13%        | 16.1ft   | 32%        | 22%         | 8%             |
| 20  | 8%         | 16.4ft   | 42%        | 15%         | 14%            |
| 26  | 5%         | 17.7     | 50%        | 11%         | 21%            |
|     | INSIDE 6FT | AVG PROX | MISS GREEN | UP & DOWN % | LEFT IN BUNKER |

*"If a golfer gets up and down from a greenside bunker one in three times, they are ultimately saving a shot a round"*

**HOW TO HIT IT**

Greenside bunkers cost us shots because of large errors – a 14-handicapper, on average, misses the green with one in three shots. Clearly, this means we are either leaving the ball in the trap or skimming it through the back. The best way to leave either of those mis-strikes behind is to develop a simple technique based around the ability to hit the ball around seven yards or 20ft – the length of most greenside bunker shots and one that will almost

always find that 15ft circle. A great way to train this shot is by focusing on the lean in the shaft – both at address and at impact. Yes, in the ideal bunker impact there is no lean – forward or back – in the shaft. This promotes the shallow attack that allows you to take an equally shallow and controllable sand divot from under the ball, allowing you to control strike and distance. Here's how to work on delivering that head/handle dead heat for impact...



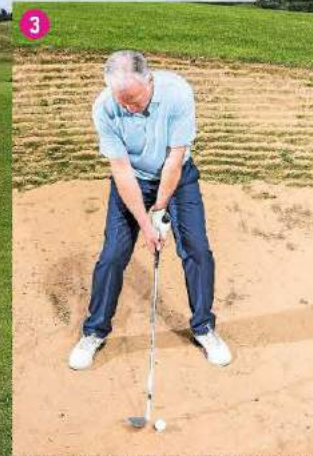
**1 The dragger...**

In the swing, your lead hand tends to drag the club; it pulls the handle, and the clubhead follows. While this can help us compress irons above ground, in bunkers a dominating lead hand tends to create a steep attack and sees too much sand taken.



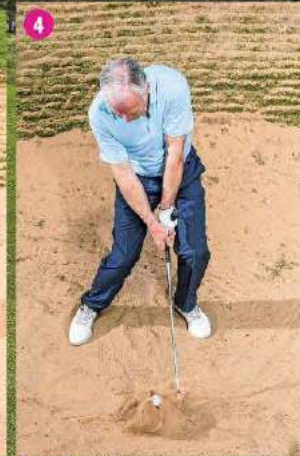
**2 ... and the thrower**

The trail lower hand, in contrast, is a thrower – it wants to release the clubhead past the ball. A free release of the trail hand helps take out the natural forward shaft lean created by the downswing and deliver that more level strike through the sand.



**3 Address: Neutral shaft**

With the role of each hand sorted out, turn your attention to your address. Play the ball just forward of centre in your stance and add a little extra weight into your lead side. Set the shaft in its impact position, handle level with the hose of the club.



**4 Impact: Return to neutral**

As you swing, focus on returning the club to its neutral-address lean; the clubhead level with the handle as it enters the sand. Keep those hand roles in mind, allowing the lower hand to release the club under the ball.





**MOST-WANTED**  
**#5**  
**SHOTS**

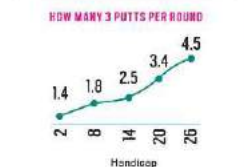
**Lag it to the bin lid**

**P**utting data for long and short putts tends to be grouped together because a three-putt can be down to a mistake with either the first or the second putt.

The bottom line is that there is a significant rise in make percentage from 4ft versus 6ft: a 14-handicapper makes 77% of four-footers but just 38% of six-footers.

The aim should be to get the first putt inside 4ft, particularly for any double-digit handicapper. Doing this would save one to two shots per round depending on handicap.

Overall, eliminating all three putts completely from your round would save on average 2.7 shots.



**HOLDING OUT FROM 4FT AND 6FT**

| Handicap | MAKE % FROM 4FT | MAKE % FROM 6FT |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2        | 85%             | 67%             |
| 8        | 80%             | 45%             |
| 14       | 77%             | 38%             |
| 20       | 75%             | 33%             |
| 26       | 68%             | 27%             |
| AVG      | 77%             | 42%             |

**HOW TO HIT IT**

**PUTTING FROM RANGE CUTTING OUT THE THREE PUTTS**

Clearly there are two elements to getting your first putt close enough to avoid a three-putt: distance and direction. Here, we'll address both elements with simple drills designed to help you two-putt from range more often.



**STEP 1**

**Direction: Widen the gates**

For this drill you are going to create three sets of 'gates' with six balls. The first set should be about 5-6ft ahead of the ball, and just 6-8in apart; the second set should be around half way between the ball and the hole down your line, and around 18in apart. The third set should flank the hole, 2ft either side of it. On breaking putts, set these gates to frame your curving line.

**Find the gaps**

From here, strike a group of balls with the obvious goal of feeding each through all three sets of gates. This provides...

- Great feedback on your ability to hit your starting line.
- A target zone that is both achievable but exacting enough to get the putt within two-putt range.
- A greater awareness of how to factor in green contours to your starting line.

**STEP 2**

**Distance: Work on your strike quality**

When it comes to distance control we tend to think in terms of making the appropriate stroke length for the length of putt. But the plain fact is that strike quality can completely override this. Two putts, created through the same stroke length and acceleration can roll out to very different distances if one is struck from the centre of the putter and one from the toe or heel. Inconsistent striking ruins distance judgement because you're left unsure of whether to strike the putt harder or softer. So, to work on distance control, work on developing a consistently solid strike. Here is a simple drill that helps...



To keep track of the quality of your striking on long putts, all you need is a piece of chalk. Rub the chalk against the ball on the point where you intend to strike it – perhaps on one of the linear decals.



Now strike a series of putts from range. After each putt, check the mark on the putter face, and rechalk the ball. In time you will build up an accurate picture of your striking pattern, and develop a new focus for contacting the ball on the sweetspot.





## 4-8-FOOT PUTT GET MORE ASSERTIVE

As the stats suggest, we don't hole enough putts in the 4-8ft range. Yet they are vital to your score. These are the par-savers, putts that can keep the momentum going and determine whether you will leave the course feeling you've scored as well as you could, or left a few out there. On these shorter putts, the typical club golfer struggles through becoming too tentative – either through the shortness of the stroke, or the importance of the putt. If you can get more assertive, your performance will improve... and we can often link this to improving rhythm and tempo.

There is no one tempo that is right for every golfer. You can putt assertively and confidently with a variety of stroke lengths and rhythms. The important thing is to find which one works for you. Here's how you can find out. So set up three 'gates' of two tee pegs. Make sure that the middle gate is central. Place the ball here, and address the ball.

### STEP 1

#### 1 50-50

Start by using the outer pegs to frame the backswing and throughswing lengths. Hit five putts using this 50-50, pendulum-type rhythm. How comfortable does this feel to you? Does the putter's acceleration feel natural and consistent?

#### 2 Two-thirds/one-third

For the next set of five putts, swing back to the rear pegs but through to midway between the front two sets. This is more of a pooping rhythm, used traditionally by Gary Player and more recently by Phil Mickelson. How does this feel?

#### 3 One-third/two-thirds

For the final set of putts, switch it around. Go back to midway between the back two sets, and swing through the level with the front gate. How smooth does the putter's acceleration feel? How well are the five balls grouped?



### STEP 2

#### Billiards drill

Even after 15 putts, you should have a good idea of which type of stroke works best for you. Whichever you choose, make sure you employ it with conviction. As a great practice drill before you play, place a ball six inches in front of the hole and try to knock it in with the one you're striking. This will help you develop that all-important assertive rhythm for the round to come.



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