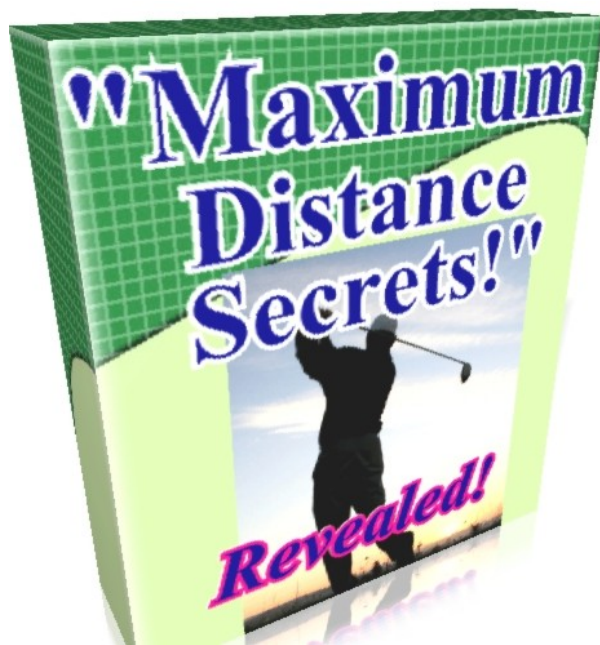


Strictly Off The Record
"Short Game Domination"
Mini-Report



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I. Why Short Game Is So Important

Short game is the term that golfers use to describe all shots made from approximately 75 yards toward the hole or the 'scoring distance.' Ideally, we all want to get our balls onto the green in a single shot. But, that rarely happens. So, you'll need to have good short game.

That's just how it works...

A. The Journey

Golf is a journey that seemingly never ends once you embark. For those of us who have enjoyed this sport for a long time, we have come to the understanding that it's about the ride, not the destination.

We are always trying to improve & we enjoy the feeling as our skills advance.....

Like any sport, our goal is to get better every time we play. While the journey is great, so are the advancements in our games....

B. Short Game Is Key

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The National Golf Foundation estimates that there are over 36 million people in the United States alone that play golf.

Almost half of these people are between the ages of 20 and 40. Roughly 20% of these players are female. Golf fans spend an enormous amount of money every year on golf equipment and golf course fees: an estimated \$25+ billion.

\$25 billion indicates an incredibly passionate market. Even though all of this money is spent year after year, the average scores have not improved very much over.

The average score is still approximately 100. Only 22% of golfers score better than a 90 (for an 18 hole course). And the par on just about every golf course is 72.

Not everyone who plays golf has a desire to constantly lower their score, but, most of us do. The rumor is that the average golfer is happy to shoot around 85. 85 isn't bad, but is that the best that you should hope for?

Hopefully not!

II. Precision Orientation

Guys Tiger Woods or Greg Normand don't win because of their wonderful long-distance tee shots. Their golf scores depend on *short game as much as they do long distance drives.*

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Regardless of your score, more than half of your strokes will come from short game.

When it comes to mastering short game, the focus is more about *precision*, rather than distance or strength.

A lot of the time, your success on the course will largely be determined by how well you play short game. Unlike other sports, golf doesn't depend solely on a player's raw power. A great round has as much to do with intellect, technique, & making the right decisions as it does strength. (Though, my main course revolves around power, short game needs to be discussed here.)

You'll often hear golfers speak of their 'approach shots' which describe each swing made towards the hole. Each one must be carried out with the right speed & at the perfect angle.

Your short game must be mastered.

Every shot counts.

Getting the timing right with just enough strength to move the ball accordingly can drastically affect your score.

The tee off & then each shot towards the hole can best be thought of using the analogy of a jet airplane.

Initially, a jet takes off with as much force as it needs to become

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airborne.

However, when it's time to reach its destination, the jet (just like the golf ball) coasts in with pinpoint accuracy. The jet needs perfect execution, the right amount of speed, and hopefully it will land perfectly in the landing zone.

A. What Makes Up Short Game

Shots that typically make up short game include pitch shots, chip shots, bunker shots, flop shots, and putts.

1. Pitch Shots: Pitch shots are often used when trying to get a ball over an obstacle. This type of shot generally makes the ball go airborne for 75% of its movement before rolling on the green.

2. Chip Shots: Chip shots only have a small amount of initial loft, typically travel a small distance (measured in feet), & generally have a slow roll towards the hole.

3. Bunker Shots: As the term implies, the bunker shot is used to knock the ball from a bunker area. The standard club used here is the sand wedge, which causes the ball to fly high & land sharply near the hole.

4. Flop Shots: Flop shots make a ball becomes airborne, flying practically straight up, & landing near the hole without rolling.

5. Putts: The putt is the very last shot made: the goal is to sink the

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ball into the hole.

III. Take More Putts

While it's true that much of your short game shots will be taken from as far as 70 to 75 feet away from the hole, others will be from as close to a foot or so off of the green.

There are many variables to take into account when deciding what kind of shot to take. These include the weather, the terrain, distance, the type of club to use, & many others. Also, holding back your ego in order to prevent misjudgments doesn't hurt either.

A. Putting

Learning how to put is essential to improving your golf game. For example, if the ball is lying 20 to 30 feet away from the hole, it's better to putt instead of sending it flying through the air with brute force.

The idea is to get the ball on the ground as soon as possible in order to bring short game into play. Trying to keep the ball airborne during every shot shouldn't be your goal. Getting it into the hole in as few shots as possible should be.

When you choose to putt, you generally have more control & there is (hopefully) less room for error. You can concentrate better when standing directly over your target line. Just putt right through your

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shot.

Also, putting involves less work too- it's just plain easier. Everyone likes that.

B. What To Focus On?

Putting takes the integration of a variety of skills. You must use your judgment in order to determine the proper speed & distance needed to line up the shot.

Furthermore, you need to take the following variables into account too:

1. The wind factor & how it will affect the direction of the ball. Will it blow the ball left or right? Or, will it add too much distance, or not enough?
2. Likely outcomes of this hole. Have you played it before? What do you remember?
3. Grounds conditions. Is it wet? This can be a HUGE factor. Adjust your putts accordingly.

IV. Get Low

Why do most golfers spend most of their time trying to hit shots that go airborne at great distances? Perhaps it's ego, or maybe it's just

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plain fun (it is).

Knocking a great shot far into the sky may have some appeal, but when it comes to short game, you must use different strategies in order to lower your score.

One strategy is to continually hit the ball lower. Not only is it effective, but it keeps it safe. Low shots tend to have a better outcome too.

Your goal is to lower your score. So, just think lowww...

Look at these examples:

A. When Your Ball Is Close To The Green

When your ball is close to the green, it is difficult to determine how far it will travel when you send it into the air. Keeping an eye on the ball's destination is much easier when keeping the trajectory lower.

Keep the ball low enough so that it rolls most of the distance as close to the hole as possible. When your ball is sitting just 30 to 40 yards away from the hole, you will only invite problems if you decide to pop it up too far up into the air.

B. During Windy Weather Conditions

When you are playing during high winds, your game can turn into a disaster in just one stroke. By hitting the ball high in the air, you

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give away your control & are more susceptible to wind's mercy.

Your ball can end up flying to the left, the right, or even into a greater distance than was intended. By keeping it low but firm, the wind has much less of a chance to interfere with the ball's travel path...

C. Blocked Areas

Often, you will make a shot & the ball will end up underneath a tree or some other immovable obstacle that prevents you from getting it airborne. This is a perfect opportunity to practice your low shots in order to remove yourself from a sticky situation.

But wait!

There's A LOT MORE than was presented here!

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