

Here is the free report I promised you. I know you're looking to shave a few strokes off your play on the greens or you wouldn't have signed up. I won't pretend to be the world's best putter but I've included a few things that have really helped me take my game to the next level.

So let me guess - you've tried just about everything you can think of but are still struggling to "find your stroke." You're frustrated because you're still having trouble reading the break or speed of the green no matter how many gimmicks you've tried. You're annoyed because you continue to lip your putts, leave them short, or run them long. And you're absolutely sick and tired of 3-putts. Does this sound familiar?

I only know all this because I used to struggle with the same things. My name is Paul "The Golf Hack" Austin and although I LOVE golf, I used to HATE the way I putted.

When I started getting serious about my golf game, I realized that putting was where I needed the most work. I would have some decent days on the green...but I would have many more BAD days. I was just so inconsistent!

I felt like I was improving in other areas of my game - I was becoming a better driver and ball striker and my iron play was getting there. But one area of my game where I didn't see any consistent improvement was with my putting.

So, like you I'm sure, I tried to fix it on my own. And I tried EVERYTHING! I read all the magazines, watched all the videos, and bought all the gimmicky "guaranteed to improve your putting overnight" quick fixes. I would get so excited when I bought a new gadget or learned a new tip that I would rush out to the practice green and literally spend hours trying it out. And sometimes it helped on the practice green...but definitely not on the course when it really mattered.

So I tried even more things. Over the course of a few years I experimented with different putters, different stances, and different grips. I paid hundreds of dollars for lessons from a "pro" who was probably ten years younger than I was (worst money I ever spent). But none of this really made me any better either.

I'll admit, I was frustrated. I didn't expect to be like Tiger out there but I DID expect at least some consistency after everything I had tried. I thought it was a lost cause and that I was forever stuck with being an up and down, sub-par putter. I figured that the all those 3-putts a round was just something I couldn't avoid and had to learn to deal with.

Luckily, I stumbled across a putting book that dramatically changed my game. I found it in the "games" section of a used book store for about \$2. It was old (I think it was published in the 1950's or so) and it was more of a pamphlet than an actual book. I flipped through it not expecting much but something seemed to click so I took it home. Keep in mind that I had tried virtually everything up to this point so even though I was interested in reading the book, I was pretty skeptical that it would actually produce results...but I didn't remain skeptical for long.

The big premise of the book was that we all tend to overanalyze our putts and needlessly make putting more complicated than it needs to be. Even though there are certain methods, tricks, technologies and gadgets that WILL help us improve, one thing is more important than all the rest:

Your mental approach BEFORE the shot!

I know, I know - it sounds a little too simple to be true but think about it...how many different things do you think about before you attempt a putt? How many thoughts constantly run through your head? How worried are you about your stance, your grip, your read? If you're like I was, you'll recognize the truth of this problem.

The book is no longer in print but I wrote down what I thought were the most important "secrets." I can honestly say that I used these three tips to turn the corner on my putting game. Like I mentioned at the beginning, I won't pretend that I am the best putter on the planet (not yet at least :) ) but I WAS able to knock about 6 strokes off my putting game within three weeks of using the tips outlined in the book.

And I KNOW they work because they are the same techniques the pros use to become world-class putters...

I'll be honest - the methods I outline below will not guarantee overnight success. Nor will they be all you need to improve. You will also need sound mechanics and the right equipment. But don't worry, I have plenty of things to share with you in the future that will lead to more success. But, none of that matters unless you first learn to conquer your pre-putt mentality.

Now, I want to keep this as brief as possible because we all suffer from "information overload" and, like I mentioned above, putting doesn't have to be all that complicated. So here are the three most important things to focus on if you are serious about improving your putting.

### **Pre-Putt Routine:**

Look, you and I both know we have a tendency to focus on every little thing before we pull the trigger on our putts. We worry about our grip, our stance, our read, our lag. We worry about our stroke, our rhythm, our past putts. We worry about everything except PUTTING THE BALL IN THE HOLE!

That's the goal, right? All the things we think about BEFORE the actual putt are just ways we have trained ourselves to think will make it easier for us to put the ball in the hole. But, we complicate the process and fill our heads with a ton of nonsense before we even pull the putter back.

Trust me, all those things are important. We need to account for those things if we ever want to stay consistent. But we shouldn't be THINKING about those things on the green...they should be second nature. They should be so ingrained in our subconscious that we don't need to actively think about them. They should be automatic.

Too much time for thinking can lead to performance anxiety or second-guessing what our own eyes tell us.

So, how do you limit your thinking and worrying and focus on putting the ball in the cup? By developing a sound and consistent pre-putt routine.

By developing a consistent pre-putt routine, you're actually doing more than just taking a couple of practice strokes. You are actually activating and taking advantage of "muscle memory."

We've all heard the sayings "practice makes perfect" and "repetition is the mother of skill." But what's the truth behind these sayings?

It has to do with the fact that repetition actually creates certain neuro-associations in your body that allow you to perform the same task in the future more efficiently and effectively. The more times you perform a task the same way, the easier, faster, and better you become at that task. And, better yet, that task becomes second-nature meaning you don't have to actually THINK before you DO.

Developing a consistent pre-putt routine works the same way. You immerse yourself in the execution of a putt as opposed to thinking about everything you have to do before the putt. You turn off the mind and begin to trust your natural stroke. You become more confident, you eliminate second-guessing, and you start SINKING MORE PUTTS!

It sounds so simple that it doesn't seem like it would be a big deal but a sound pre-putt routine is vital to your consistency on the greens. If you don't believe me, take it from Tiger Woods who, aside from being the most famous golfer on the planet, is widely considered one of the most mentally tough athletes of all-time based on his ability to perform well under pressure. What does Tiger have to say about tackling pressure?:

"The best way to handle pressure is to establish a pre-putt routine and never deviate from it. It should be automatic, freeing your mind so you can focus on the task at hand."

Like Tiger says, your pre-putt routine should be automatic taking most of the thinking out of the process and focusing your energy on execution. If you are the gun aiming at the target (the cup), your pre-putt routine is your trigger.

Again, it seems too simple to be that important. But DO NOT overlook the importance of a solid and consistent pre-putt routine. If you do, you will never show consistent improvement in your putting game.

**Visualization:**

The process of visualization is a technique that most elite athletes employ to perform well in their respective sports. You've probably heard of the research study at a leading university where they took a group of basketball players and divided them up into three groups.

The first group practiced free throws on the court, the second group practiced free throws in their minds (they visualized themselves taking free throws), the third group did nothing at all.

To the astonishment of the researchers, the group that practiced free throws in their minds by visualizing dramatically improved their free-throw percentages whereas the other two groups showed virtually no change!

Visualization is especially important in individual sports like golf. Jack Nicklaus, the all-time PGA leader in major victories and considered the best golfer of all-time, attributes a lot of his success on the course with the fact that he visualized each and every shot before he actually took it. He imagined exactly how he wanted the shot to play out in real life and then went to work to make that shot happen.

But he didn't just "see" the shot. He said that the process was like he "went to the movies." He saw the whole picture - his swing, the trees on the course, the flag blowing in the wind - as though he was an actor and the shot was being shown on screen. More than just "seeing" the picture, he used all his senses including how the shot would sound, what the feel of the wind was like, and how the shot would make him feel.

Visualization works the same way with putting. As part of your pre-putt routine, you need to pretend you are "at the movies" and that the actor (you) is going to knock the putt in the hole - no ifs, ands, or buts!

Visualization works best if you don't just "see" the ball going in the hole but you convince yourself that the ball WILL go in the hole. This simple process goes hand in hand with a solid pre-putt routine and not only increases your confidence in your putting ability but also proves itself out on the course. You will begin to second-guess yourself less and sink putts more.

### **Trust Your Stroke:**

This is such an important piece of information that most of us overlook when trying to putt. We all complain about not being more consistent with our putting game. We would love to be more consistent and make those good days more frequent than the bad days. Yet, even with that said, we show no consistency with our actual strokes.

In some cases, we think about putts that we missed on previous holes and start to adjust our putt mid-round. Other times, the pressure of the moment causes us to mistrust our natural and practiced stroke. But remember, if you have established a solid

pre-shot routine and have effectively visualized the ball going in the hole, the only thing left to do is to actually pull the trigger and PUTT THE BALL!

Like I said before, we all have a tendency to try new things every time we are on the course hoping for that quick fix. There were times I would actually switch putters or switch my grip from overlap to the claw grip and back again...during the same round!

Looking back on it now, it sounds crazy! But I know you've been there, too! But, if you've developed a solid and consistent pre-putt routine AND you have effectively visualized the ball in the hole, then TRUST YOUR STROKE. Don't mess up all the hard work by tinkering with it on the course.

Luke Donald went from one of the worst putters on Tour as a rookie to one of the top putters in 2009. Asked what his keys to success were he said that it was when he finally adopted one stroke approach and stuck with it. He went with what he thought was the best stroke at the time and practiced that consistently.

This is not to say he hasn't varied his technique over the years because he certainly has. But they have been MINOR adjustments that were made over a long period of time on the practice green. How can you expect to find consistency when you change your putting stroke every time you are on the course? You can't. And if you can't find consistency on the course, how can you expect to improve your putting? You can't!

So pick what you feel is your best stroke and stick with it. Focus on making the same stroke every time you pull the putter back. You can make minor adjustments on the practice green if something is not working right but NEVER change your stroke on the course!

### **Final Word:**

Like I mentioned before - these three "tricks" alone will not turn you into the world's best putter overnight. But, these three things are the foundation of a solid putting game and, if you work on them, you WILL see improvement. But, without the foundation, you can never hope to achieve long-term success in your overall putting game.

### **BONUS:**

I know I promised to make this report short and sweet but I can't let you leave without giving you a little more information that has helped me improve over the last few months.

Just promise me you WILL NOT neglect the methods I outlined above - seriously, if you don't build the foundation, nothing you do on top of that will matter.

Okay, enough of the lecture - here are some other things you can focus on to improve your game.

## **Pay Close Attention -**

As I said before, great putters plan their putt well before they actually pull back the pendulum. Make sure you gather all the information that you need regarding the green, the surrounding area, and the conditions well in advance.

Great putters don't work with secret information that you don't have. Great putters just use the information they have access to better than you and I and they are very observant.

What does this mean for you? This means beginning to scan your horizon and the putting surface when you are still well away from the green. Ideally, you will have put your ball on the green with a shot from 50-100+ yards out. As you are walking up towards the green, start the scanning process now.

Take a big picture look as you are walking up to your ball, even when you are still on the fairway. Keep in mind the following:

- Overall Slope - obviously, the farther out you are, the better view you have of the "overall" slope of the green. Too often, we get right on top of our putt and fail to see or account for the big picture view of how the green slopes.
- Bodies of Water - it's no secret that putts have a tendency to break a little more towards large bodies of water. While this part of the process is a little more advanced, make sure you keep the idea in the back of your mind.
- Wind - wind affects putts, too. Keep an eye on the flagstick and an ear to the ground. If there is light to moderate wind, don't worry about it affecting your putt. But if it's howling towards you (or away) it can definitely have an impact on the speed of your putt.
- Dampness / Dryness Fairway - as you're walking up to the green, keep an eye on how the fairway around the green looks. Is it damp or is it bone dry? Has it rained lately or has the grounds crew watered the greens recently? All of this can factor into the speed of your putt.

Now as you get onto the green, it's time to shift your focus towards a "zoomed in" approach. Once you get on the green, make sure you are still in "observer" mode. This becomes second nature and you do it subconsciously if you follow the first three steps to a T but while you are practicing and getting in the habit, these methods must be included in your overall "pre-putt" routine. You should be an old-hat at this part of the process anyway but keep these things in mind:

- Multiple Angles - you already have an idea of the “big picture” break in your mind. Now is the time to make a few more angle reads to fine tune your placement. The three angles you should always focus on are:
  - Behind the ball towards cup
  - Behind the cup towards ball
  - 10-15 feet away from cup and ball and look at them both
- Your Partners’ Putts - obviously, you should always watch the break of your playing partners’ putts, even if they are not directly in line with your putt. It can give you valuable information on the “true break” of a particular green.
- Results of Your Past Putts - account for your past putts. Have the greens been faster or slower than you estimated? Have you been correct in the read of the breaks?

### **Always Think Speed First, Line Second -**

There’s nothing worse than leaving your putt too short or shooting it way past the hole. If you judge the speed correctly, even if you are off left or off right, you will most likely have an easy tap in. But, if you correctly judge the line of the putt but not the speed, you may very well leave yourself with a putt that is going to be difficult to sink. This is where 3-putts become a major issue.

So first decide on the most effective speed for the putt given the situation and information you’ve gathered. Envision this speed and make sure it’s what remains at the forefront of your pre-putt routine.

### **Consistent Stroke -**

I mentioned before that it is vital to develop a consistent pre-putt routine and stroke. Well, it’s worth repeating.

Did you know that 85% of a putt’s direction or line is determined by the angle the putter face makes on contact and only 15% of the putt is determined by the path of the stroke? That’s a pretty staggering number but not all-together that surprising. It makes sense.

But the problem is, we all tend to focus on the mechanics and our reads while neglecting the most obvious piece of information - the angle which the club face makes with the ball on impact.

This is why you should NEVER change the mechanics of your putt mid-round. If you do, not only will you be inconsistent, you will not be able to effectively evaluate your progress and you won’t know what you need to change on the practice green.

Once you've made all the decisions regarding the speed, line, direction of your intended putt, leave that info alone. Don't force or guide your ball into the hole - make consistent reads and consistent putts. The rest will begin to fall in place.

### **Rate It -**

The last thing to mention here is the importance of evaluating your progress. This is pretty easy to do on the practice green - ie, am I dropping the putts or am I a bit off? On the course, it's a little different. You don't want to overcomplicate putting but you do need to keep an accurate accountability of your game. Personally, I use a system that is easy to keep track of while not filling my head with a bunch of nonsense. I won't go into great detail here, but it consists of grading myself on 4 components of the putt using a scale of 1-5:

- Scan It - how well did I gather information on each green?
- Plan It - how well did I plan the speed and line of the putt given the information I gathered?
- Point It - did I line my ball, my stance, and my putter face in the direction I determined?
- Roll It - did I stick with the shot I had imagined or did I clam up during the backswing? Did I trust my stroke or did I try to guide the ball into the hole?

Obviously, you want to score as high as possible. This is an objective evaluation and not entirely accurate but, done consistently, it will not only give you valuable information to work off of in the future, but it will help keep your mind in the game and focused on the right information.

At the very least, you need to keep track of ALL your putts. You do this anyway, I am sure. But keeping track of your putts gives you a great indication of how consistent you are over time and whether you need a lot of work or not.

### **Clock Drill -**

This is just a simple little putting routine you can use on the practice green to improve your putting from a number of angles and distances. This is a good opportunity to refine your pre-putt routine.

Place a ball at one foot from the hole. This is your one o'clock angle. Go through your reads and practice your pre-putt routine as though this is the real thing. Putt the ball - if you miss, putt it out. There are no gimmies in this exercise.

Now, drop the ball two feet away at the two o'clock position. Again, follow your pre-putt routine to a tee and putt all balls out. Once you make the two footer from two o'clock, drop the ball three feet from the hole at the three o'clock position.

Do this for a full 18 “rounds” with the last shot coming from 18 feet away at the six o’clock position. Remember to keep track of your putts. This exercise allows for a wide range of putt angles and distances and gives you a relatively accurate gauge as to how you actually perform on the course. Plus, it’s a lot more fun than the “miss the putt start all over” drills.

Just remember, putt out every ball even if it’s from two inches out and count every stroke. There are no gimmies. Stick with this exercise while following through with a consistent pre-putt routine and making great reads and you can’t help to notice improvement.

Improvement breeds confidence and confidence translates to lower scores. Lower scores breed even more confidence which lowers future scores...and so on and so on.

Anyway, that’s enough for now. I really hope you use this information to get out there and start seeing immediate improvement! I look forward to sharing more of the tips and methods I have used to turn the corner on my putting but, until then, get out there and **SINK THOSE PUTTS!**

Signature...

Paul “The Golf Hack” Austin