

---

## Articles and Tips - Putting on an arc versus a straight line

---



Over the past 5 years the trend of putting instruction has been to swing the putter on an arc that swings from inside the ball on the backstroke to inside the ball on the thru swing. The putter face will open relative to the target but stay square to the arc on the backstroke and close relative to the target but stay square to the arc on the thru swing. The putter is designed to swing in the angle of the shaft, believes Scotty Cameron as does Stan Utley the putting guru. Cameron proves his point with a laser pen that attaches to the shaft of the putter and when the putter is swinging in the correct arc the laser travels on a straight line back and thru. But if the putter head swings on a straight line back and thru, the laser draws a big smiley face.

On the other hand, the Dave Pelz short game schools have taught the straight back straight thru theory. His study of putting theory has hours and hours of scientific research behind his beliefs. In this way of putting, the putter head swings straight away from the target and never rotates and the putter head swings thru the ball on a straight line to the target and never rotates.



Which is correct for you? There are many successful players that validate both of these methods. I am in the belief that some players see the ball rolling on a straight line, and are therefore linear in their focus. Other players see the ball rolling in an arc, and are therefore spatial in their focus. Meaning, the straight back straight thru theory is for linear focused players and swinging the putter on an arc fits the spatially oriented player.

The first illustration is how a linear focused player sees this putt. His read of the green gives the general thought of, "If I putt the ball on a line two feet right of the hole and if rolled in the right pace, the slope of the green will curve the ball in the hole." That is linear focus in a nutshell. If you look at all putts as straight putts just aimed on different lines, this fits the straight back straight thru theory.

The second illustration is how a spatially oriented player sees the same putt. His read of the green gives the general thought of, "If I roll this ball in the right pace, some place out there, it will curve in the hole." This spatial oriented view fits swinging the putter on an arc.

However there are few great putters that think linear and putt on an arc and vice versa, it is possible. Consider this, if you have changed your putting stroke because of what has been written on the success of swinging the putter on an arc. I suggest that you become more spatial in reading the greens and get the word "line" out of your vocabulary.

As Mr. Penick would say; "Go to dinner with good putters"!

---