

Articles and Tips - Controlling Pitching



◀ Controlling Launch in Pitch Shots with a Sandwedge.

To control the height or launch of the ball is very simple and helps create a successful short game. First imagine the height and visualize the roll the ball from a desired launch angle to a flagstick on the green. Second, we need the proper set-up for the shot and relate the loft of the wedge to the right hand (right handed players) to create this desired launch.

For a low pitch shot the ball must be back in the stance, hands centered in the middle of the body. With the hands and the shaft leaned forward of the ball it de-lofts the club-face. From this position swing the club back with your hands and arms, keeping the right palm down. With the right palm down, the club-face will remain down looking at the ball. The length of the backswing should be waist high or even shorter with the club in front of the body. If the club gets too far behind the body you will bottom out the swing before the ball and hit the shot fat or blade the ball on the upswing. The downswing is a relationship of arm swing and body rotation through the shot. During impact the right palm should be facing to the ground. The result is a pitch that has a low launch and a lot of roll.



◀ For a medium pitch shot move the ball to the middle of the stance, hands still centered in the middle of the body. From this position swing the club back with the hands and arms, the right palm should point parallel to your target line, like your shaking hands with someone. When the shaft of the club is parallel to the ground it should be parallel to the target line, with the toe of the club pointing up. This club is also in front of the body as referenced in the low pitch shot. The importance of the club in front of the body is to have a repeatable bottom of the swing and the club can strike the ground after it strikes the ball. Once again the downswing is a combination of arm swing and body rotation through the shot. At impact the right palm will face the target and create a higher launch of the ball with more air time and less roll.



◀ For the high pitch shot move the ball forward of center, hands centered in the middle of the body. Open the club-face and then grip the club, if you grip the club and then open the face it is not really open. This swing needs to be longer than the other pitch shots due to the loft. In the backswing use your hands and arms with the right palm up pointing to the sky. Again the downswing is a combination of arm swing and body rotation through the shot. At impact the right palm is facing up, this creates an extremely high launch with maximum air time and no roll. Gravity is your friend in this shot.

Pitch shots are truly a product of the right hand, and with a little short game work you too can hit it low and run the ball along the ground to the hole on the back of the green, or hit the high pitch over a bunker to a tucked flagstick with little or no green to land the ball.

Great Golf, Neil Wilkins