

# LEARN TO PLAY SIMPLY GREAT GOLF!

## Chapter 8: The Two Best Full Swing Exercises

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Chapter 7 taught you the best G.A.S.P Pre-Swing Fundamentals of Grip, Aim, Stance and Posture to promote your best golf swing. This chapter of Learn to Play Simply Great Golf teaches you the two most important full swing exercises for making your Simply Great Golf swing and my “Minimum Practice-Maximum Results” at-home practice plan for making your best swings and golf shots, consistently.

In general, the two most important focus points for making your best golf swings, from putting to driving, are to: 1) coordinate the swing of your arms with your body/torso rotation and 2) begin with and maintain the proper “tension level” in your arms and hands.

The following Full Swing Exercises are described for righties. You know what to do lefties! Left means right and right means left for you.

### **EXERCISE #1: THE ARMS SWING-BODY ROTATION COORDINATION (no club needed)**

This exercise basically teaches you your golf swing motion without a club. It is very important to begin with the proper stance and posture for achieving the correct motion.

Take your basic stance for a full swing with your feet pointed just slightly outward about 15 inches apart and your weight 50-50 slightly toward your insteps. Now set yourself into an athletic posture by standing up straight and then pushing your hips back as far as they will go while simultaneously allowing your upper body to tip forward. Add a slight knee flex and pick your heels up slightly and drop them so that your weight is slightly forward, toward the balls of your feet.

Now, make a fist with your left hand and with your thumb sticking out. Grip your thumb with the fingers of your right hand. Let your arms hang down from your shoulders relaxed with your left arm straight and your right arm slightly bent. Use a golf ball or any other focal point on the ground a couple of feet out from your stance to concentrate on staying centered or keeping your head steady until “ball-club contact position”.

Begin your “back-swing” by thinking to keep your head and lower body steady and simultaneously swing your arms and rotate your upper body. Think of your swinging arms as the leader of your upper body rotation and swing and rotate to the point you can feel your head beginning to turn. This is the completion of your full back-swing. A slight rotation of your head and a slight bending of your lead left arm are acceptable. The proper arms swing and body rotation would position your hands out to your side, not in front of you or behind you. Be aware of your spine angle and practice without changing your beginning spine angle, such as tilting left.

You should notice that your right arm has bent so that your elbow is pointing downward. Your upper body rotated near ninety degrees and your hips rotated near 45 degrees, with average flexibility. Your feet are still flat on the ground and your weight shifted so that you have 75% on the inside to center of your right foot. *Your lower body moves properly by working as a steady base that moves in response to your upper body rotation.*

Begin your “down-swing” concentrating on keeping your head steady and leading the downward swing of your arms with your body rotation. Your left side body leads your down-swing until your hands reach hip level. Now, your right side body leads your rotation to ball-club contact position and through to your finish. At ball-club contact position, let your head rotate toward your target as your body continues to lead your swinging arms to your full finish position.

Again, allow your lower body to move in response to the main rotation of your upper body in the down-swing and through-swing. Your weight will gradually shift from your right foot to your left so that approximately 60% to 70% of your weight would be on your left foot at ball-club contact position and 95% on your left foot at the finish. Your hips will finish facing your target so that a right angle to a line across your hips will point to your target. Your left leg will finish fairly straight and your right foot pivoted or rotated so that you are standing on the tips of your toes with your right foot at a vertical angle.

Your upper body will finish rotating so that a right angle to a line across your shoulders points approximately 45 degrees left of your target. Your body will also finish in an upright posture with your upper body tilted slightly inward resembling your beginning spine angle or posture. Your arms finish slightly bent with your hands across from your ear.

Practice this exercise as a single swing by re-setting your grip, stance and posture before each swing and practice 10 swings as a set. Saying general keywords or “trigger words” to yourself, prior to making your motion, is very helpful for influencing you to make the proper motion without becoming stifled by too many thoughts.

Say “rhythmic” to yourself for promoting a fluid and simultaneous swinging motion with your arms and rotation of your body and say “swing and turn, turn and swing” for promoting your arms swing as the leader of your back-swing and your body rotation as the leader of your down-swing and through-swing. Think “**rhythmic swing and turn, turn and swing**”.

Shorter versions of this motion for putting, chipping and pitching can also be practiced, as your arms swing-body rotation coordination is also one of the two key focus points for these swings.

## **EXERCISE #2: THE SWINGING LEVER –**

This is a great exercise that trains you to make the proper swinging, rotating and hinging action of your arms, hands, wrists and golf club. This swinging lever motion is greatly responsible for proper ball-club contact, ball direction and great distance or power.

It is very important to have the proper “grip” for achieving the correct motion. Let your arms hang relaxed by your sides and look at your hands. This is the general neutral alignment that matches a good basic golf swing for a straight ball flight. Your hands naturally hang in an “over” alignment rather than “under” as you see the back of your hands, rather than your palms.

Once you have formed your grip, with straight arms and the club head resting on the ground, use *just enough tension* in your hands to hinge your wrists and bring your club shaft to the horizontal position.

This position is the heaviest the club will ever feel and this position gives you the feel of the proper tension level of both your hands and arms that you must begin with and maintain throughout your golf swing. *I would estimate that ninety percent of poor golf shots come from increasing this beginning tension level prior to ball-club contact position.*

Take your basic stance and posture for a full swing. Think of your club as an extension of your arms and *swing* your arms and club out to your right side until your hands reach chest level. You should sense a gradual rotation of your arms, hands and club and a primary hinging action in your wrists that causes your right arm to hinge as the momentum of the club head weight swings upward. Your left arm should remain straight. Allow your upper body to engage and rotate.

*Swing* your arms and club back down and through to your left side until your hands reach chest level and again allow your upper body to engage and rotate. You will feel the club head weight momentum cause your wrists to unhinge and your arms, hands and club to rotate, if you maintained the proper tension level of both your hands and arms.

Practice this exercise as a continuous motion back and forth 10 times at a medium tempo with your hands traveling to chest level at each side. Say two keywords or “trigger words” to yourself to focus on the main points for making the proper motion. Say “soft” to yourself for beginning with and maintaining the proper tension level of both your hands and arms and say “rhythmic” for making a fluid swinging motion with your arms. Think “**soft and rhythmic**”.

Develop a minimum practice habit of practicing your 10-repetition Swinging Lever Exercise and 10 Arms Swing-Body Rotation Exercise on a regular basis and you will soon see the results with better, more consistent golf shots.

Chapter 9 of Learn to Play Simply Great Golf will detail “Keys for Gaining More Distance”.

*Mike Passmore has achieved a ranking of 2006 Top 6 PGA Instructor in the U.S. and he is a 3-Time PGA Section Teacher of the Year*