

# Pitching Drills For Consistency

*Following drills courtesy of Mel Sole, former South African Tour player*



Most of the amateurs I play with hit the ball well from tee to green, but when they get within 50 yards of the green they seem to struggle. "I don't have time to practice these shots," they tell me. "The pros have all the time in the world to stand and work on these shots, so they develop feel."

The 7-8-9 Method requires a little practice initially, but once you have established your distances you will be able to rely on it in the future.

Imagine as you address the ball that you have a large clock in front of you. Learn to swing your left arm (right arm for left handers) to the various "hours" of the clock. The 7 o'clock position is pictured above.

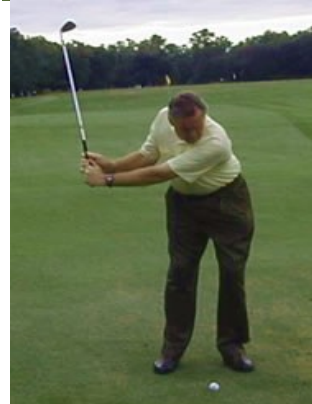
Notice in the photo above that there is a slight wrist cock. This is important as you need to cock the wrist to help deliver a slightly downward blow through the shot. Practice hitting shots like this until you can consistently hit shots a certain distance. This will become your 7 o'clock shot.



Practice hitting shots swinging your left arm to 8 o'clock and note your distances. This will become your 8 o'clock shot. This is the 9 o'clock position.

Practice the same as the first two shots, while swinging your arm to 9 o'clock.

Finish off swinging the arm to 10 o'clock and you will now have four specific distances that you can consistently pitch the ball.



Distances will vary from player to player as in full shots, but once you have them established you have a tried and true method to rely on. When you find yourself 40 yards from the flag on the course you can say to yourself, "OK, this is my X o'clock shot," and you know for sure that if you swing your arm to that position, the ball is going to go about 40 yards.

**Note:- it is the hands that travel to 7,8, 9 o'clock etc NOT the club head. It travels further.**

**There are three general rules that are very important in the pitch shot.**

1. Notice that at address the majority of my weight is on my front foot. This is important to help you not only keep your body steady during the swing, but to help you impart the downward blow that is important in creating the backspin you want on this shot. You will also notice looking at the other positions during the backswing that my weight does not shift to the back foot at any time. I keep my weight on the front foot even at the top of my backswing. (This is only for the pitch shot - not for full shots.)
2. It is important that the pace of the swing be consistent throughout. It is no good swinging slowly through one shot and quickly through the next. You'll get very inconsistent results. Try to imagine a pendulum and the way it moves backward and forward at the same pace. Try to feel this in all of your pitch shots.
3. Lastly, as you see here, it is important to follow through. Do not stop your follow through on this shot or you will constantly come up short. The follow through should finish at about 3 o'clock. See Picture below.

