

POWER DRILL - THE SIX-CLUB LUNGE

On the previous page we looked at the X-factor, and maxing out the angle between shoulder and hip turns. Here's a great drill that will help you build that up.

A Take six clubs. Hold them horizontally in front of you. With feet parallel to the shafts, rotate to your right (right-handers) as far as you can. This will help you stretch out the lat muscles under your shoulders. The weight of those six clubs creates mass and momentum, which you are training yourself to control, just as you need to do in a normal swing.

B Now we add a twist - literally. This time, lunge forward with your right foot as you rotate to the right.

Feel like you are turning the clubs over your right leg. What we're doing here is setting up some counter-rotation, your hips turning into and against the body's rotation. This is going to work that right glute (backside) muscle, especially with the weight of the clubs building momentum into your rotational movement.

I'd advise 15 backswing lunges over the right leg, followed by 15 throughswing ones over the left. The throughswing version helps you improve your ability to decelerate and finish in balance. If you don't have that, you'll fall ahead of the ball.



SCREEN TEST - HOW FAR CAN YOU TURN?

We've seen that power comes from the ability to load and unload your glutes and lats. But that's no good without stability. You need to be able to hold your position while you do it. This test will help.

- 1 Stand on the floor with your back to a wall.
- 2 Keeping both feet flat on the ground, rotate as far as you can and touch the wall behind you. Ideally you should be able to turn enough to touch the wall directly behind your back. If you can't, it's your short lats that are stopping you. Keep trying it and you'll gradually stretch them out.

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★ Consult your GP before starting a fitness programme.



Golf health shorts

Powering up
When you hit a ball you produce 4 horse-power in the space of 1.8 seconds. Your muscles consume enough energy to power fifteen 60 watt bulbs.

High speed
The clubhead approaches 140mph in the pro ranks, but the body can keep up; the sensory nerves from hand to brain are some of the body's fastest, with impulses travelling at 240mph.

Pace makers
The saying goes "train fast to be fast". We can learn from other sports by using fast-hand martial arts patterns, plyometric athletics throwing exercises, and even fast-feet football drills in our golf conditioning.

Joy of six
Muscles begin to fatigue after only six repeated drives, leading to technical breakdown... not what you want to practise. Down the range hit your long shots in clumps of no more than six.

Girl power
All this talk of power is so macho. But statistically the world's top golfer right now is 5ft 6in tall, 9 ½ stone and when driving averages 271.6 yards... her name's Annika. And for the record, she's pursuing her black belt in Karate.

HEALING HEELS

When you get a minute, find your golf shoes and sit them on a level surface, heels facing you. How upright are the backs?

Hopefully they are upright like the ones below. But look out for a lean, with the shoes either angled away from or towards each other. If you see this, your shoes are not offering enough support for your foot type. Bin them. Feet are the foundation for efficient movement; if your shoes do not offer the needed support they can cause problems - for swing and body.

If your shoes lean, seek advice from a pro. If they lean a lot, take your shoes and your feet to a podiatrist for a biomechanical assessment. It seems like a lot of fuss, but supportive shoes will lower your chances of injury.



DIET - Supplementary benefits

Go ACE for vitamin supplements:
+ A helps fight infection when your immune system's low - like after 36 holes! Eat calf's liver, oily fish, cream cheese, butter
+ C helps your body resist 'free radicals' - damaging chemicals produced by sporting activity. Eat bright-coloured fruit and veg.
+ E also fights those danger chemicals and improves the effectiveness of Vitamin A. Eat spinach, avocado (below) and muesli.

