

Weight Too Far Forward

It's one of the most frustrating faults in a golf swing. It's so easy for other people to see, but it's so hard for yourself to "feel". Basically your body weight is too far forward.... your centre of gravity is over your toes.... in essence you are effectively leaning forward, or you certainly will be at ball strike.

So what's the problem? It's a seemingly small fault but a long list:-

- You'll be close to your balance threshold, any further displacement forward and you are probably going to topple and make a step, or a capture movement, usually with your rear foot once you're past the ball.
- Even if you don't topple you are reducing your effective base of support... golf is hard enough without trying to do it balancing on tiptoes. We need a stable yet mobile base to transfer forces around.
- To hold on to your forward lean your calf and hamstring muscles are over-activated. This locks down the legs, restricting the relaxed and balanced action that they contribute to a full swing, and is an unnecessary energy leak in what might already be a "strained" swing.
- Effectively you are throwing your bodyweight at the ball, and your arms, and of course your swing plane can only follow this. It can be the trigger of a steep swing plane with a tendency to go "over the top" and have an inconsistent strike.
- If you want to get into biomechanics, the forward stance takes our centre of gravity further away from our axis of rotation... this is a bad thing. If you're in the office right now, whack a marker pen through a cd and spinning top it on the desk... easy. Now stick a lump of blue tack or a few paper clips on one edge and spin it... you need loads more energy and it is unstable... that second one is the toppler's swing.

There is actually a good reason why many of us have our weight too far forward, especially at impact. The whirling club creates momentum as we flail it in front of us. It's just like a propeller on a plane, and it actually drags us forwards. To counter act this we have to produce an opposing force in the opposite direction... a backwards harnessing force, and not a lean backwards! Leaning backwards brings with it another list of disasters. The harnessing force should keep us on neutral balanced feet, pretty much sharing our bodyweight evenly between heel and toe. Easy to understand, but much harder to achieve in practice.

I spend ages working with my golf athletes on balance, and stance stability, however I am often asked for a quick range drill to combat the forward stance. After warning about the perils of quick fixes, I get them to try this quick fix... it is a good one!

Range Drill:



Place a ball and address it with a mid iron and your normal set up



Don't move your posture or spinal/hip angles, but carefully upend the club, hold onto the head, and place the butt end between your legs and grounded behind you.
Place both hands on top of the club head



Drive your hands into the club head and push back down along the club shaft direction.
This will create a momentum force effectively vaulting you forwards onto your toes, similar to what can happen when you swing



Your job is to resist this with a counter force and to take the weight from your toes back to the middle of your feet. This doesn't mean leaning backwards, just feel your weight settling back and fire up the postural muscles that hold you evenly balanced over your feet



As you practice the balance of forces keeping your weight evenly spread, challenge this further by pushing harder down into the club, and add more distraction by pushing the club head from side to side. "Feel" how you need to counter balance



Now upend the club and simply take that "feel" directly into your set-up and swing

Practice this a few times and with different clubs and you'll soon build an appreciation of the neutral forward/backward feel at your feet. You'll be surprised at how this feeds up the chain and can improve other aspects of your swing and swing plane.