

A full-page photograph of a golfer in mid-swing on a green field. The golfer is wearing a light-colored sweater and dark trousers. The background shows a line of trees and a hill under a clear blue sky.

How To Add More Swing Easy &

The “late hit” is one of golf’s most commonly professed swing concepts. It is also one of the least understood. The general perception is that the hinged or cocked wrists at the top of the backswing remain hinged all the way through impact, with the clubhead never getting past the hands until after the ball is away. If that was the case, the ball would go well right of the target and have very little power behind it. In fact, when the ball is struck, the wrists must be unhinged. The idea is to delay that unhinging as long as possible and avoid an early hit, which is when the release comes too soon and the club is “cast.”

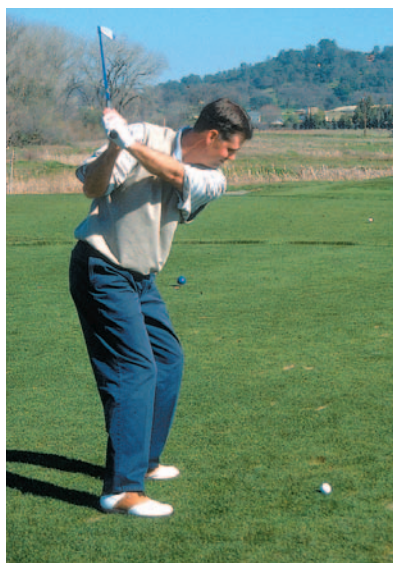
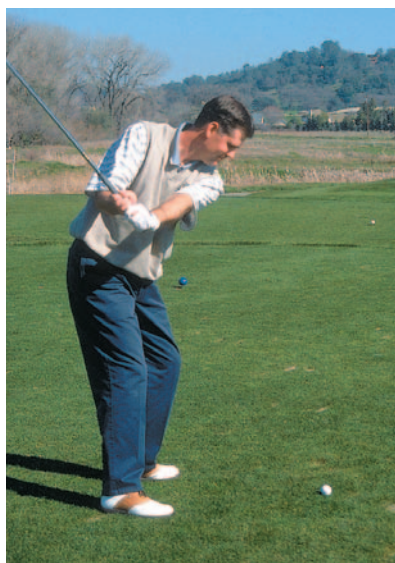
In the optimal delayed hit, the wrists unhinge just before the clubface meets the ball. This is what is meant by getting your hands into the shot. How do you accomplish this? Strange as it may sound, given that the club is held in the hands, the delayed hit is achieved by the lower body beginning the downswing.

The First Move — To The Left

To produce a delayed hit, the downswing should begin with a slight lateral movement of the hips to the left. It is not a big slide or turn, only a subtle, but definite shifting of weight into the left side. An

Delay Club Release

6 Ways To Make It Happen In Your Swing!



The late hit needs a proper beginning, and it is with the backswing, which begins with a rotation of the shoulders. This is followed almost simultaneously by an up-cocking or hinging of the wrists, the left forearm rotating and the right elbow folding and moving into your right side.

interesting thing happens at this time. The wrists actually hinge a little more. There is also a kind of lagging that results from the physical forces generated by the leftward movement of the hips. This only enhances the chances of a delayed hit.

However, the most important result of the hip movement to start the downswing is that you are less apt to start the club down with a rotation of your shoulders and cast it or throw it out toward the ball with an early release of your wrist hinge. Casting not only dissipates the energy needed to deliver the most power, but it also creates an outside-to-in slice-inducing swing path.

The move to the left is going to go a long way toward eliminating this casting action, but you also need some self-control. You must tell yourself to not hit at the ball, which almost invariably leads to an early release of the wrist hinge. There must be no manipulation of the club with the hands.

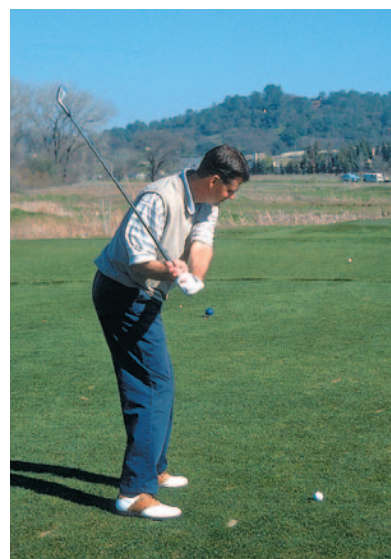
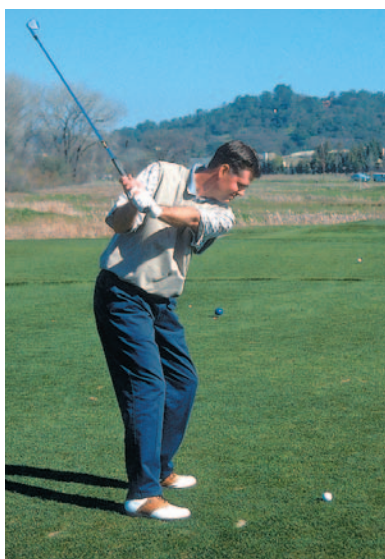
The unhinging of the wrists must be allowed to happen, and it will by virtue of centrifugal force. After the move onto the left side to start the downswing, the wrists remain fully hinged

until the hands are shoulder-high. The angle between the left arm and the shaft is released a little from shoulder height down, with substantially more, actually most, of the release coming below the waist.

A checkpoint in this sequence is when the hands reach about waist-high. At this point, the shaft of the club is parallel to the ground and the target line. If you can photograph your swing, this is what you want to see. If you have released your wrist hinge too soon, the club-head will be pointing toward the target line.

Again, by virtue of centrifugal force, the complete unhinging will happen just as the ball is struck. That is how maximum power is applied to the ball. At impact, your left arm and the shaft are in line with the ball, and your hands are still slightly in front of the ball.

Remember, you don't consciously delay the unhinging. If you begin the downswing in the proper sequence, starting with the subtle shift of weight onto your left side, gradually increasing centrifugal force will cause the release and produce maximum clubhead speed when the ball is struck. It's a matter of storing energy in



The downswing begins with a subtle, but definite shift of weight onto the left side. There is no conscious action taken with the arms or hands, which move only in response to the weight shift. In this way, the right hand is kept quiet, is restrained from forcing the wrists to unhinge too soon and produce a cast or early hit.



To tame the right hand, hold the club in your left hand and hold your left elbow with your right hand. Swing the club back and through, keeping your right hand on your left elbow throughout. The preoccupied right hand is not going to impose itself on the swing.

the backswing and more or less conserving it until that moment just before the clubhead impacts with the ball.

All golfers, including the best players, are apt to release the club too soon in the downswing. Jack Nicklaus addressed this problem in a way I've always liked. He said you start the downswing slowly, sort of in slow motion. A slight softening of the left arm helps create this pace. The hands kind of fall from the top of the backswing. You don't pull them down in the old drawstring or window-shade image, which suggests tension and a forcing activity. You just let them fall to the ball like snowflakes, as David Feherty once described Vijay Singh's downswing.

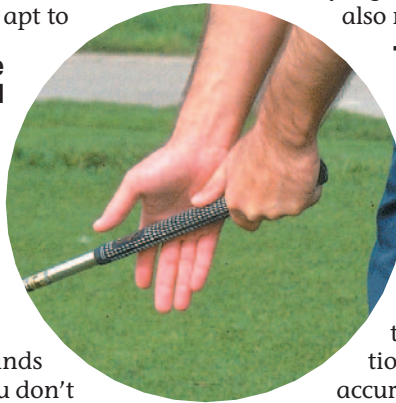
The Swing Path

There are other ways to achieve the delayed hit besides the move to the left. I have had a lot of success getting golfers to think of hitting the ball with the club moving on an inside-to-out path. That is not what actually happens, but by making the effort, you keep from casting the club and swinging it from outside to in.

A common instruction is to start the backswing with the club going straight back from the ball. However, this requires a re-routing of the club in the downswing to get it moving to the ball from the inside. Any re-routing is an extra movement that breeds inconsistency, and if you can avoid it, you are better off.

This swing path is best realized when the club is started back with a rotation of the shoulders, rather than a swinging of the arms. Shoulder rotation (the shoulders feel as though they are turning level) will swing the club back slightly to the inside and thus on a natural and correct plane. This, in turn, encourages swinging the club back to

Another drill to limit the right hand for a delayed hit is to keep the hand on the grip of the club but with only the palm touching. Leave the fingers off and swing the club back and through.



the ball on the same plane. The one-plane golf swing is not only a good way to produce the delayed hit, but it also makes for consistently solid ball-striking.

The Vertical Hinge

Another important component in creating the delayed hit is how you hinge your wrists. I teach a vertical hinge in which the hands break upward (the thumbs coming back toward you) as the club swings back, rather than a sideways flexing of the wrists. Vertical hinging keeps the club on the plane created by your shoulder rotation and produces the most powerful and accurate shots under any circumstances.

Fold The Right Elbow, Rotate The Forearms

In conjunction with the vertical hinge, the right elbow should be folded fairly early in the backswing — when the hands get about waist-high. The hinging action has a way of inducing the elbow fold, or what some people refer to

To prevent the club from being cast from the top or released too early in the downswing, split the grip by sliding your right hand down the handle so it is well separated from the left hand. Now swing the club back and through.





To hinge your wrists vertically, at address pull the club back toward you with the thumbs coming at your body. Now swing the club to a full backswing and downswing. You'll be surprised at how well and accurately you will hit the ball.

as a tuck. The elbow comes in close to your right side and is pointing down.

At the same time in the backswing, the forearms should turn clockwise. The right-elbow fold will create the proper amount of forearm rotation. This is also known as supination and pronation. Ben Hogan made these terms popular, as rotation was a major theme in his swing system.

The combination of the vertical hinge of the wrists, the right elbow folding into the right side and pointing down

the delayed hit. For example, if your feet are a little closer together at address, you should be able to make more of a turn. I recommend this for older players who may have lost some flexibility.

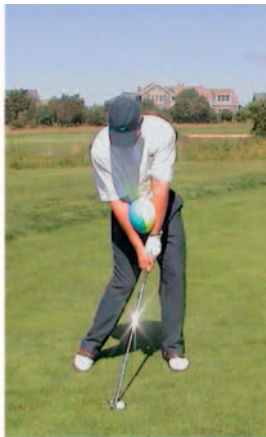
Everyone will benefit from being sure the hands are ahead of the ball at address, especially for iron shots. **GI**

— Brett Taylor is a teaching professional at the Empire Ranch GC in Folsom, Calif., and co-host of the syndicated radio program "Golf Talk Radio."

toward the right hip (not getting high or away from the body), and the rotation of the forearms so the left arm swings across your chest will put the club on the ideal swing path or plane, slightly to the inside. From here, it will move to the ball in the downswing on a slightly inside-to-out path and overall produce a very compact and controlled swing with a delayed hit.

Setting Up

The setup to the ball is standard, but you can do a few things that will indirectly help produce



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