

## How to get your Golf Conditioning up to Par

In my opinion golf is one of the most challenging sports on the planet. Golfers need to have; great flexibility, the power to knock the socks off a drive, and pin point accuracy and feel. To create a decent handicap requires a consistent swing, dedication and mental toughness to survive the not-so-good shots.

It's great to have a magnificent set of clubs...but at the end of the day, the clubs don't swing themselves. This article concentrates on principles that I use for training the golfing athlete.

### **1. GUR (Golfer under repair)**

Sort out your injuries and imbalances. Pain is not normal and is a sign that something isn't flying right in your body. Sore wrists and ankles will dramatically change the way you strike the ball. Neck and back pain during golf is NOT normal. Some corrective exercises from a trained exercise professional and swing analysis from a PGA Professional can often sort these issues out quickly.

### **2. You must have enough flexibility for a safe effective swing**

The hips and upper back should provide most of the rotation in a golf swing. If you are lacking flexibility in these areas often you'll end up moving excessively from another area such as the lower back, neck, arms and lower body. This will always cause swing faults and inconsistencies in your game and will often cause injuries. Ideally use a golf-specific trained exercise specialist to help you improve flexibility in combination with a PGA Professional to ensure that you are making the best changes in your swing.

### **3. Golf is a strength and power sport**

A good golfer accelerates the head of a golf club to speeds of up to 200 km/hr in 0.3 seconds. It's not unusual for golfers to use 80-90% of their maximal effort when driving. It should be obvious that the load on the body during a practice or a round of golf needs to be respected and prepared for! This clearly isn't happening though.

Recent research indicates that:

- > 30% of professional golfers are playing with significant injuries
- > 50% of golfers don't do any sort of warm up

If you're serious about improving your game and preparing your body you need to be doing some strength work. Training for golf is totally different from bodybuilding and most other types of sports training. In fact, training on weight machines with a poorly designed programme will make your game worse. Golf-specific strength programmes should primarily involve full-body exercises using free-weights (dumbbells or barbells) and cables. Rotation strengthening is essential to improve your distance and reduce your risk of injury.

In summary I've justified why golfers need to work on their physical preparation. Phases of training should firstly work on injury rehabilitation and imbalances followed by flexibility and then strength work. Use a golf-specific exercise professional and a PGA Professional to get the best results.

## **About the Author**

Dave Liow is an exercise specialist who has specialised in working with dedicated golfers. He has worked with many of the top playing and professional golfers in New Zealand. He was the head trainer for the NZ Titleist Academy and has prepared several Eisenhower and Espirito Santo teams for World Championships.

If you're serious about improving your golf or getting rid of a golf injury you can contact Dave at [info@daveliow.com](mailto:info@daveliow.com)