

Quick Fixes

by John Bertges



I'm not much a believer in band-aid cures for the golf swing. However, in a day and age where microwave dinners, emails, and instant messaging rules, golfers sometimes find themselves five minutes before their tee-time with a seirous swing virus. There's no time to take a pack of lessons...You need some swing expresso to jolt you back on track. Besides you're playing with the company boss who just flew in to play a quick round before the meeting. The last thing you want is to be hunting in the woods for your errand tee-shots. Unimpressive.

You asked for it, so here they are - the four most common swing ills and the instant medication to combat them. These are among the best of the quick fixes I have used over the years. They are almost certain to get you through the days round, but buyer-be-ware. Over medicating can cause some of its own set of problems. These fixes are by no means permament cures. Consult your local professional for more lasting results.

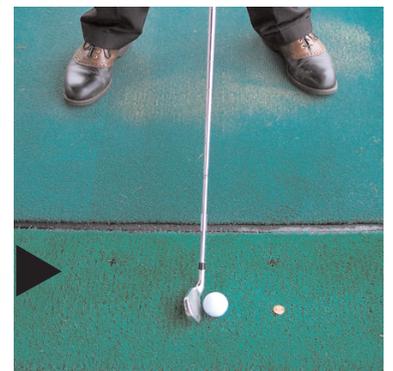


John Bertges

- PGA Professional
- Director of Golf Guaranteed Golf Schools Indiana
- PGTCA Master Professional
- Player Magazine Golf Advisor

THE ILL: TOPPED SHOTS THE CURE: PENNY DRILL

Place a penny about 6 inches ahead of a ball on the driving range. Focus on swinging through the ball and hitting the penny. This will help to generate more momentum beyond the ball and thus pull your arms longer through the hit preventing a top. Since the penny is a lot smaller than the ball, it will assit you in hitting far enough down to get the ball into the air. As a matter of fact, focusing on a specific spot past the ball on the course (example: a blade of grass) can cure most topped shots. Take the focus away from the ball and move it forward.



SWING GENERAL WARNING: FOCUSING BEYOND THE BALL CAN LEAD TO MOVING YOUR BODY AHEAD OF THE BALL ON THE DOWNSWING WHICH CAUSES OTHER PROBLEMS. STAY WITH THE SHOT UNTIL THE END.

THE ILL: FAT SHOTS THE CURE: BALL-FORWARD DRILL

Oddly enough, this fix is not much different than the topped shot cure even though they are opposite shots. Tee up a ball about 8 inches too far forward in your stance. Anticipate hitting through it to the finish. Most fat-shots are a result of an early release by being too ball bound. All great players generate more speed past the ball during the swing, even though they look at the ball they focus swinging through it. Amateurs displace most of their speed well before the ball causing a loss of power or fat shots. Hitting shots with a ball well forward in your stance will help you to time your release later rather than early. It's all in the focus.



SWING GENERAL WARNING: PLACING THE BALL TOO FAR FORWARD IN YOUR SWING ON THE COURSE CAN CAUSE SLICES. MAKE PRACTICES SWING AND TRY TO WHISTLE THE CLUB PAST THE BALL THEN HIT.

THE ILL: SLICING THE CURE: BALL BACK, HEAD BACK

All golf swings are circular in nature. If you place the ball far enough back in your stance you can't swing to the left (the main cause of a slice). In fact, you will swing to the right and most likely produce some draws. During this drill it is also critical that you place your head behind the ball with your shoulders and eyes aiming to the right (see the shaft on the ground in the photo, right). This set-up will encourage an inside-out path into the ball making it spin counter clockwise producing a draw. This drill can be confusing to you slicers since you are swinging in the same direction the ball slices. Don't worry, trust it. It works.



SWING GENERAL WARNING: PLACING THE BALL TOO FAR BACK IN YOUR STANCE CAN CAUSE SOME PUSHES AND HOOKS. GO EASY ON THE MEDICATION, A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY.

THE ILL: SHANK SHOTS THE CURE: TWO-BALL DRILL

I don't even like saying the word, 'shank'. It almost seems contagious. Nonetheless it can be cured and fairly quickly doing this simple drill. Shanking is when the club head moves outward over the ball-target-line during the swing. The result, you hit the ball on the neck or hosel. The easiest way to fix it, reverse the ill. Set two balls on the ground as shown. Set up to the outside ball and try to hit the inside ball. This routine simply reroutes your club inward instead of outward. On the golf course try a variation of this drill. Line up to the ball with the hosel square behind the ball. Pull in and try to hit it on the toe.



SWING GENERAL WARNING: DOING THIS DRILL TOO OFTEN CAN CAUSE TOE SHOTS. WHAT WE REALLY WANT IN THE SWING IS CENTER CONTACT VS. AN EXAGGERATION.

Hope you enjoy these quick fixes, but try not to rely on them. Get through the round and do yourself a favor. Schedule some lessons. Good golf is always more fun than bad golf and a few lessons cost about the same as what you might spend on an average round of golf.