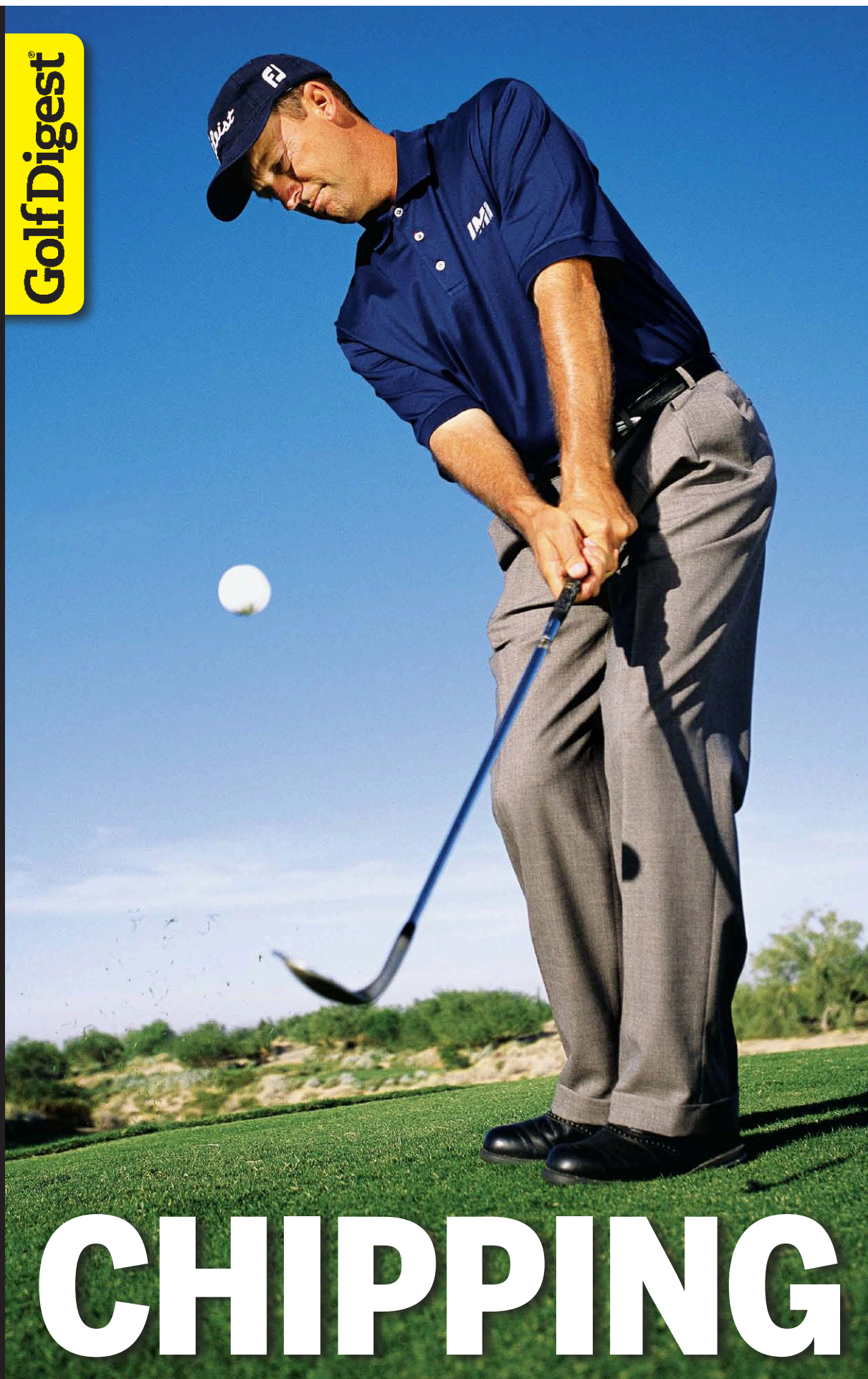


**THE BASICS**

**GolfDigest**



**CHIPPING**



# TWO **SCHOOLS** OF THOUGHT

BY MATTHEW RUDY

Here's a logical place to start: Should you fall in love with one club for chipping and use it every time, or learn one swing and switch clubs based on the shot? Golf Digest 50 Best Teacher

**DEAN REINMUTH** argues the latter: "Average players do better grooving one basic short-game swing and picking a club based on how much green they have to work with." Another reason, adds Reinmuth: "On tight lies, it's better to use a less-lofted club, and if you're stuck with only one, like a lob wedge, you're going to hit some chunks and skulls from those lies."

**KEVIN WEEKS**, another Golf Digest 50 Best Teacher, takes the other side: "It's easier to learn how to hit a variety of shots with one club, like a 56-degree. You develop better feel, and the bounce on that club is much more forgiving than it is on others," Weeks says. "If you set up with the ball just inside the right heel and keep your spine tilted left, it's almost impossible to hit a shot fat. For more loft, just play the ball forward."

## THE **BASIC** TECHNIQUE

BY TODD ANDERSON

- ☺ Position the ball just behind center, open your stance, and set more weight on your front foot.



- ☺ Swing the club back with your arms and shoulders, the upper part of your arms riding on your chest.



- ☺ Shift your lower body forward, and swing the club so it's in a straight line with your left arm at impact.



- ☺ Keep turning your body through, and make sure your left wrist is still flat, not cupped, at the finish.





# WHY WE CHILI-DIP

BY SEAN FOLEY, A GOLF DIGEST 50 BEST TEACHER

Most amateurs who struggle with chipping, particularly those who hit behind the ball, know it's because they're trying to help the shot up with a wristy motion. Problem is, they just can't stop doing it because the traditional firm-wristed chipping motion is counterintuitive.

If you feel like you have to trick your brain on chip shots, here's a swing thought to try: Pretend your ball is sitting on a downhill lie. This will set your weight on your front foot, keep your wrists from breaking and produce a downward strike, letting the loft on the club do the work. It's a good swing thought, and chipping off downhill lies is also a great way to practice.

## 3 CHIPS YOU NEED

BY SUZY WHALEY, GOLF DIGEST 50 BEST TEACHER WITH STINA STERNBERG

Chipping requires more creativity than any other part of the game, and that's from a good lie. When the lie gets weird, all bets are off. That's when you need a good plan. Here's my best advice for chipping from three awkward spots.

**FROM DEEP ROUGH** Use the most lofted club in your bag, play the ball slightly back, and lean the shaft toward the target. Keeping your weight left, make a quick wrist hinge and hit down on the ball—don't worry about how you finish. Your goal is to just pop the ball out of the grass and let it roll out.

**AGAINST THE COLLAR** This requires what I call a putt-chip—a chip using your

normal putting stroke—and the key is hitting the ball at its equator. With a wedge, grip down and hover the leading edge of the club behind the ball. Don't lean the shaft toward the target; just stroke into the ball's equator.

**CLOSE TO THE COLLAR** The rough can interfere with your swing even when the ball lies a few inches in front of it. Here, use a putter or 7-iron and move your weight to your left foot, with the ball slightly back. Your hands will be ahead of the ball. As you swing back, the club-head will come up quickly and miss the collar, and you'll hit down on the ball.



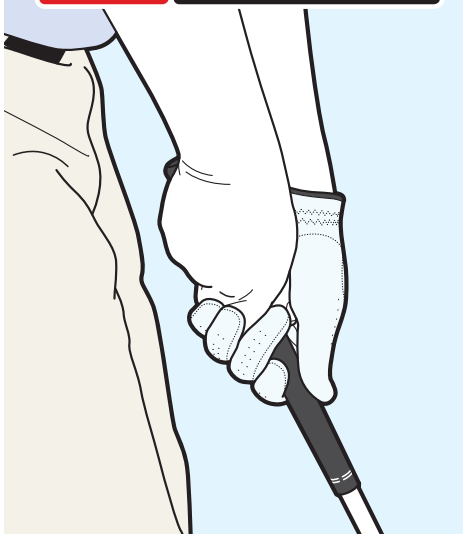
## EDITOR'S PICK: CHIPPING DRILL

BY RON KASPRISKE

You don't have time to practice, so when you do, you want to hit balls. But give yourself 10 minutes for this chipping drill from instructor **Josh Zander**. It'll quickly get you making ball-first contact with a descending

blow. At the practice green, address a chip with your right foot back and up on its toes (left). This forces you to stay left during the swing and make a little body turn, pivoting around your left leg. It also

helps position the bottom of your swing arc past the ball, ensuring downward contact. The faster you pivot your body around your left leg, the farther you'll hit the ball.



# TRY CROSS-HANDED

BY JEFF PATTERSON

Why? “Because his chipping was crappy,” says Vijay Singh, before his fellow tour player **Chris Couch** can answer. “It got so bad—to the point where if I missed a green, I’d make bogey or double,” says Couch, who went to cross-handed chipping in 2004. His instructor, Mark McCann, suggested he give it a try—the method is common in McCann’s native South Africa. “Once I did it, I never went back,” Couch

says. He even chipped in cross-handed on the last hole of the 2006 Zurich Classic to win by a shot. Couch’s twist is a double-overlapping grip, where the last two fingers of his left hand overlap his right (left). “One thing to be careful of, most people top the ball when they first try it,” Couch says. Not exactly a ringing endorsement, but Couch did rank 27th in scrambling last year.

## THE CHIPPING YIPS

BY MATTHEW RUDY

When it comes to the dreaded “y” word, the putting variety gets all the ink. But for sheer score-wrecking potential, the chipping yips can be king. “It just drains a player’s enjoyment of the game,” says Golf Digest 50 Best Teacher **Randy Smith**. And he knows. Smith has had them since the 1980s. “People think the yip is in the right hand, but it comes from the left trying to take over,” Smith says. His fix? Center the ball, open the face slightly, then move the pinky finger of your left hand off the end of the grip. (If you’ve got ‘em bad, drop off the ring then middle fingers, too.) Hinge the club back, then let the weight of the head sling through impact. “You’ll still have the yip, but you can hit acceptable shots this way.”



## WHEN TO PUTT, WHEN TO CHIP

BY MATTHEW RUDY

If there’s still a stigma to using the Texas wedge—aka putting from well off the green—**HANK HANEY** says it’s worth any strange looks you might get. “The putters are so good today and courses are so manicured, the only time you should chip from within 10 yards of the green is when the biggest putting stroke you can make

won’t get you to the hole, or you have an obstacle to carry,” Haney says. “Even a bad putt is probably going to be better than your average chip.”

To play the shot, use your same putting grip and stroke, Haney says, and don’t be afraid to add a little body action if

you need more power. “The only reason players might not do well with this shot is, they never practice it,” he says. “In chipping, you need good contact and feel. Putting is really just feel: Miss the center of the face by a half inch, and you still get a decent result.”