



Body Angles and Body Shape

As a coach who teaches all sorts of players from absolute beginners to top amateurs and professionals, I believe it is very important, for the success of any shot that all golfers have a sound understanding of the correct set up before he or she attempts to swing a golf club.

Following is an introduction of a teaching method I have had enormous success with and is being used by an ever increasing number of coaches and touring professionals in Australia and worldwide. This article focuses on the set up, but the technique is part of an overall swing method referred to as the right sided swing and has been featured on the Golf Channel by its founder Gary Edwin who is one of Australia's most respected coaches.

I have had the opportunity to learn these methods from working with coaches from the Edwin Stable both in Australia and in Japan, and over the years I have come to

learn that correct "body shape" has a big influence on the golf swing. By the term "**Body Shape**" I am not referring to how big or small a person is, but to the angles created by the bending of the body into position to set up to a golf ball.

The body shape is so important in that it can have an enormous influence on the swing. A poor set up or body shape at the start can multiply into several mistakes by the time we arrive at the top of the backswing, which means you have to make almost impossible (and very inconsistent) compensations during the execution of the swing to reach a good impact position.

Top players and top amateurs can overcome set up errors with hours and hours of practice on the driving range.

Most people never have this amount of time to hone these swing compensations due to a poor set up and this causes long term negative effects on their game.

I find assessing and improving students "Body Shape" at the start of the lesson can go a long way toward solving a lot of the problems in their swings. In all my lessons I spend a lot of time explaining and demonstrating good and bad body shape a good body shape.

Examples of Australian tour players on the US PGA Tour who actively work on good body shape are Rod Pampling, Paul Gow, and Peter Lonard among others.

Body Angles Explained

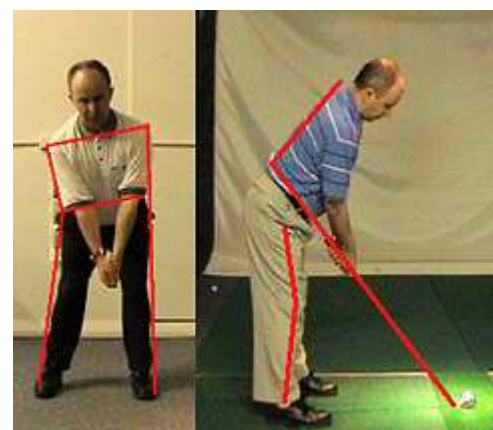
The most important thing to do before even attempting to swing a golf club is to get your body angles correct. Body angles refer to the angles of your body in the set up position. If the body shape is correct then you have more of a chance of getting the swing working well early and the club moving in the right direction during the swing

You don't need to go to a driving range to practice your body angles; it can be done at home in front of a mirror without clubs or balls.

An image of correct body angle at set up is that it is almost the same as the body angle in the impact position i.e. "set up resembles impact"

To get your body into the correct set up position adopt a reverse "K" shape looking from front on. This means the left side of your body will appear to be mainly straight and the right side will have the angle or "K" shape. Maintaining this shape from start to finish will form the basis of a solid swing.

Many club golfers set up in the reverse shape i.e. the right side is straight and the left side has the angle. When I look at players setting up poorly and trying to hit a golf ball they are all inevitably subconsciously trying to find the correct body angles while they are swinging the club in order to find a decent body shape at impact. All this moving around leads to all the common faults we (and your golf instructor) are always talking about i.e. reverse pivot, swaying etc...



Looking from behind the forward bend from the hips is also very important. A minimum amount of flex in the legs, bend from the hips and let the arms hang, this will ensure the swing starts on plane and with a correct swing radius.

If your body shape is not right at the start you will have to try and find this position somewhere during your swing to achieve this shape at impact. Some tour players can get away with not having the correct shape at set up because they have grooved compensatory moves into their swings over hundreds of hours beating balls on the driving range.

If you START with a good body shape you've got more chance of getting the swing right with no need to make compensatory moves and a more consistent impact position will result.

Try to practice correct body shape (as above) in front of a mirror at home so you can engrain the proper image and feeling of Correct Body Shape. Just remember to always strive to create a straight line down your leading side intersecting your shoulder- hip- and outside of your leading foot at both set-up and then again at impact.

Here are some examples of how we compare a students swing to a Models swing

Example 1

The models swing is on the top, firstly you will notice that the starting body shape or "set up" is the opposite of the model. And you will notice that in comparing the two swings that while the model's body shape stays constant, the student's body due to his incorrect perception of what happens in his swing is changing and moving a lot sideways during the swing. This all leads to inconsistent ball striking.

Example 2

This is a before and after shot of a student, she has had lessons in the past but never a video lesson, so in lesson 1 (above) with me, she could see immediately that her set up posture was wrong compared to the model and that the arms and shaft were way to high or Vertical, In lesson 2 (above) the change in Shape and shaft arm position is enormous.

