



ON THE GREEN GET AUTOMATIC FROM SHORT RANGE

By GOLF Top 100 Teacher **Don Sargent**

YOU'LL HOLE MORE PUTTS when you get both the right distance and direction. On the short ones, however, the key is to really nail direction.

To dial things in (and make sure you're aiming the putter in your intended direction following your read), focus on how you hold the putter. Options abound, but one good rule of thumb is to grip the putter so that the handle rests in the lifeline of your trail palm (the right for right-handed golfers). Grabbing the putter like this ensures that your thumb gets on top of the handle with the back of your left hand pointing in the same direction of the putterface. This is important, because with this grip, you simply point the back of your left

hand at the target as you stroke the ball, which is much easier to do than controlling the clubface.

As you make your stroke, keep the back of your left hand facing the hole (or target), which, in turn, will align the putterface in the same direction. For all you southpaws, do everything in reverse, with the back of your right hand facing the target.

Concentrating on the orientation of the back of your left hand as you make your putting stroke will help you focus more on what direction you want the ball to roll. As a bonus, it will also prevent you from trying to "steer" the ball.

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1. Use the back of your left hand as an indicator of where you want to aim.

2. Holding the club near the hosel during practice can help you see—and feel—the relationship of the back of your hand and the putterface.