

How Good Is Your Alignment?

By Dean Sklar, PGA Professional



The single most important – and frequently overlooked – full swing fundamental in golf is the setup position. So, here are some step-by-step tips for how to take your stance and achieve that perfect setup.

Alignment in the Golf Stance

At address your body (feet, knees, hips, forearms, shoulders and eyes) should be positioned parallel to the target line. When viewed from behind, a right-handed golfer will appear aimed slightly left of the target. This optical illusion is created because the ball is on the target line and the body is not.

Foot Position

Your feet should start out shoulder-width apart but adjust depending on whether you're playing woods/long irons, middle irons or short irons.

The feet should be shoulder-width (outside of the shoulders to the inside of the heels) for the middle irons. The short iron stance will be two inches narrower and the stance for long irons and woods should be two inches wider. The target-side foot should be flared toward the target from 20 to 40 degrees to allow the body to rotate toward the target on the downswing. The back foot should be square (90 degrees to the target line) to slightly open to create the proper hip turn on the back swing. Your flexibility and body rotation speed determine the proper foot placement.

Ball Position in the Golf Stance

The position of the golf ball in one's stance varies depending on the club used.

The ball placement in your setup position varies with the club you select.

Your middle irons should be played in the middle of your stance.

The correct ball position for the long irons and fairway woods plus your

driver is to be played off the inside left heel.

Keep Your Weight on the Balls of Your Feet

Your weight should be balanced on the balls of the feet, not on the heels or toes. With short irons, your weight should be 60% on the target-side foot. For middle iron shots the weight should be 50/50 or equal on each foot. For your longest clubs, place 60% of your weight on the backside foot. This will help you swing the club on the correct angle on the back swing.

The Final Setup Positions

Always practice proper alignment out on the driving range by placing two clubs down on the ground parallel to each other after you feel you are properly aligned to your intended target and see how well you are lined up. Better yet, while on the golf course ask your playing partner to stand behind you and see if you are properly aligned. The best way is to take a lesson from your local PGA Professional just on alignment. They are the experts in the game.

► PGA Professional Dean Sklar is a member of the Quarter Century Club of the PGA of America, an elite group of members who have served the PGA with honor and pride for 25 years. If you would like to talk to Dean about your golf game, contact him at Dean@SklarTeam.com or visit Rose and Dean Sklar at Coldwell Banker online at www.SklarTeam.com.

