

The Open Stance and Weight Distribution

An open stance creates the need for a turn away from the ball. Invariably, the turn needed is initially characterized by the student as “extreme”. More interesting is how such an “Extreme” turn into the backswing causes the body-weight to stay inside the rear foot.

A big turn requires some controlled hip rotation on the rear leg for the flexible golfer and logically, it requires more controlled rotation for the less flexible golfer. Here are some ways to think about turning your body into the backswing:

- Move the rear hip backward
- Move the forward hip forward
- Move your belt-buckle over your rear knee
- Move your lead shoulder over your rear knee

The rear hip joint is a hinge. Creating tension with internal rotation creates power in the downswing. We should be relaxing into the ball – unwinding the tension created with an efficient backswing. Internal rotation increases as the rear hip moves clockwise (Seen from above). This rotation sets the body weight more toward the forward foot because as the turn increases, the weight supported by the rear foot moves toward the toe. This is a consequence of the torso balance countering the hip movement.

The weight must move to the toe of the rear foot to keep that foot from spinning on the heel - away from the target. Increased pressure on that toe – dictated by more internal rotation – is what the golf club alleviates as it reaches the top of the backswing. The club’s inertia is moving (Should be moving) toward the target. That little bit of energy kick-starts the balancing act of the downswing.

As the club pulls us toward the target very gently, we experience a “Pause” when seemingly nothing is happening. We are relaxing into our downswing. The body sequence necessary to get back to perfect impact has been set in motion by the golf club just before our backswing is finished. As the golfer’s weight moves toward the forward foot in the downswing, the pressure on the rear toe, rear hip, torso turn, and flatter arm-swing against our torso, and wrist hinge begin to unwind steadily to the ball.

Our weight moves to the forward heel in order to do two things: 1) Increase separation between the hips and shoulders for the body’s last application of torsional force before unwinding, and 2) To provide time for the body sequence to synchronize their relaxation and strike the ball.