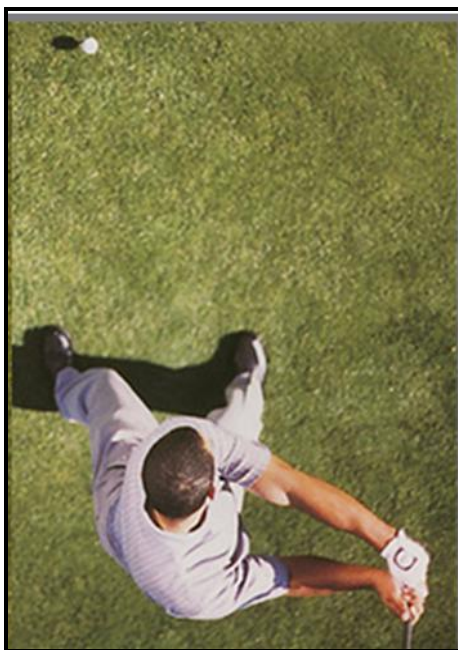


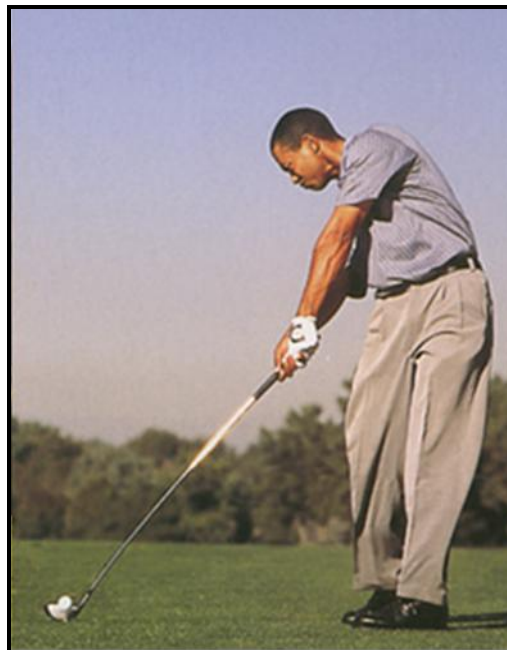
Dr. Paul Callaway's Golf Health and Fitness Tips

“Build a Strong Left Arm for Increased Power and Accuracy”

Creating a strong left (for a right handed golfer) arm during the backswing and downswing promotes maximum power and accuracy. Keeping the left elbow as straight as possible during these swing phases ensures the biggest swing width possible and sets up the possibility of explosive club head speed at impact (see Picture 1A and 1B). There are fewer moving parts with this swing approach, therefore, promoting improved accuracy and consistency.



Picture 1A: Straight Left Arm in Backswing

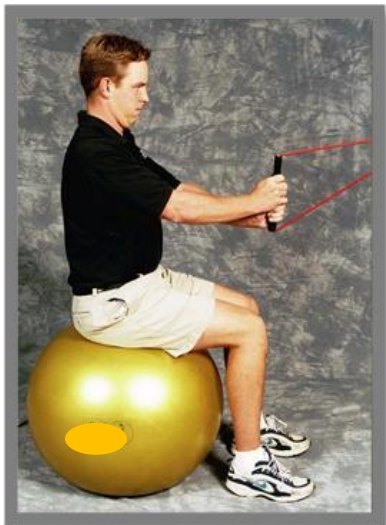


Picture 1B: Straight Left Arm at Impact

The secret to maintaining a straight left arm during the swing is performing exercises that target strengthening of the left shoulder blade muscles. Improved strength and control of the shoulder blade muscles first will then create a solid foundation for improved performance of the muscles of the shoulder, elbow and forearm and wrist. This is called “proximal stability”. Simply put, if the muscles close to the body are strong then the muscles farther from the body can work better.

An excellent strengthening exercise for building strong left shoulder blade muscles is called the “Seated Shoulder Blade Squeeze”. To perform the “Seated Shoulder Blade Squeeze”:

- Sit on a Swiss Ball (this promotes better posture and balance during the exercise) and attach surgical tubing with handles securely into a doorway.
- Then squeeze your shoulder blades together in back while maintaining straight elbows (see Picture 2).
- Hold the squeezed position for 2-3 seconds and slowly release.
- Repeat the shoulder blade squeezes for up to 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions.



Picture 2: Shoulder Blade Squeezes

A second helpful exercise for keeping a straight, firm left arm during the swing is a “Downward Arm Pull”. To perform this strengthening exercise:

- Attach the surgical tubing with handles in the top of a doorway and turn your body so your feet are aligned with the direction of the tubing and your intended target line.
- Stand far enough from the tubing attachment that you can reach back into your full backswing position and there is no slack in the tubing.
- From your backswing position, slowly pull the tubing down and across your body toward your impact position making sure to keep a straight left arm (see Picture 3).

- Stop your pull when you have reached your impact position.
- Hold for 2-3 seconds and slowly release back to the starting position.
- Repeat 1-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions.
- As you become stronger, start the exercise farther from the tubing attachment in the doorway.



Picture 3: Downward Arm Pull

Paul Callaway, PT, PhD is the Director of Golf Fitness at the Cantigny Golf Academy in Wheaton, IL. He was the first Director of Physical Therapy on the PGA Tour and has specialized in golf-specific fitness training, performance enhancement and injury-prevention for the past 25 years. If you have questions for him about this article or any other topic related to golf fitness and performance, he can be reached via email at paul@callawaygolffitness.com, by calling 630-567-7572 or by visiting www.callawaygolffitness.com .