

Using a Mirror During Practice

I believe video technology and mirrors are the best teaching aids on the market for learning proper set-up and swing path. They show you your posture, grip ball position, body alignment, and weight distribution. These aids also show you what the golf club is doing during the golf swing.

From a mechanical prospective, learning the golf swing is a two-part equation.

A correctly trained set-up gives you the opportunity to train your club to swing on a good path and proper swing plane. Otherwise your body will learn to compensate and move indifferently to accommodate impact with the ball. This in turn makes timing and continuity of rhythm complicated and less reliable.

To know that you are set-up correctly and on a plane, use a body length mirror at home on a regular basis. This will prevent your set-up or path from changing from week to week. You are trying to match what you see, to a feel, training it to be permanent. It is important that you learn to feel what is correct.

Application

1. Put a piece of tape vertically on the middle of the mirror (preferably colored electrical tape) from top to bottom.
2. To position a second piece of tape, choose a middle length club (5 or 6 iron). Viewing your address position facing the mirror from a side profile put the tape diagonally on the mirror, running on the same angle as your club shaft.

If you have the luxury of using two mirrors, use one for face-on or front view, and the second mirror for your side profile or down-the-line angle.

Viewing your swing from the side view allows you to monitor your primary spine angle, knee flex, arm position and shaft position. And secondly, it allows you to monitor your club during its path and plane positions. The vertical tapeline should run thru the back of your shoulder through your kneecap and into the balls of your feet.

When viewing the diagonal tape line for path and plane, the club should move along the tape until it reaches parallel to the ground. At this point your club head should cover your hands as you look in the mirror. This would be the ideal club path position to achieve. Keep swinging the club shaft up, keeping the shaft parallel and above the tape as you complete the backswing. Now, lower the club parallel to the tape until it reaches parallel to the ground. Again the club head should cover your hands. Now, move the club down the tape line to impact. Practice this drill moving the club in very slow motion with a lot of repetition.

From the front view or face-on position, the vertical tape line can be used to monitor proper secondary tilt, ball position, grip position and weight distribution.

As your instructor, I will teach you the proper set-up and address position. Then we can begin to learn the proper swing plane and path of the golf swing. Training yourself to use the mirror correctly will keep you accountable, and the information you've taken from your golf lesson, accurately applied.