



Equipment check!

Nearly one third of all golfers harm their performance because they use grips that are either the wrong size or too worn. As if the game wasn't hard enough!

Paying attention to your gear is one of the easiest things to get right in golf and there's no better time to get it sorted than in the run-up to a new season. The easiest way to find out if your clubs are up to scratch is with your local PGA Professional. It's what we do, what we're good at and best of all we provide the consultation free of charge.



As a club pro I don't think you can buy a game (whatever shape the drivers or however expensive the irons) but I do feel you can buy good tuition and advice to improve your golfing ability which is where an equipment check proves invaluable not only for seeing if your grips should be changed but also to discover whether you're even playing with the right clubs for your game!



A great place to start a check of your equipment is with the grip. This is the fastest and most inexpensive way to make an immediate impact on the control, accuracy and distance of your game. Why? Quite simply it's

the only part of the club connecting the body to the club and therefore provides the point of transfer of power and the ability to effectively control the ball.

So How Is Your Grip?

Well according to the earlier stat there's a one in three chance it's either slippier than an eel or the wrong size which means a trip down to your pro shop should top your «to do list».

It's important to realise that grip size influences ball striking and shot pattern so if you've got hands the size of shovels you really ought to be clasping a grip to match, conversely if you're mitts are on the small size you'll want a corresponding grip size.





Custom Fitting

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As a general rule of thumb, grip size should correspond with hand size. Once you've got the right grips it's also important to remember to re-grip because when a grip wears, as it inevitably does, it affects your game, causing you to grasp the club tighter, creating arm and wrist tension which in turn inhibit good swing mechanics

In contrast a new grip provides the traction for you to hold the club lightly without the fear of losing the club during your swing and with the consequence that this relaxed state promotes good swing mechanics and effective wrist action.



How often should you re-grip?

As a guide, you should re-grip once every year regardless of whether you play golf every day or only twice a year. It may be that frequent play

and personal preference may dictate re-gripping sooner but bear in mind that grips lose a significant amount of their original feel long before they become hard and glazed over, however because it happens slowly over time, most golfers fail to notice it.

Shaft Check!

Once your grip is sorted it's time to look at the shaft. Over time a shaft can lose flex and power. Shaft technology has developed at an astonishing rate but even so over a period of time shafts can become brittle and hard with the resulting loss of feel, distance and control.

You may well be ready for a shaft change when you notice your shots feel dead even when you've hit the ball really sweetly. Again playing with the right shaft flex can impact hugely on your game so when with your pro take the opportunity to seek his view or even test out some of his demo shafts and find one that gives you maximum output.

Old For New?

One question that many golfers ask is how often should I buy new clubs? It depends on a number of factors including how much you play and practice, what your expectations are and how well you are playing with your current set but as a rule manufacturers would say every three years for the average player. Other factors in the equation might be for example that you've been a beginner but have improved and progressed so that a more bladed iron would be preferable to heavier cavity backs. On the flip side you might be struggling with power and timing and require something easier to hit and therefore switch say to graphite shafted cavity backs.





With one client I teach I've suggested slightly longer clubs to help his posture at address and make him more comfortable to compensate for a back problem that is restricting him. Whatever the state of your clubs I would advise at least having a static fitting. At worst it will give you an idea for the future should you buy further clubs and at best it might show that you're playing with clubs that are totally the wrong length for you.

Finally

If you've been bashing balls and practicing hard over winter on mats on concrete you might over time develop problems with loft and lie, especially with forged clubs which are more malleable. With ball flight and

alignment so important in golf it's again worthwhile getting your pro to give them the once over.

In conclusion equipment takes a fair old battering one way or another and a spring "EU check" is the perfect way to check it's ready for the season ahead and unlike a car won't cost you an arm and a leg.

Have a good year's golf.

Any questions regarding Custom Fitting!

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