



Winter Blueprint To Better Golf

Make Next Year Your Best Yet

*Six Simple Steps To Follow This Winter
For Better Golf Next Year*

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I am a PGA Professional based at Hillsborough Golf Club, Sheffield, UK.

The need to write this ebook was born from seeing many club golfers frustrated at the start of a golfing season.

Winter months can give a golfer plenty of time to reflect on last season and dream big about the season to come. However, these big dreams can often be dashed in the first few weeks of the season because their game is extremely rusty.

Too many golfers go into hibernation from October to March and find that their game suffers until May - don't let this be you!

To avoid falling into this trap I believe there are a few things you can do to improve your game throughout winter and start next year with a bang.

As with everything, you can do as little or as much as you like of these areas. If you can make a small commitment over these next few months I am sure you will find it worth the effort.

Please read the 6 elements in this ebook and try to implement them into your winter schedule.



1. Reading:

The darker nights are a great time to read up on the game. There are plenty of good books out there but one piece of advice I would give is to avoid any books on technique.

These books will only lead you to “try a new swing thought” the next time you visit the range which can lead to a whole series of issues with your swing. If you really want to work on your swing, read the next section before doing anything about it.

As I mentioned earlier, I have read plenty of books on golf, here are the books I recommend you try this winter:

- A. [Playing Lessons: Jack Nicklaus](#)
- B. [With Winning In Mind: Lanny Bassham](#)
- C. [Golf Is Not A Game Of Perfect: Dr Bob Rotella](#)
- D. [Lowest Score Wins: Erik Barzeski & David Wedzik](#)
- E. [Every Shot Counts: Mark Broadie](#)



My favourite book is “With Winning In Mind”. This book is not golf related but gives a great insight into how the best athletes train and think.

A friend, who was a World Champion Rock Climber, recommended this book to me and told me to treat it as if it was my bible!

I am always updating our Facebook page with plenty of interesting articles that may also be helpful this winter. Please [like our page](#) here to keep up-to-date with the latest articles.

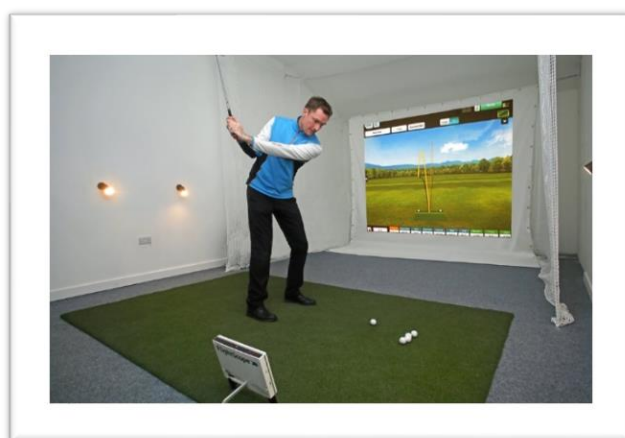


2. Visit a PGA Professional:

Winter is the perfect time to work on your game, but trying to do this on your own is often difficult. Find a PGA Professional who has the right facilities and can put together a programme for you to follow through winter.

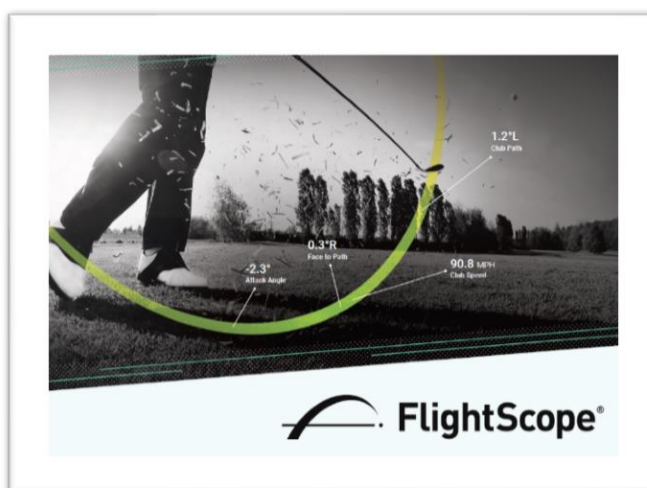
A good winter programme should include technique changes (where necessary) using video analysis and radar technology linked together with a practice schedule that suits your time constraints.

I'm sure that most golfers would not appreciate practicing on a cold and windy driving range so finding a PGA Pro with an indoor facility is crucial.



I also believe that working with a PGA Pro who has the technology to analyse your impact conditions is vital.

Systems such as FlightScope or Trackman give an amazing amount of data that help all golfers understand exactly what is happening at impact. This information is the cornerstone of any winter improvement plan.



3. Putting:

The wintery greens can play havoc with your putting stroke, so I recommend that you buy a putting mat and work on your stroke at home.



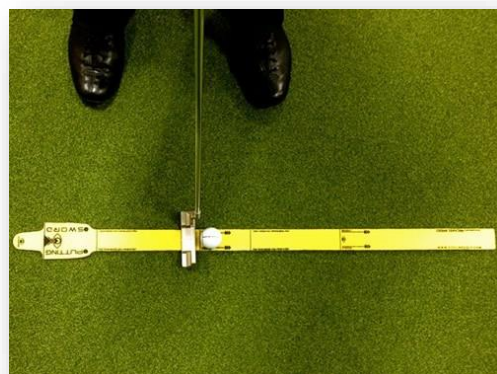
To work on your putting takes only 10-15 minutes a few times per week but the benefits will be huge when the greens improve in spring.

To work on your stroke I suggest using two canes as shown in the picture above. This practice will help to groove a consistent swing path that will become automatic by the time spring arrives.

Grooving a good swing path is only one part to a good putting technique. It is also vital to have good control of your clubface aim. To improve your clubface control I recommend you use the YES putting balls because they will highlight any issues you have and make your practice harder but more productive.

One more product I believe is great for practicing your putting indoors is the putting sword which gives instant feedback on both your putter face position and also your path.

The objective is to putt the ball all the way down the sword. If your path or clubface position is not correct the ball will fall off the sword.



4. Chipping:

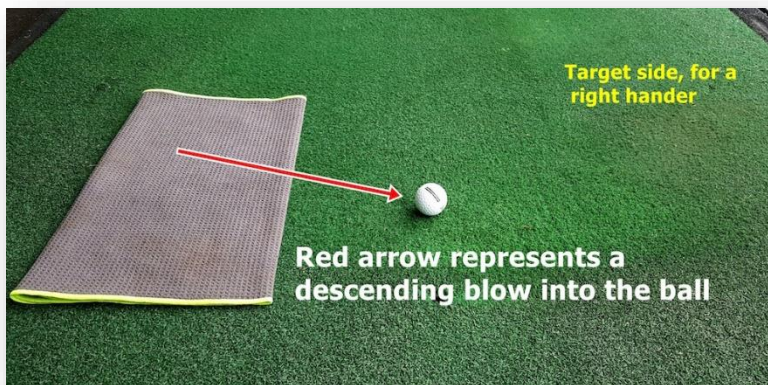
The short game is generally the first area of your game to suffer and the last one to come back. So focusing a little of your time during the winter months on these shots will save considerable heartache when the warmer weather begins and you are on the course more.

One of the areas of the golf course itself that suffer in winter is the greens so focusing on distance control when chipping is not easy on the bumpy surface. However focusing on landing areas is a great way to practice and will help your distance control.

The objective of the ladder drill (pic right) is to land balls between the clubs laid on the floor. If you land a ball in each target (set at 5ft apart) try to land two balls in each target coming back towards you. If you miss one start again!



Many golfers also struggle with heavy/fat shots when chipping from wet fairways.



A great drill to help with this issue is the towel drill (pictured right). Place a towel 3 or 4 inches behind the ball and hit chip shots trying to avoid the towel.

Avoiding the towel will help you to create the ideal angle of attack for chip shots.



5. Fitness:

With the darker nights at this time of year reducing the chance to play a few holes a great way to use your time would be on improving your golfing fitness.

Getting your body in shape can have a dramatic effect on your game. I don't recommend strength exercises this winter but I believe that by focusing on balance, stretching and core stability you will feel the benefits in your swing when the better weather comes around.

The website myTPI has a wide range of fantastic exercises that will help all golfers.



This picture shows a great exercise that helps improve stability and balance.

One word of caution is that you should not start any strenuous exercises if you already have an injury or any health issues without consulting a doctor.

Another great exercise is the one below which works on balance whilst also incorporating the same moves as the golf swing.



By performing these exercises weekly or bi-weekly you will be amazed at how much better your golf swing will feel.



6. Plan your Schedule

Jack Nicklaus once said that a golfer will only play their best golf for 6 weeks in a year!

This may sound a little depressing but my experience shows this to be correct.

However, many club golfers believe that they can play their best every time they tee it up but sadly this is not the case and Jack Nicklaus is closer to the truth.

Many times during the season this statement is proved correct. One year Rory McIlroy won the Quail Hollow PGA Tour event by 6 shots then the following week he missed the cut.



So what can we learn from this?

I believe we should be managing our schedule carefully. If you look at Tiger Woods & Jack Nicklaus in their prime, you will notice that they only played around 20 – 25 tournaments a year. But they always aimed to peak for the majors. If Jack said he would only play his best for 6 weeks in a year, he wanted 4 of them to be in the majors.

What to do next.

1. Most golf clubs will be publishing their competition schedules soon. I suggest you highlight the 4 events you would like to perform in the most and plan your schedule around them.
2. Plan a week off from golf 3 weeks prior to your targeted event. This will ensure you feel fresh for the preparation and the event itself.
3. 2 weeks prior to the event start practicing specific shots you will need for the event. For example, if your course has lots of bunkers practice your bunker shots, if your course has big greens practice long putting. What I'm getting at here is that you should be practicing to prepare for the event and not just blindly beating balls on a range with a 7 iron or driver.
4. Play at least 1 event in the week before the main event. This will give you time to work on your pre-shot routine and general competition game



with some pressure. The goal here is not to play your best it is to build your game and be ready for next week.

5. Just before the event itself take a day off from golf. Your preparation is done and this break is to ensure you are feeling fresh and ready for the big event.

If you can follow these guidelines when planning your year you will be building your game to peak at the right times. Who knows you may end up winning as many club majors as Jack Nicklaus did actual majors.



What to do now

How much you work on the elements mentioned in this ebook depends on time constraints and your goals for the coming season. But I urge all golfers to avoid putting the clubs in the attic this winter and try some of these tips.

The main reason golfers banish their clubs for the winter is lack of time. The daylight is reduced and with work and family commitments the time for golf gets drastically reduced.

However, I believe that “where there’s a will there’s a way”. I suggest that you start by adding just 30 minutes of practice each week. This could be 2 x 15 minute practice putting sessions or it could be a visit to your local PGA Pro once per week. This small time commitment will stop your game decaying and it may even improve!

I am sure that once you find that you can commit to 30 minutes per week, you may find that an hour is possible every 3 weeks. Don’t forget, the main reason for this exercise is to keep your game going through winter and not to embark on an intensive practice regime.

Finally, we should all remember why we are playing this game. If you play golf just for the exercise then the tips here are probably not for you but if you play golf because you enjoy playing well or would like your handicap/scores to come down, I believe that this ebook is ideal for you.

If you would like my help in developing a winter training programme, please contact me at:

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