



# MAKING THE PUTT

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## Steal Jack's Putting Secret

Keeping your right elbow tucked like the Golden Bear gives you a perfect path every time

### THIS STORY IS FOR YOU IF...

1. YOU LIKE TO POWER YOUR STROKE WITH YOUR ARMS.
2. YOU TEND TO PUSH PUTTS.

### CHECK THIS!

My access to computer-generated data on 50,000 putting strokes puts me in a unique position: I know what good putters do and what bad putters don't do. Part of any kind of putting analysis is looking at techniques that generated the best results, and for my money you can't beat the one used by Jack Nicklaus, a player who always seemed to make his best strokes when he needed them most.

There are a lot of good things to copy in Nicklaus's stroke, but none are more important than the position of his right elbow, which was always tucked against the right side of his torso from start to finish. This right-elbow position—something I see over and over again in the good putting strokes that I review—is a key component in swinging your putter back and through on the correct path and with good tempo.

Photography by ANGUS MURRAY



The best thing about Jack Nicklaus's stroke was the way he kept his right elbow in close from start to finish.

**"This right elbow position is something I see over and over again in good putting strokes."**

STRETCHER (T) NICKLAUS (D) PUTTING (R) MARIUS FILMLALTER



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### THE TYPICAL RIGHT-ELBOW MISTAKE

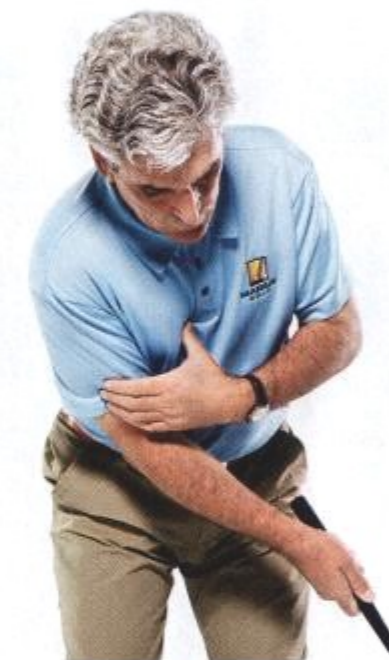
I see a lot of amateurs trying to power their strokes with their arms. This invariably causes them to move their right elbow out and away [photo, right]. The problem is, when you lose your right elbow/torso connection, the putter rises up off the ground, making it difficult to strike the ball squarely. Elbow separation also occurs if you try to take the putter straight back and through. There's no way you can trace a straight line with your putterhead without losing your right-arm connection on your backstroke and your left-elbow connection on your through-stroke [photo, far right].



### HOW TO FIX IT

When you set up, keep your arms in close by resting both elbows against the sides of your torso. As you take your putter back, use more shoulders than arms, and keep your right elbow tucked [photo, right]. This helps you add a slight arc to your stroke without manipulating your motion.

As you start your forward-stroke, maintain that right-elbow connection all the way to your finish [photo, far right]. By pinning your right elbow like this you're in better position to trace the correct path back to the ball and into your release, which should start the ball on the line you intended.



### TRY THIS DRILL

To ingrain the feel of the proper right-elbow action, pin the right side of your chest and your right bicep together with your left hand, then putt with your right hand only. As you hit putts like this, you'll start to feel how the connection forces you to use your shoulders to swing the putter instead of your arms, and how the putterhead traces a nice arc both back and through. It helps to think of finishing your putt with your right shoulder closer to your chin than it was at address. If you get this right, you'll know you've maintained your connection, and the quality of your roll will skyrocket.

[golf.com/putting](http://golf.com/putting)

Watch a video of this lesson and learn more about the game's premier putting expert, Marius Filmlalter.



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Dear Sergio,  
How do you keep everything in your life on track—and remain focused on your golf—when you spend so many days on the road? Is it as stressful as it seems?  
—Tim D., San Antonio, Tex. (Turn the page to read Sergio's answer)

