

Golfer Self Assessment

Is your flexibility and stability...

- Preventing you from playing better golf?
- Contributing to your injury problems?

The following simple biomechanical tests will help give you, the golfer, an improved understanding of how physical biomechanics and stability can influence the golf swing. Included are 7 flexibility and 2 stability tests. Two pictures will be shown for each test, an ideal scenario and a less than optimal scenario. All flexibility tests are measured in degrees. The stability tests are measured by an observation of form and stability. The tests and explanations are specific for Right handers. For Left handers just apply to the other side of the body.

- Neck Rotation (90)
 - Test by rotating your head one way, and then the other.
 - Vital for achieving 90 degrees trunk rotation and preventing associated swing faults from lack of rotation.
 - Lack of neck rotation can lead to overuse of the arms during the swing, possibly leading to overuse injury of the shoulder, elbow and wrists. It can also lead to neck injury.

Optimal Neck Rotation (90)



Less than 90 degrees



- Spinal Rotation Sitting (60 minimum)
 - Test by being seated and keeping your pelvis and legs facing forward. Place your arms across your chest, and actively rotate your trunk from your shoulders.
 - Coupled with 30 degrees of pelvis rotation, a minimum of 60 degrees of trunk rotation is essential to obtaining 90 degrees of trunk rotation during the swing.
 - Lack of trunk rotation can effect optimal swing plane and axis of rotation mechanics and will contribute to overuse of the arms leading to possible wrist, elbow and shoulder injury.

Optimal Trunk Rotation (60 or more)



Less than 60 degrees



- **Shoulder External Rotation Standing (90 minimum)**
 - From a standing position externally rotate both arms. Be aware not to extend through other parts of the body. Standing with your back against a wall will prevent this.
 - Lack of external rotation R shoulder can limit you achieving a full and proper back swing and can contribute to a flying right elbow, a closed clubface and swing plane faults. Lack of rotation L shoulder can contribute to a lack of extension in follow through and “chicken winging.”
 - Lack of shoulder external rotation can potentially lead to shoulder and neck impingement problems

Optimal Shoulder Ext. Rot'n. (90-110)



Less than 90 degrees



- **Wall Standing Extension (Shoulder Flexion)**
 - Stand with feet about 1 foot away from a wall with knees and hips bent. Rotate your pelvis backward so back is flat on the wall. Pull your bb in, take straight arms out in front of you and bring back towards the wall as far as your low back stays against the wall.
 - Tightness can contribute to similar swing faults listed for lack of external shoulder rotation and will limit proper extension in follow through.
 - Tightness can contribute to over rotation of the lumbar spine and injury of the shoulders, elbows and wrists.

Optimal Shoulder Flexion (180)



Less than 180 degrees



- **Hip Internal and External Rotation**

- **Internal hip rotation – Standing with both feet about shoulder width apart. Keep your pelvis still by placing your hands on your hips or stand with your feet and body back against a wall. Turn your feet in as far as you can.**
- **Lack of hip internal rotation is most relevant on the Left hip where it needs to be 70-90 degrees to achieve optimal left hip clearance in follow through. For the test below, a minimum of 45 degrees needs to be achieved when turning the feet in.**

Optimal Hip Internal Rotation (45)



Less than 45 degrees



- **External hip rotation - Lack of external hip rotation on the Left leg can limit pelvis rotation during the back swing. This can lead to increased lateral movement, lifting of the left foot as a compensation, decreased back swing range of motion, as well as many other swing faults. For the test below, a minimum of 45 degrees needs to be achieved when turning the feet out.**
- **Tightness in the hips can contribute to over rotation and injury of the spine as well as overuse of the arms leading to shoulder, elbow and wrist injury.**

Optimal Hip External Rotation (45)



Less than 45 degrees



- **Wrist Extension (90)**

- Pull your fingers back with your arm extended.
- Proper range of motion is vital to achieving proper hinging of the wrists and for creation of power through the ball strike zone.

Optimal Wrist Extension (90)



Less than 90 degrees



- **Butt and General Stability – Single Leg Stance**

- Observe this test by standing in front of a mirror. Stand on one foot by bringing the other bent leg up in front of you. Observe lateral movement, hip hiking, rotation of the pelvis and internal rotation of the knees.
- Lack of butt and core stability limit golfers consistency by contributing to lateral sway, lack of weight transfer, inconsistent swing plane and lack of ball striking consistency.
- Poor stability can contribute to injury from over rotation in follow through, lack of support for the low back and pelvis and overuse of the arms from lack of core strength.

Optimal Butt and General Stability



Poor Stability



- **Hip and Core Stability**

- Lie on your back with your feet on the floor and lift your hips up as shown (standard) 1. For (advanced) 2. golfers, straighten 1 leg whilst keeping your hips in the same position. Both should be held for a minimum of 10 seconds.

- If you are unable to do 1. your core and hip stability is poor. Advanced 2. should only be used for lower handicap golfers.

- Golf performance and injury problems with hip and core stability are highlighted above for the single leg stance.

Correct position for the test

Standard 1.



Advanced 2.



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