

# Learn how to fade or draw like a pro

**T**HE top touring golf professionals are able to move the golf ball in the air from right to left (a draw) or left to right (a fade) on purpose, when the situation requires these shaped shots to be played.

The majority of amateur golfers worldwide on the other hand, if statistics are to be believed, have handicaps of 15 and above. These golfers should not be attempting to replicate their professional counterparts in this way then, but it is worth knowing how these shots are played as it can help one to understand what causes side-spin to be imparted on a golf ball and this might then go some way to helping you to eliminate it. Low handicap golfers will do well to practise shaping their shots though, as they should have good basics already.

It's worth noting that a draw and a fade are considered to be good golf shots as the ball still ends up on the intended target, even if it has taken a bit of a detour in getting there!

It is the hook and slice that miss the target and are thus faults that need to be corrected. The one major difference between these good and bad "shaped shots" is the clubface.

When playing a draw or a fade, the competent golfer has succeeded in keeping the clubface square to the intended target at address and at impact.

Due to incorrect basics, the golfer that hooks a ball left of target has managed to close the clubface (the toe of the club has overtaken the heel) at some point between the address position and impact. For the slice, the golfer will have opened the face (the heel is ahead of the toe) much like a cricketer hitting through the covers.

So then, bearing in mind that the clubface is square to the line running from the ball to the intended target (the flagstick), I will



explain how I play an intended draw shot, which is useful when the pin is positioned back left on the green and there is water on the right and a bunker front left for example.

As you can see in the photograph at address, I have aimed my feet, hips and shoulders to the right of the flagstick. As I have mentioned previously, my clubface is aiming directly for the flag itself and not where my body is aiming. In the photograph, I have used a green that is really close to me so that you can see these things more clearly; in reality, the green would be much further away.

Having set up in this way, I will now swing the club normally along my body alignment, which is to the right of target. The ball will take off to the right as I have followed through there on purpose, but it will now curve to the left and finish on the green because that is where my clubface was aiming.

There really is no need to manipulate the clubface during the swing in any way when using this technique as you have done it all at address but this does require faith, trust and sound basics. If you chicken out and follow through to the flag itself, instead of where your body was aiming, you will only succeed in hitting a pull-hook (which takes off to the left of where you aimed and misses to the left of the green).

You may even manage to get the ball to go straight to the green by doing this (a pull shot) but your downswing will be too steep, leading to a whole new can of worms!

Many golfers that think that they hook their shots are actually playing a pull or a pull-hook, which are both entirely different to the hook shot, and can be fixed through correcting their body alignment at address, and swinging the club toward the target with more freedom. The trouble with this error is that it can also lead to a slice, but more on that next week. It takes a trained eye to spot these errors so I recommend that you see a PGA professional for a golf lesson in order to correct them, rather than relying on advice from playing partners.

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