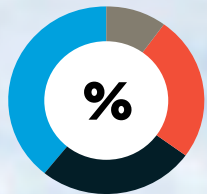


## BY BUTCH HARMON



### Have you ever felt like you had the yips?

- » No, never: 10%
- » Yes, putting yips: 25%
- » Yes, full-swing yips: 26%
- » Yes, chipping yips: 39%

SOURCE: GOLF DIGEST READERS

### BUTCH'S BASICS

Chunked chips usually come from trying to help the ball up. But you don't need height on a chip shot — you need solid contact. Try this drill: Set a headcover a foot behind the ball and practise chipping without touching the headcover. Play the ball back, lean left, and swing. Miss the headcover, and you'll catch the ball flush.

### DROP-OFF DRILL

Practise letting go with your right hand and swinging your left arm through.



## FEELING YIPPY?

### TRY THIS DRILL TO STEADY YOUR CHIPPING

Here's what jumps out at me when I see players yipping chip shots: The left arm stops dead just before impact, and the right hand flips.

If this sounds familiar — you know who you are — the trick is to learn to keep your left arm moving through the shot. I have a drill that can help.

Take your normal setup: Stance narrow, ball just behind centre, weight favouring the front foot.

Then make your regular chipping stroke, except drop your right hand off the grip just before impact. Focus on keeping your left arm swinging to the target (above).

With your yipping hand off the club and your lead arm moving through, you physically can't do what yippers do.

The other part of yipping is the fear that you can't control it.

To combat that, don't delay.

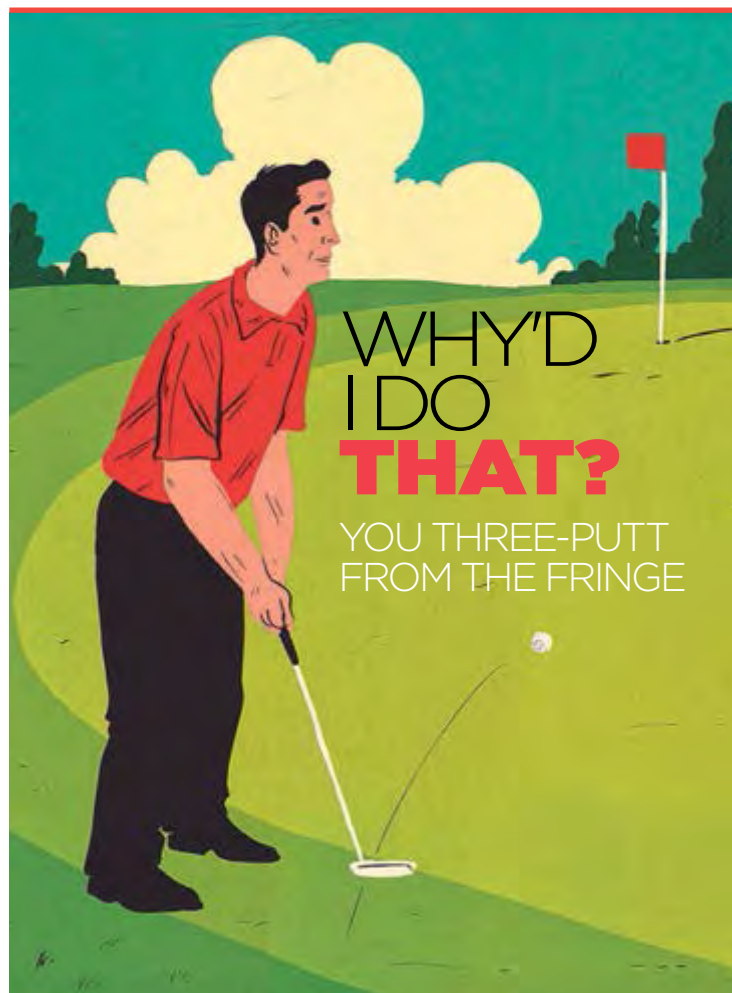
Make two practice swings, dropping your right hand off, then get in there and make your normal stroke.

Your swing thought: Keep the left arm moving.

**Butch Harmon is based at Rio Secco Golf Club near Las Vegas.**

**'GRIP A LITTLE TIGHTER, AND YOU'LL PUT MORE POP ON THE BALL.'**

## BY RICK SMITH



The old saying is definitely true: Your worst putt is better than your worst chip.

So if you're just off the green, grab that putter whenever you can. A lot of golfers do this already, but why do so many off-green putts either rocket past the hole or creep on and stop halfway there?

### Consider these factors that affect the pace when putting from off the green:

- Is the terrain uphill or downhill — or a combination? Get a read on this as you walk up.
- Is the grass in the fringe growing towards you (makes it slower) or away from you (faster)?
- Is the turf wet or dry, soft or firm? Wetter is slower. Firmer is faster.

er is faster. Walk between your ball and the green, and assess the ground with your feet.

After a quick analysis, boost your feel for distance by looking down the path of the putt as you make a few practice strokes. A solid, accelerating strike is important to getting the ball to roll through the fringe.

Increase your grip pressure slightly and play the ball back if it's sitting down, a bit forward if it's on top of the grass. And don't forget to practise a few off-green putts before you head out.

**Rick Smith is a Golf Digest Teaching Professional.**

### HOW MANY BEARS DOES IT TAKE...

When you're putting from off the green, think of it as two putts: one from the ball to the green, the other from the edge of the green to the hole. The trick is getting the speed right when it transitions to the second putt.

Use my Goldilocks rehearsal: Make your first practice stroke too firm, and your next stroke too easy.

Then make one that feels just right. Step in and repeat it.



### THE PUTT THAT LOST THE BRITISH

In the 2009 British Open, Tom Watson, at age 59, needed a par on the 72nd hole to win the Claret Jug for the sixth time.

He hit a perfect drive and a great approach, but his ball trickled off the back of the green. He elected to putt, a smart play.

But, making sure to get the ball to the hole, he rolled it eight feet past. His par putt never had a chance, and he lost in a playoff to Stewart Cink.



photos by J.D. Cuban, Jim Luft, Ross Kinnaird/Getty Images; illustration by Paul Blow