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| **Proper Windup, Release, and Swing Path**I just completed a video lesson with a new client who has a very good swing but lacks a proper windup and release past the impact area.  I was digging some old photos to show him, and I found a Rick Smith article that had the exact photos that I was looking for.I know that this article from Golf Digest August, 2008 will help about 95% of the golfers trying to improve.  I will eventually replace these photos with mine.“Learn to Swing In to Out” by Rick Smith with comments by Lee Woodard

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| swing1 |

Ever watch a PGA Tour telecast and wonder how those guys hit 8-irons 180 yards? The biggest reason is their inside swing path and powered with a wide windup and full release.Make sure you have proper setup and initial conditions. The first error usually appears by snatching the clubhead back inside which is a beginning of a problematic swing.The following are two views of what a proper top position looks like.  Notice the width (e.g. hands are a maximum distance from the head), upper lean away from the target, and the right leg lean toward the target (see the lines drawn on Photo B below).  The windup is completed with the left shoulder almost over the right foot and well behind the ball.

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| swing2 |

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| swing3 |

Note the excellent width below and how to accomplish it.

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| swing4 |

Your position at the top can set up a weak downswing if you are not creating proper width.   As you swing to the top, maintain space between your right hand and right ear.  This will also correctly move the top of your spine away from the ball.Solution: reach for it. Hold an iron with your right hand only, and swing to the top (A). Look to ensure that you have good width between your hand and your head (B). If you do, grip the club with your other hand (C). This is a good top-of-swing position.Two common problems are hanging back and flipping at the ball with no arm rotation and post impact release of the clubhead.

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| swing5 |

Note:  In the pivot above right, the head remains slightly behind the impact point until the ball is well on its way.If you have a proper windup behind the ball, then start the downswing with the lower body which will allow you to swing from the inside.  Solution: separate from the shaft. Stick a shaft or similar object in the ground, and address a ball so the shaft is touching your right side (make sure the shaft doesn't obstruct your swing). Practice making down-swings where your lower body separates from the shaft (above, bottom). Feel your weight moving fully to your left foot while your torso rotates toward the target. You'll create room for your arms to swing, instead of scooping (top).

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| swing6 |

The above is an anti-casting feel and drill.  In an attempt to lift the ball in the air, you unhinge your wrists prematurely as you swing down (inset). It's known as "casting," like a person slinging a fishing line, and this unhinging of the wrists promotes an over-the-top swing and weak, scoopy impact.Solution: hold it back. Take the club back with both hands, and then hook the shaft with your right index finger. As you swing down, keep the hinge in your left wrist by resisting the swing with your right index finger (above). When it's time to hit shots, remember this feeling of resistance in the transition.

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| swing7 |

If you are flipping at the ball, think about ‘trapping’ the ball on the clubface- i.e. your hands are slightly ahead or even with the clubhead at impact. The problem is made worse with no arm rotation past impact.Solution: keep the palm down. As you hit shots, hold your right palm facing down through impact (above right). To do this without swinging the club straight into the ground, you have to rotate your body forward. It will feel as if you're trapping the ball against the turf and closing the clubface.The photos below address the proper release and arm rotation after impact.

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| swing8 |

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