



Golf Digest's Ultimate Drill Book: Over 120 Drills that Are Guaranteed to Improve Every Aspect of Your Game and Low

By Jim McLean

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Elevate your golf game with the innovative, high-impact drills the pros use, from renowned instructor Jim McLean.

To golfers of all proficiency levels, skills and drills go hand in hand. Jim McLean is one of the greatest living teachers of the game and in *Golf Digest's Ultimate Drill Book* he includes 120 precision golf exercises to address a wide array of concerns. From tee shots to the short game, readers can customize practice sessions depending on their unique trouble spots.

Revealing his time-tested tactics for overcoming pitfalls, golf guru Jim McLean revolutionizes the learning process with strategies for every aspect of the game. Golfers will learn how to attain a perfect golf posture, add distance to one's drive, shoot well from tough lies, pitch like a pro, troubleshoot putts, maintain mental focus, and much more.

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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for Jim McLean

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"Jim has done more research on teaching than anyone alive. Nobody has taken more lessons and studied more instruction ideas. The drills in this book come from the best in the business." --Carl Welty, PGA Top 50 Instructors

"Jim McLean has been an integral part of The Golf Channel's instructional programming since our launch. Given his expertise in all areas of the game, Jim's compilation of drills into one quick reference source should be an excellent addition to any golfer's library." --Bob Greenway, Senior Vice-President, Production and Programming, The Golf Channel

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About the Author

Jim McLean is director of golf at the Doral Golf Resort and Spa, a regular contributor to *Golf Digest*, and a featured instructor on the Golf Channel. He lives in Weston, Florida.

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Introduction

into one complete reference resource. So, during the winter of 1984, I wrote that first book in Orlando, Florida, in my spare time when not playing in tournaments. I'll never forget that experience. My wife Justine allowed me to use the living room of our apartment, where I had the full manuscript laid out on the floor. And it took that entire off-season for me to organize things.

Later that winter, I shot accompanying photographs. There was a chapter for each part of the game; the idea was that readers could find several good drills for whatever problem they had and solve their swing and shot-making problems through intelligent, honest practice. The beauty of that book was that everybody could find something productive in it, no matter what they thought about swing technique.

Back then, drills were not nearly as popular as they are now. I found that out when I pounded the streets of New York City looking for a publisher. No one bought the idea.

It was not until the 1987 Orlando Golf Show that I found someone who liked my book— Jack McDermott of Golf Digest magazine. But it was not until 1990 that the book finally came out. That was because so much additional work had to be done, including reshooting the photographs and then having an artist do drawings based on them.

Thankfully, the brutal work paid off. The original Golf Digest's Book of Drills was an immediate success and, to this day, is still in hardback and has been reprinted fourteen times. The response was tremendous: Not only did average golfers offer accolades, so did top tour pros and teachers.

In the years following the publication of that book, I learned or invented many more drills, and in 2001 I came to another crossroads in my career. After wondering why no new drills book had been written, I decided to ask Golf Digest to step up to the plate once again.

What you now hold in your hands is a guidebook to golf improvement, since drills or practice exercises serve as a catalyst to learning, allow you to correct faults that sneak into every player's swing from time to time, and learn new tee-to-green scoring shots.

All of my instructors, at each and every school site, use drills to teach what I consider are the eight vital steps in a good golf swing, inclusive of what I call the Corridors of Success and the critical X-Factor positions. Let me explain, so that you are very clear about these instructional points.

The eight most logical steps of the swing, as determined by the study of top golf professionals and amateurs, are as follows:

Step One: The first move in the backswing.

Step Two: Halfway back.

Step Three: The three-quarter position of the backswing.

Step Four: The top of the backswing.

Step Five: The move down to the ball.

Step Six: Impact.

Step Seven: The early follow-through.

Step Eight: The finish and rebound.

I believe that learning to groove these ideal positions through drills is the true shortcut to good golf. However, there are not eight exact positions you must achieve. The ideal swing patterns must require allowances for your own personal differences, since there are always differences in great golf swings. To represent this, I came up with the Corridors of Success—parameters within which I like to see any swing fall. For example, on the backswing, I might prefer that the left wrist be flat, although small variations are okay. A flat left wrist at the top is nice, but it is not a fundamental. Whatever area of the swing needs work,

you can improve and groove it by working on drills, all designed to help you learn a new action or correct a faulty one in your technique.

I have a detailed system for teaching the game, and I do stress the importance of the X-Factor to many students working to improve through drills. The X-Factor is a proven concept that first takes into account the differential between the turn of the hips and the turn of the shoulders—your torque. It's how you turn, not how much, and what counts most is the gap or differential between the two turning actions. The X-Factor book discussed power positions from setup to finish and focused entirely on body motions. The Eight-Step Swing focused on how to teach and diagnose everything in the golf swing. Both books required a tremendous amount of research, which I have loved doing.

I'm happy that many of my philosophies and top drills come to the surface in Golf Digest's Ultimate Drill Book. This comprehensive instructional text contains what I call "Timeless Winners"—evergreen drills I have been teaching for years—plus well over one hundred new drills. What's more, this book contains photographs throughout rather than illustrations, since all the "players" involved in this project agreed that it will better allow you, the reader-golfer, to use the instructional messages put forth in the text that follows.

Whatever your handicap, this book can help you reach your full golf potential. I make this profound statement simply because I have witnessed students improve greatly by doing drill work. By practicing these drills, you can zero in directly on problem points in your game or golf swing, and address these right away.

I take great satisfaction in knowing that this book's publication will also allow teachers to learn new ways to help their students get better at golf. Take it from me, drills have broad use and can be used by all golf instructors, regardless of their own individual swing theory. Furthermore, any drill in this book can be modified to produce slightly different feels and swing actions.

Drills even work for tour players. Just recently, Vijay Singh told me that drills from my first book helped him improve his golf swing. Vijay's comment was very rewarding, considering he is a former Masters and PGA champion. And throughout Tiger Woods's life, all of his teachers, from his father Earl Woods, to Rudy Duran, to John Anselmo, to Butch Harmon, have had him use practice drills.

One of the drills I helped invent, the Stop-And-Go Drill, was a significant help to Tiger as he made swing improvements in the late 1990s with Butch Harmon on his way to becoming the world's leading golfer. Let's hope this drill, along with many others in this book, will help you bring your game to peak-performance level. All you have to do to accomplish this goal is to determine what area of your swing or shot-making game needs improvement, go to the relevant chapter containing specific cure-all drills, then sacrifice some playing time for practice time.

Good luck in your self-improvement journey.

Jim McLean

Miami, Florida

Chapter 1

Timeless Winners

- Favorite drills for every golfer, from my original bestseller, *Golf Digest's Book of Drills*, designed to help you develop technically sound setup, swing, and shot-making fundamentals

All of the practice drills you are about to learn are extra-special because they have stood the test of time. These drills are still being used by golf instructors at the Jim McLean golf schools, many top teachers around the country, and of course, myself.

These “timeless winners” serve as a good introduction to the myriad other drills contained in this very comprehensive book—each designed to help you improve your setup, swing, or shot-making game. Regardless of your handicap (or, in case you’re a teacher, your swing theory), you’ll find all of these drills—from the Grip-Pressure Drill, to the Stop-And-Go Drill, to the Hands-Leading Chipping Drill, to the Wedge-Stroke Putting Drill—extremely practical and easy to practice.

You’ll have to practice regularly to achieve major change. But your time will be well spent. I know from the experience of thousands of golfers that using drills in practice sessions will help you master the proper golf moves and hit better shots. These are the golf motions and positions that will accelerate your learning curve.

GRIP-PRESSURE DRILL

Problem: The golfer either grips the club too tightly or holds the club too lightly. **Result:** The golfer tenses up vital golf muscles and drains power from the swing, or sacrifices high speed for low control.

Goal: To determine what degree of “personalized” grip pressure allows you to generate high clubhead speed and maintain full control of the golf club throughout the swing.

Practice Procedure: Start by gripping the club very lightly. Label your lightest grip pressure as “1,” on a scale of 1 to 10. Next, grip progressively more firmly until you give the handle a big squeeze, reaching 10 on my scale. I invented the 1–10 scale in the 1980s to help golfers quantify the feel in their hands. As you proceed through my scale, give each degree of pressure a number.

Next, hit some shots, each time gripping more lightly than more firmly, until you find the grip pressure that allows you to hit the ball powerfully and accurately. That grip pressure number will probably be 4 or 5. However, there are allowable exceptions to the rule, according to my “Corridors of Success” leeway philosophy. The bottom line is: Find the grip pressure that gives you the best results, and nine times out of ten that will be lighter than what you’ve been using until now.

Constantly identify the feel of your personal grip pressure, so that you hold the handle the same way out on the course and give yourself the best possible chance to hit pro-standard shots. One more thing: Maintain constant grip pressure from the start to the end of your swing. This simple tip may become your best link to good play.

Tailoring the Tip: You can also vary pressure in each hand as you play intentional hooks and slices, which most golfers do not realize. Grip the club lightly in the right hand for a slice and lightly in the left hand for a hook.

Experiment with grip pressure until you find the hold that allows you to accelerate the club through impact into a balanced finish, like the one the player employs here.

INTERMEDIATE-TARGET DRILL

Problem: The golfer aims his feet, knees, hips, and shoulders left or right of the target, and often compounds the fa...

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Jacqueline Kang:

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Judith Cole:

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