

Compound exercises are the best for golf

Isolation exercises and weight training are good for general fitness, but are they potentially hurting your golf swing?

Michael Jones



The most common question I get asked is; "what's the best kind of exercises for golf and the golf swing".

As a golf fitness trainer, there are five factors that I take into account when designing specific golf fitness programs: Strength, Flexibility, Balance, Co-ordination and Stability.

If it sounds like a lot, you are correct. That's why golf is such a difficult game to master. You need all these factors working at once with the correct timing. As a result of these factors being incorporated into your swing, they also must be reflected in your golf fitness routine and exercises.

Let's look at sports science today: all sports require specific exercises to improve the player's performance. The majority of these are "compound exercises", which are exercises that involve many muscles all working together over lots of different joints to complete the movement. To achieve

better performance you must duplicate the sport involved.

This is not, however, commonly done in golf, as most players do "isolation exercises" (i.e. bench press, lat pull downs, etc) which only involve a few muscles. This simply does not relate to the complexity of the golf swing and therefore can in many instances make your swing worse.

The great thing about compound exercises is that by adding complex movements, your brain must send many signals in rapid-fire succession, and many muscles have to function systematically. I always encourage all players – from beginners to tour professionals -- to attempt compound exercises as it's a great way to cover all the above mentioned points.

So many golfers tell me "I do weights", etc. While this is great, the exercise isn't usually complex enough to cover the movements you make in your swing and improve the 5 Factors mentioned above.

Traditional golf fitness concepts like "All you need is core abdominals and stretching" are myths still advocated by many non-informed professionals, and there is plenty of scientific proof to advocate golfers should strive for specific exercises that enhance all factors I have covered.

Compound exercises have many benefits, not the least of which is time. These days



Squat press on Bose Ball. This is a great example of a compound exercise with Balance, Strength, Co-ordination and Stability all components. Try 4 sets, 8 Repetitions.



Unassisted Push up, feet on small ball. This is for the advanced trainer with Strength and Balance playing a major role in this compound exercise. If you can complete this, all golf muscles will be activated and you will feel ready for action. EGFA tour professionals use this exercise while competing in tournaments as it's time efficient. 4 sets and 8 Repetitions.

golfers are time poor but still expect results. By completing 4 sets of 12 repetitions involving rotation, extension, balance and strength all wrapped up with stability may only take 20 minutes versus the 90-minute generic, one dimensional, non-golf related exercise. Many of my tour professionals have found great value in their time management courtesy of completing compound exercises on the road knowing they're using less time in their schedule but are still activating their swing muscles.

So when you're considering updating your golf fitness program, take time out to

consider doing some compound exercises. And make sure to consult your golf fitness trainer or PGA golf coach to design compound exercises that make you work towards improving all facets of your golf game and your golf fitness. ◀

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