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Stop at the top

Stopping at the top is a great way to practise. It allows you to complete the backswing with ultimate care and start the downswing on its intended line. This allows you to complete the backswing with absolute precision. Firstly, it removes any impulse ‘to hit the ball on the backswing’, which causes the body to tilt and the hands to twist and roll on the takeaway. Secondly, it allows you to swing the club down on line and into the back of the ball. Think of a bowman as he draws back the bow and pauses momentarily before delivering the arrow to its target.

Whilst learning or rebuilding their swings almost all golfers at the school are taught to stop at the top of the backswing.

Once the swing’s old habits have been broken down, stopping at the top will gradually evolve into a very slight pause before evolving again into an imperceptible slow down of the swing as the club changes direction in the transition from backswing to downswing.

There is nothing new or revolutionary about stopping at the top of the backswing. As with all things in golf it has been done for years, and over the

decades a host of professionals have used the stop at the top in their practice drills.

When we were teaching on the European tour we met Gordon Brand, a top tour player who once finished second in the British Open. Gordon was famous for stopping at the top of the swing, which we admired, as it was something we had done with our pupils for many years. However, we feel that he wasn’t happy being seen as something of a novelty on tour and one day called us over to admire his new improved swing, which he confidently told us no longer included a stop at the top.

We watched intently as he rifled shot after shot down the middle of the practice ground, but guess what? – there was still a stop! Which just goes to show that it is difficult to break old habits, but if they’re good ones, you don’t need to.

RIGHT

The Stop At The Top drill: If you try this drill on the practice ground, you will be surprised how cleanly and far you hit the ball. When we take our pupils out to Stoke Park they are amazed how solid their strike becomes.

The stop at the top drill



1. Tee the ball up.



2. Stop at the top.



3&4. Hit the ball and continue through into a $\frac{3}{4}$ follow through position.

