



Not only does the correct inclination of the spine pre-set the correct weight shift for a fully coiled backswing but it also creates the perfect launch conditions with the driver

Since its first publication in 2003 I'm delighted to say that I have received over five thousand emails and letters from golfers across the globe conveying how much *The 7 Laws of the Golf Swing* had influenced their game for the better. The fundamental messages and the stunning imagery featured in the book have been responsible for creating winners on every major professional tour including the record-breaking 2007 European Tour Order of Merit victory by Justin Rose; a feat that will unlikely be broken again.

Speaking as a coach, 2010 was once again proof that biomechanical laws and common sense will, in the long term, always prevail over any 'method'. Fads will continue to come and go, but if you seriously want to improve your game then look no further than these proven 'laws' and fundamentals of movement.

The illusion of a 'method'

I have a problem with 'methods' in golf (such as the recent 'stack and tilt' phenomenon). A 'one-size-fits-all' approach is immediately squashed when you consider the variables in weight, arm/leg length, dynamic capability and flexibility we profile individually. Any individual or team that shouts 'our method is the answer' should be given a wide berth; a 'method' sells us a 'constant' but as we all know, the golf swing is organic and constantly changing.

I wrote *The 7 Laws of the Golf Swing* with one purpose in mind – to reveal the truth of the golf swing for what it really is and write and depict it in a unique way. And the fact remains that until we develop different shaped hands or an extra leg the golfing ability of a human being will always be determined by natural biomechanical laws and truths.

I am delighted to share in this article four of the primary images featured within my book that capture a golf swing's sense of geometry, shape, timing and dynamics. By studying and employing any one of these four truths (ideally all of them!) in your own motion I am sure you will experience new sensations that help you to play better golf.

Looking ahead to 2011, I look forward to appearing regularly in Gi with a series of fresh and entertaining features – if you have any questions or if there is anything specific you would like me to address, drop me an email: nbradleygolf@aol.co.uk

THE SEVEN LAWS

By Nick Bradley

TOUR COACH & AUTHOR 'THE 7 LAWS OF THE GOLF SWING'

Pre-Setting Weight Transference

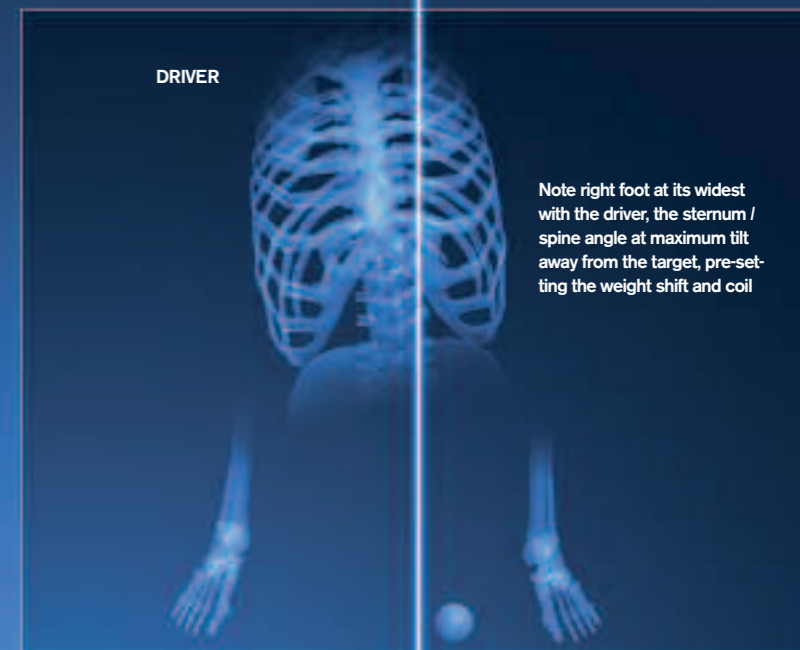
Law 2 was probably the first time in golf instruction that the bone structure of a golfer's body was displayed. Law 2 certainly was the 'readers' favourite as it left no doubt as to how and why you should be standing to the ball. Whilst I agree that the weight transference during the backswing should be minimal, the current theory of leaving it centred over the ball (as per stack 'n' tilt theory) is only half of a story that needs to be told. Modern theorists will tell you that nothing can go wrong strike-wise with this centralised winding of the body, yet they turn a blind eye to the fact that, equally, the sternum can move ahead of the ball during the downswing. This is twice as problematic!

You can now see with the smaller pictures (right) how this works with the driver through to the wedge. With its small and slower motion, a wedge shot needs little if any weight shift at all. The spine and sternum can assume a frontal position which leans slightly target-ward with the right foot narrowed.

The mid iron, as you can see, has the spine marginally tilted away from the target with the nose directly looking down the sternum. With this marginal weight shift already pre-programmed, the need to create weight transference or a conscious wind-up behind the ball is made obsolete. Why do we need a marginal weight shift anyway? Because without something called 'dissociation', which is a stretch between the upper and lower body, no strong kinematic chain or flow of force can ever occur in the downswing.

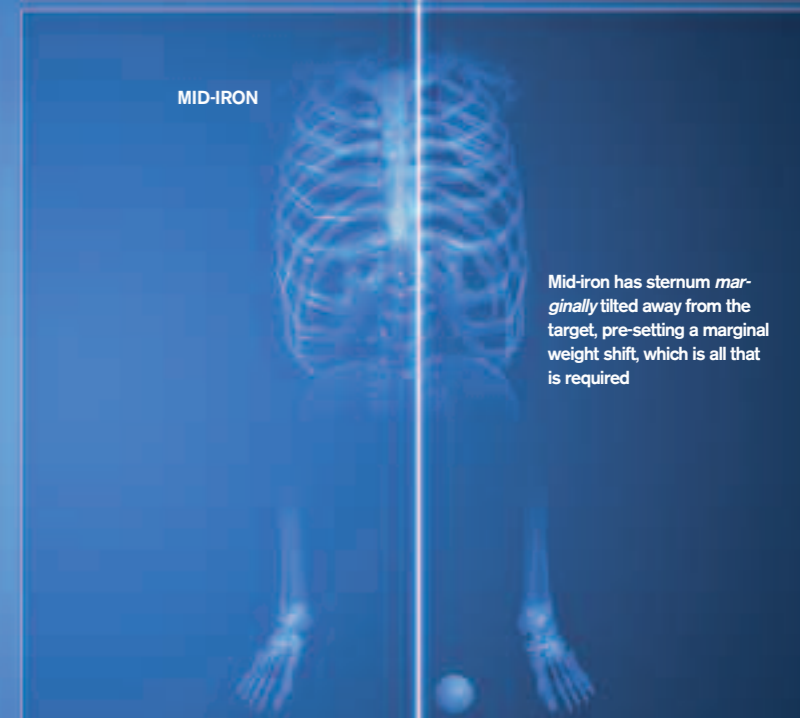
Lastly, the driver; the right foot has widened and the spine is now at its maximum tilt away from the target. Apart from the automatic weight shift I mentioned a moment ago, this rearward tilt provides a perfect bodily launch angle for the driver especially if you position your hands slightly behind the ball at address.

I'd like you to note one last detail in the image – it can be found in the way the nose bone is always aligned to the sternum and spine no matter what club. This has two benefits: it is safe and structurally sound to have this linear relationship between the head and the spine and secondly, it temporarily stalls the turn of the torso early in the backswing allowing the club and body to sync up nicely. Now that's efficiency!



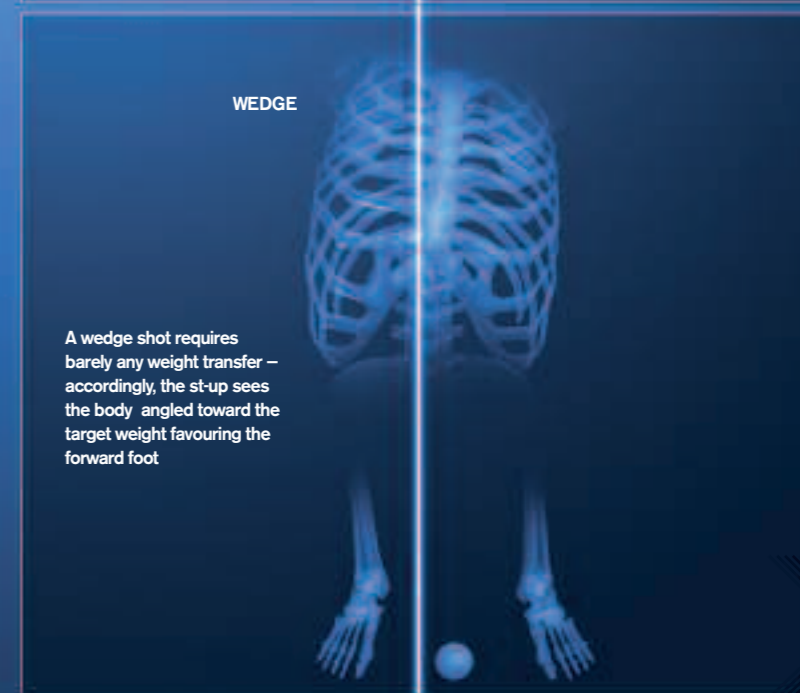
DRIVER

Note right foot at its widest with the driver, the sternum / spine angle at maximum tilt away from the target, pre-setting the weight shift and coil



MID-IRON

Mid-iron has sternum marginally tilted away from the target, pre-setting a marginal weight shift, which is all that is required



WEDGE

A wedge shot requires barely any weight transfer – accordingly, the set-up sees the body angled toward the target weight favouring the forward foot

BEFORE YOU THINK 'POSITIONS', THINK 'SYNC'

Law Four is called 'the swing's dimension of time'. Time after time I will see amateurs and professionals obsessively working on the plane of their swing or some other aspect that doesn't look as pretty as they would like, and no matter how hard they try to force the club into this 'slot' it never takes shape.

Look at it this way: the only reason the hands on your watch point at the right numbers at the right time is due to the synchronization of all the moving parts behind the face. Your golf swing works exactly

the same way; certain parts have to move further distances than others and therefore they need to move quicker! the most obvious example is the golf club itself which is depicted here by a rather large feather. So before you think 'positions' think... 'sync'!

With the average clubhead travelling about 12 feet in the backswing and the torso only 12 inches, you can start to comprehend how it would be really easy for these two to miss each other at impact. The key is to have the clubhead working like the feather so it covers its

greater distance fairly rapidly and 'syncs up' to the torso.

Aside from the timing benefit you can also appreciate the kind of leverage you can generate through actually using your hands. The fundamental motion of a golf swing is very similar to that of cracking a whip – in both activities the hands provide the vehicle or the transporter of any energy the body may have created. I have seen strong guys with poor grips and poor leverage hit it absolutely nowhere yet you can take an average-sized guy like Sergio Garcia and the rewards from having superb leverage are evident.

The innocent feather image also locks us into a firm law of physics, too. With force equal to mass + acceleration, this image of the club or feather revolving around the body immediately has the club in a lighter state; your capability of moving it quickly is now much easier.

It's a simple image with a huge results:

- Your torso and club will sync together throughout the swing
- Your plane and swing shape will start to make more sense and will repeat more consistently
- You will create a lever system that will allow you to move the club-head at speed – and more speed = more distance

To heighten your sense of co-ordination between body, arms and the club, imagine you are holding a large feather at the set up

Your arms and the feather have to travel much further than the torso on the way to the top of the backswing – so they have to move more quickly in order to maintain 'sync' with the body

Like cracking a whip, the acceleration of the clubhead on its way to impact requires the arms and hands to transport the centrifugal forces generated by the body

Your swing shape through to the finish will improve as the arms and body 'sync up' to maximise speed – from here you are simply recoiling



THE SWING PLANE'S 'LINE OF FIRE'

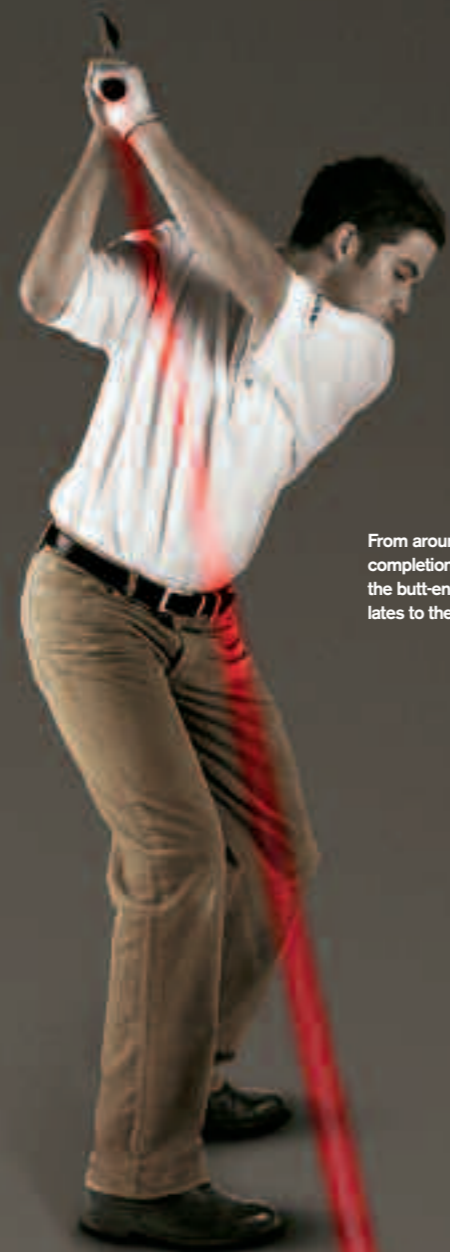
I remember not so long ago at the Orlando PGA Golf Show being asked whether I believed in a 'one plane' swing or a 'two plane' swing? I just told him that neither were right for me because I just wanted an 'on plane' golf swing.

This area of golf instruction is very ambiguous but what I can say with 100% conviction is that I have no chance of ever creating decent arm and club plane if the torso and bigger mass is misbehaving. So once again – and rather like the feather image – if you want a better swing plane and shape to your swing you first have to work on your body positioning.

But let's assume that you have all of that down and your good to go. The truth of swing plane, the big bang of swing plane, the holy grail of swing plane is the lie angle of the golf club! Which is why you should get fitted around great posture and not your impact position (please take note all you club fitters!).

I have a very simple statement for you that you should never forget about your swing: 'it is simply a circle on its side!' – that's all. The lie angle of the club and consequent body motion play a huge role in what the swing plane should look like but the basic premise is this: there have been more great players displaying a slightly 'laid off' position at the top of their swings than players who have been 'on line' or 'across the line'. Why is this? The reason can be found in this image.

When the club reaches its completion of the backswing it needs to continue to relate to the target line; this is clearly visible since this 'line of fire' has been scribed by the butt of the club from halfway back to the top. The one detail that many golfers miss in attempting to find a great backswing position is in the rotation of the left forearm and bicep. This subtle feeling of turning the left forearm and allowing the right elbow to bend slots this aspect of plane right in there between the lie angle of the club and the body motion.



From around halfway to the completion of the backswing the butt-end of the club relates to the ball-to-target line



Combined with a sound body action, the subtle feeling of rotating the left forearm while allowing the right elbow to bend will reward you with a good swing plane

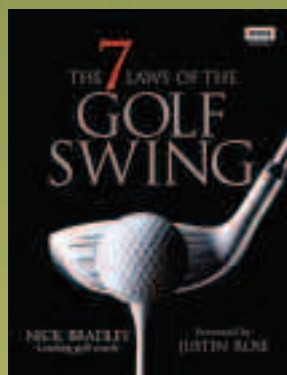
THE STEP-IN-DRILL YOUR KEY TO A MORE DYNAMIC DOWNSWING

The step-in-drill is quite simple: take your regular 7 iron set up...draw your left foot in so its nearly touching the right shoe...make your backswing but as you near the top...make your step with the left foot and collect the ball as usual.

This is the most naturally dynamic way to train a downswing that has good 'sequencing', can accumulate power and deliver the clubhead with speed and mass. There is a wave-like motion that great downswings display where the transference of energy is kinetically driven.

Now all of that sounds highly technical but the fact is this: there is very little difference between the way you walk down the street putting your left foot in front of your right and shifting your weight and a potent downswing.

One last key. As you make your step, the earlier and the deeper (as in squat) you go the more torque and power you will generate. Need more proof? Just youtube Rory McIlroy's swing!



The 7 Laws of the Golf Swing, by Nick Bradley, is published by BBC Books and is now available in paperback



Take a 7-iron and get set for the exercise by setting up with the ball opposite your left heel – then draw your left foot in towards the right before stepping into your downswing

As you step and place your left foot towards the target so you create this wave-like kinetic motion as your body 'squats' into the hitting position – the earlier and deeper this squat the more energy you will generate to accelerate the arms and club

Having compressed the ball through impact the dynamics of your swing motion will carry you to a fully released finish, totally in balance