

## **FEATURED GOLF TIP**

### **How to get out of the bunker**

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These steps will ensure that you have the right mechanics for getting out of bunkers. Once you've read these steps practice them and get used to hitting out of bunkers, and they will become just as natural as a regular short game shot. These steps will give you the solid foundation that you need for bunker success.

Here are the steps: (note: These steps apply to a normal sand bunker. Not wet or hard sand)

1. Choke down on the golf club (Have your right index finger about an inch from the bottom of the grip). Choking down gives you the control with the club and also allows you to "feel" the shot rather than hitting it.
2. Narrow your stance a little and play the ball a few inches forward in your stance. This will also aid in controlling the shot, and it will contribute to higher ball flight.
3. Dig into the sand with your feet a little and get comfortable.
4. Keep your body completely still throughout (no twisting hips).
5. Start your swing with your arms and keep your swing vertical. The end of the grip butt should be pointed at the ball at the top of your backswing. (Don't bring the club straight back, remember steep is better here!)
6. Your left arm should be parallel to the ground and fully extended at the top of your swing.
7. Then start your downswing at the sand focusing to hit 1 inch behind the ball. Don't focus on hitting the ball, hit the sand an inch behind and the ball will get out every time!
8. Your arms and body follow the ball as it leaves the sand.
9. Remember steep angle into the sand is key here, however you don't have to swing too hard, we are not blasting the ball out we are advancing it.

Drill:

Go into a bunker and take 3 clubs your pitching wedge, sand wedge, and a lob wedge(if you have one). Remember that you can get creative with shots; just because it's a sand wedge doesn't mean that you'll "feel" the most comfortable or give you the best results. But I want you to notice the difference in design and performance.

Regardless, hit a few shots with each club and really notice the difference in how the ball comes out of the sand. Then choose the club that best suits you. But remember on all these clubs swing steep and hit 1 inch behind the ball. You can even draw a line 1-2 inches behind the ball and aim for that line.

At home, office, or at the course take practice swings and focus on bringing the club up at a steep angle. Watch as your grip end points to the ground. And stop there - this is the position that you want to be in. A great way to see if the grip is pointed over the ball is sticking a tee in the grip handle. Do that a few times to ensure that you know where to stop the golf club and start your steep downswing. Then the downswing is easy! Just hit an inch behind the ball. Practice this for a few days then go have fun in a bunker!