



THE DRILL SERGEANT

EXCLUSIVE BY
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BEATING THE BUNKER BLUES

Some players become nervous wrecks when they find their ball in a greenside sand trap.

This reaction can often be attributed to not having a definite plan to follow, not understanding how wedges work and just plain fear after some poor bunker experiences.

If this sounds familiar, here is a drill designed to overcome your fears and help you understand how your sand wedge works.

To set up the drill, you need to get an A4 size piece of thin wood, either ply or masonite works well, and paint it white.

Position the wood in a bunker and cover it with a two-centimetre layer of

sand [pic 1]. Place the ball on top of the sand and draw a circle around the ball, about a ball width from the edge of the ball [pic 2].

Now take your set-up with a slightly open stance and the ball positioned only slightly ahead of the centre of your stance [pic 3]. Set the face of your sand iron square to the target line and then make a two-thirds backswing [pic 4] before following through to a normal balanced finish on your front foot [pics 5, 6, 7 & 8].

Contact with the sand should be on the line behind the ball. You should feel the club contact the board somewhere near impact with the ball.

Looking at the sole of your wedge post-shot, you should see where the board contacted the club on the trailing edge of the sole [pic 9]. The trailing edge contact is the result of the design of the sand iron, which sees the leading edge heading well up and away from the sand at impact.

To create different flight lengths you should swing the club different lengths or at different speed. That is, longer or faster swings fly the ball longer and shorter or slower swings reduce the flight time.

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PHOTOS: BRENDAN JAMES A 10



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THE DRILL SERGEANT SAYS:
Poor planning, fear and not understanding how your sand wedge works all contribute to forgettable bunker experiences.



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