

Want to practice putting? Do it with your eyes closed

The simple drill can help golfers make a more consistent stroke on the greens

By Ryan Davis / *Special to The Bulletin*

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Closing your eyes while putting is a tip made popular by Jim McLean, 1994 PGA teacher of the year.

The purpose is to make your putting stroke soft and smooth. This drill will shift your attention away from the mechanics of the stroke and force you to concentrate on feel.

Most golfers lift their head too soon in their putting stroke to see if the ball is going to vanish into the cup.

Closing your eyes while practicing will result in less anxiety on putts of all distances.

When practicing this procedure, hit a series of 10-to 15-foot putts with your eyes closed.

Make sure that you are settled in correctly at address.

All you should be concentrating on is hitting the putt solidly with an accelerating motion and with an ultrasmooth stroke.

After you practice this, your stroke will become smoother and your thoughts will become less mechanical, and you will develop better feel.

The more feel you have, the better you will putt. Pretty soon, your buddies will call you "Pheel Mickelson."

This tip and many more are available in Golf Digest's "Book of Drills."

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Rob Kerr / The Bulletin

Kah-Nee-Ta golf pro Ryan Davis demonstrates practicing putting with his eyes closed.

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