

10 Quick Tips to Add Distance to Your Drives

By [Jaacob Bowden](#) of [Swing Man Golf](#)

Jaacob Bowden is one of the world's foremost experts on increasing golf swing speed. His Swing Man Golf web site was built around both the knowledge he used to increase his own swing speed by 26 mph in 37 days while training for the RE/MAX World Long Drive Championships, and also what he has learned about golf that took him from average length hitting 14-handicapper to Professional Golfer and Long Drive Champion.

If you are like most people and are looking to add length to your drives, three basic areas that you can look to for finding more distance are your technique, your equipment, and your swing speed.

In regards to technique, here are 10 quick tips to help you get more power out of your golf swing.

1) Open Your Stance and Hips

It's most commonly taught to line up parallel to where you want to hit the ball with your feet, hips, shoulders, etc. However, try setting up with open feet and an open stance (but still with parallel shoulders) like RE/MAX World Long Drive competitor Nyle Pruitt. You'll probably have to consciously adjust at first to make sure to still swing from inside-to-out. However, not only will this make your setup more like your impact position, but you are also pre-setting a degree of coil or x-factor in to your swing.



2) Strengthen Your Grip

The grip can be a good place to make adjustments to your swing if you need to change your ball flight, get more accuracy, or get more power. To maximize power, take a very strong grip with both hands like what you see here with 2-time RE/MAX World Long Drive Champion Jamie Sadlowksi. One benefit of this is that you can let your wrists cock straight up towards your rear shoulder in the back swing without having to think about rolling them open as is what is taught in much of today's golf instruction. I find a chop and whip motion like this is a bit easier to conceptualize and repeat under pressure than the typical uncock-and-roll type hand action.



Do be aware that this can introduce hooks in to your swing...which actually wouldn't be so bad for most people since so many are slicers. :-p

3) Coil Your Torso

As best as you can in the back swing, turn your upper body back in the back swing while trying to keep your hips and legs stable and still. The more separation, or x-factor, you can create between hips and shoulders, the more power you can load up to unleash on the downswing to impact.

From a physics standpoint, a longer coil has more power, so in the back swing you might try to turn back from the mid-section to lengthen your torso coil rather than thinking of turning with only the shoulders.



4) Straighten Your Rear Leg

If you aren't flexible enough to make a full back swing or just want to make your current back swing longer without working on your flexibility, go ahead and let your rear leg straighten in the back swing. Most golf instruction will tell you to keep that rear leg bent, which has the benefit of a more stable back swing...but it also limits the total turn in your back swing. By letting the rear leg straighten and opening up your hips a bit more on the back swing, you can make your back swing longer if necessary. Part of the reason that RE/MAX World Long Drive Champion Jamie Sadlowksi's swing is so long is because he does exactly this.



5) Cup Your Wrist At the Top

Many Tour players and teachers advocate a flat wrist at the top of the back swing, however, for maximizing pure distance I find that you can get more wrist cock with a cupped wrist. Try for yourself to see which position gets you more wrist cock.



6) Soften Up Your Hands and Wrists

After spending time listening to professional long drivers like Jason Zuback and Tour players like Hank Kuehne, you'll hear a lot about how important having soft hands and wrists are to long drives. Tension and hardness in your joints are like a rusty door hinge...they just aren't as free to move fast.

One indication of oily and supple hands and wrists is in the transition from the back swing to the down swing. Note in these two pictures how Charles Howell increases the angle between his forearms and club as he is starting downward due to the relative his lack of tension in his hands and arms.



7) Get More Lag And/Or Throw the Club

The technical term for lag in the down swing is the conservation of angular momentum...but without getting too technical, simply try to hold the wrist cock as long as possible in to the down swing but such that the club will still bottom out slightly after impact. Four people that are known for their delayed wrist cock are Jamie Sadlowksi, Sergio Garcia, Ben Hogan, and Jack Hamm. Take a look at how much of an angle (90 degrees or more) there still is between their shaft and lead arm deep in to the down swing as their arms approach their rear legs.







You can also try throwing the club through impact using a motion similar to skipping a rock across the water, a la Mike Austin. I've found that when I do this I get about 5-7 mph more on my driver swing speed.

To watch the video below, go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaHzdKotDPs>



8) Keep the Lead Arm Planted on the Chest

I have the physics of it explained on the member portion of our website, but basically it's important to keep the lead arm planted on your chest until after you've hit the ball because it creates a connection and compound lever to your body. Pulling the lead arm off or breaking this connection to the chest can limit the power of your swing to your lead deltoid (shoulder) muscle. This muscle is not near as powerful as your core body and legs.



This is why you might see some guys on Tour, like Vijay Singh, making swings with a towel or club head cover under their lead arm while practicing on the range.

9) Show More Butt

If you take a look at many Tour players and professional long drivers, notice how the hips are almost fully at their finish position even at impact. The hips being ahead of the shoulders like this are a good indication of how well you've lead your swing with your legs and also retained your coil. From a down-the-line viewpoint, try to "see more of your butt" at impact similar to this photo of Bubba Watson.



10) Improve Your Ball Striking

In theory, five yards is lost for every quarter of an inch that you miss the sweet spot on your driver. That means if you miss the sweet spot by as little as an inch, you could lose 20 yards on your drive. All of a sudden you'd be hitting 2 clubs more for your next shot in to the green. It's harder to shoot lower scores that way!

One of the best ways I have ever encountered to improve your ball striking is to keep your head as still as your flexibility allows during the swing (it's ok to move it some). What this effectively does is it will keep the vertebrae where your shoulder, neck, and spine intersect roughly in the same point in space during the swing. This vertebra is a key measurement to the ball and moving it around too much makes it more difficult to get consistently good ball strikes. Both PGA Tour Hall of Famer, Johnny Miller, and Guinness World Record Holding Long Driver, Mike Austin, talk about this.

But regardless of whether a relatively still head is a part of the type of swing method you use, make sure you are consistently hitting the center of the clubface. It can make a big difference.

To watch the video below, go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umTAPvU3uY0>



To learn more about what Jacob Bowden and Swing Man Golf can do for your game, visit:

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