

3 Critical Keys to Increasing Driver Distance

What golfer isn't impressed by the driver distance of tour players? But what about us mere mortals with our 60 to 90 something mph swing speeds? The number one thing that keeps all of us from hitting the ball farther is the physics of impact, otherwise translated to mean "if you don't have the swing speed, you can't hit the ball to the screen at the end of the practice range." But there are three things in a driver which, if matched and custom fit accurately to your swing, can bring about a good bit more distance.

Critical Key #1

The LENGTH of your driver is critical. If you buy into the premise that the longer the driver, the longer the drive, you have just bought into a load of malarkey and you'll be destined to a constant fight with your #1 wood. There is one and only one exception to this rule – if you have a rhythmic swing tempo that is as smooth as silk, an inside out to square swing path and if you have a late wrist-cock release, you can get a few more yards with a longer driver length.

Unfortunately, for most golfers those swing traits are rare which translates to mean a shorter driver length is better.

The longer the length of the driver, the harder it is to consistently hit the ball on-center and solid. If you miss the "sweet spot" on the face of your driver by only a half-inch, you just gave away some 5% of your potential distance. Miss it by a full inch and you lose 10% of your potential distance.

Standard length men's drivers today are between 45.5 and 46.5 inches in length. Women's drivers are only 1 inch shorter. Now think about this – the average driver length on the PGA Tour since 2005 has remained steady at 44.5". If the pros could hit a 45.5" - 46.5" driver consistently solid and accurate, bet the farm they would be using that length because distance with control is a huge advantage in this game. Unless your swing is smooth as silk with an inside out path and a late release, tip number 1 is to be custom fit for the driver length that best matches your swing tempo, swing path release and golf athletic ability.

Critical Key #2

For maximizing your driver distance is the LOFT angle on the face of your driver. If your swing speed is 90-100mph and your driver loft angle is lower than 11 degrees, 90% of you are losing distance by playing the wrong loft. If your swing speed is 80-85 mph, the average driver swing speed of a male golfer today, you're giving up real distance increases of at least 10 yards or more if you are not using a driver with a loft angle of at least 12-13 degrees. And if you have a swing speed under 80mph and you're not using a driver with at least 14-15 degrees of loft, you too have more distance waiting to be unleashed.

Critical Key #3

Total Weight and Swingweight of your driver is critical key #3. In other words, we're talking about how much your driver weighs (total weight), and of that weight, how much of it is in the head (swingweight). The total weight and the headweight of your driver have to be matched to your physical strength, your swing tempo and your golfing athletic ability. Play with too light of a total weight or swingweight for your strength, tempo and ability and your percentage of offcenter hits increases. Play with the right total weight and swingweight for your strength, tempo and ability and you will achieve the most successful combination of distance, accuracy, and consistency.

Addressing these three points for YOUR swing through proper custom clubfitting can only be done by an experienced custom clubmaker, so work with a clubfitter and you will see 10 or more yards off the tee this year!

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