



# Learn a new shot... THE BELLY WEDGE

**W**ith ever-sharper course conditioning giving us crisper greenside fringes, the chances of your ball running up against one are higher than ever. This is where the so-called "belly wedge" – the wedge's leading edge bunts the equator of the ball – comes into its own. Executed well, this shot makes light work of a potentially awkward situation. Here's how to play it.



### ADDRESS: HEAD AHEAD

Play the ball centrally in a narrow stance. But allow yourself to lean forward slightly, towards the target, until you feel your trail ear is level with the ball. This adds some pressure down through your lead side, allowing you to use it as a brace to anchor your action; any kind of sway can ruin this shot. Use your putting grip.



### BACKSWING: LOCKED IN

The more angles you introduce into this stroke, the more likely you are to deliver a downward blow that will chip the ball. So treat it like a putting stroke. Keep your hands and wrists quiet and allow your arms and shoulders to sweep the club back. Even as the club moves back, make sure you retain the pressure down through your lead side.



### THROUGH SWING: 'PUTT' IT

This shot is all about keeping your action simple, staying as still as possible, and delivering the same level, forward, strike as a putt. Your sole focus is on making solid contact with the leading edge and getting the ball to roll. Practise it first to build confidence. But armed with this technique, you'll quickly master this handy shot.



**1**  
**ON A ROLL**  
When the ball winds up against a fringe, you only have clipped, short grass between the ball and the hole. This situation warrants a rolling shot; introducing any sort of loft, carry and bounce only adds complication to what is ultimately a simple shot.

**2**  
**KEEP IT CLEAN**  
Obviously, your regular rolling club is a putter. However, the longer grass behind the ball ensures there is every chance of catching some between the ball and the putterface, muffling the strike. You need to find a way of rolling the ball through clean contact... and that's where the leading edge of your wedge becomes an effective striking surface.

**3**  
**LEVEL STRIKE**  
Of course, the priority with this shot is solid contact; if that leading edge strikes the ball even slightly below the equator, the ball will pop up with little forward energy. To find solid contact you need to control attack angle – a level strike will give you your best chance of success. Here's how to adjust set-up and swing to promote it.