

The Clock face or 3 X 4 technique.

This technique is not known by any means and there probably isn't a single big name coach out there who doesn't mention it. It's cast in stone in Dave Pelz's book, used by David Leadbetter and in the August 2008 issue of Golf Digest is recommended by Butch Harmon.

So it's not known but... I don't know a single mid or high handicapper who properly uses it. It takes very little time to perfect and is incredibly powerful, not just in terms of your confidence in tricky situations but also in terms of your actual scoring. When I started using this system I analysed my scores for a couple of weeks afterwards and for each round I calculated it had saved me between 3 and 5 strokes – that is a HUGE benefit for one day's effort!

What it really means is that you regard your hands as being like the hands of a clock face so that you can produce a swing with the left hand at **7.30**:

So here your left hand is 45° to the ground and 45° to the parallel.



9.00:

Here your left hand is parallel to the ground.



and **10.30.**

45* above the parallel.



Don't get too hung up on the rest of my swing. Producing static shots like this is odd and doesn't represent a normal swing caught by a very fast camera, So in this case I immediately see that my weight hasn't shifted quite enough onto my right foot. So, like I say, ignore that and just concentrate on the left arm position. You then apply these three different swings to your four different wedges (or

however many you have). I used my standard Mizuno pitching wedge which was, I think about 46 degrees and then (after endless trial and error) ended up with Ping Tour wedges at 52, 56 and 60 degrees.

The system takes a while to set up and requires a little dedication to calculate your distances but what you end up with are 12 different distances that you can reliably replicate under pressure. My distances are as follows:

	PW	Gap Wedge	Sand Wedge	Lob Wedge
7.30	70	55	40	25
9.00	95	82	67	50
10.30	125	110	92	75

The way to calculate this involves hitting about ten balls with each wedge at each distance. You mark these distances down and then repeat again over a period of about four days. Ideally you don't allow yourself to see the previous results so you aren't attempting to try and "fit" figures into what you think you should be able to hit.

You are aiming to hit each shot with roughly the same type of swing. The only thing to change is the length of the backswing which obviously increases the speed with which you hit the ball. There is a school of thought that says your follow through should only be as long as your backswing but I find this a little restrictive and tend to go a little past this. You can see this in the video but use what feels comfortable to you.

Use the chart on the following page to record your figures but fold over the previous results for each session so it doesn't sway your opinion. At the end you then review the figures and if there are any major discrepancies go out and test

those discrepancies until you have a figure you are comfortable with. You must be comfortable with it since you need to be able to rely on these in pressurized situations. It's incredibly confidence boosting to know that you have 67 yards to the pin and can simply dial in a 9.00 sand wedge or have the option of a 9.00 pitching wedge or a full 10.30 sand wedge for an approach of a little over 90 yards.

If you only have three wedges don't worry. Just work it out for three but I can heartily recommend going the full 4 wedge route and getting the full flexibility from that.

This made an enormous difference to my approach shot and helped me make a quantifiable drop in my scoring. Again I cannot recommend it highly enough.

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