7 Drills & Tips To Improve Your Putting Confidence

These 7 putting tips will put you on the road to holing almost all of your putts under 6 feet. They will eliminate any ounce of doubt you may have and help you build a solid base of confidence, one you can rely on in any pressurized situation. These drills will give you the confidence to spring back after a poor putt because you have diligently taken all of these lessons on board.

1. Develop a putting pre-shot routine for consistency on the greens

Having a putting pre-shot routine simplifies the game. By having a consistent proven routine you can rely under pressure, you have a massive advantage over your golf buddies and opponents. Most golfers vary their approach from one putt to the next, thus introducing a large degree of error into their putting stroke.

Through trial and error you need to develop a pre-shot routine you can consistently repeat for every putt you make. By developing a routine you will have a proven way to help you focus on each and every putt. You will be able to repeat each putt, continually hitting one solid putt after another. Once you are mastering these skills your confidence will naturally increase.

Through regular practice of your pre-shot routine it will gradually become automatic and your best ally on the course. Ultimately your best putting will happen when you focus totally on the routine rather than the result.

Never think about the end result. Don’t think this is for birdie, par, bogey or worse, it will only distract you. If you begin to project your thoughts in the future, stop what you are doing and start again. Go back to thoughts of the process and successfully execute your pre-shot routine.

Only in a dedicated practice session can you specifically work out a routine that works for you and then be able to fine tune it. Remember you should be able to replicate what you do on the practice green on the golf course. Once your own personal putting pre-shot routine becomes a natural part of your game you will automatically hole more putts from one round to the next and see your confidence soar.

2. Build your confidence from regular practice

It’s crucial you practice your pre-shot routine, as this reinforces your belief and self-confidence. By doing this you are not only developing your feel but strengthening your confidence on the greens. Learn to focus for short periods of time. It’s recommended you practice in 2 blocks of 15 minutes for a total of half an hour, 3 to 5 times a week. During the 15 minutes you need to commit yourself mentally and physically to the task of performing your routine many times over.

In between the two sessions allow yourself to relax, talk to friends, try some one handed putts, play around and then once the time out is over return to practicing your pre-shot routine. Refer to the drills below for specifics on what to practice.
3. Increase your confidence by commitment
Your confidence naturally increases when you stick to the line you decide on, commit to a putt, and hole it. There is no room for indecision on the golf course. It’s paramount you commit yourself to every shot.
You can ill afford to be indecisive on the putting green. Without the commitment, it’s so easy to change your mind on the line of a putt halfway through your setup. In fact without commitment you can easily panic as you address the putt. If you’re in two minds, start by reading the putt again so as you give yourself every chance to be committed to it. It’s often when you are indecisive that you get a rush of blood to the head and hit the ball well past the hole.
It’s key to be relaxed on the greens. Often you will tense up when you are scared of a putt. By forcing yourself to commit and have the right mindset you can immediately see the tension disappear and your confidence increase.

4. Gain confidence from the right preparation on the practice putting green
By following the advice above you will have the confidence to hole every putt before even before you reach the first tee or practice putting green. Your confidence will already be sky high and it’s best to spend your time on the practice green determining the pace of the green. This will ultimately give you even more confidence as you allow your subconscious to acknowledge any change in speed, compared to what you are used to putting on.
Furthermore instead of wasting time trying to find a hole on a flat part of the practice green and even getting distracted by other golfers putting to the same hole, it’s recommended you putt instead to a tee peg. Desperately trying to hole a few putts on the practice green before you go out for your round is really only for those that haven’t put in the hard work to build a solid foundation of confidence. Simply putting to a tee will enable you to concentrate more on repeating your pre-shot routine and testing the pace of the greens. Don’t even risk getting sidetracked by counting how many putts you have holed on the practice green. Why risk seeing yourself miss a putt before you go out to play. Remember to focus on executing the process rather than the final result.

5. Build your confidence by creating a selective memory bank
Confidence is built on a succession of success stories and experiences, these begin to form your very own private image and video memory bank. When it comes to golf you need to carefully select what you put into this memory bank. If you miss a short putt you need to be selective and delete it so as you are only storing positive mental images.
You don’t necessarily need to store all the putts that you hole. Sometimes you can build up confidence from a good miss. This would be where you have successfully read and executed a long putt that breaks a few times, leaving you with a tap in.
If you mentally have a whole catalogue of missed putts in your mind, it is time to go back to the drawing board. You need to start building a positive memory bank on the practice green. In principle this means repeatedly holing short 2 and 3 feet putts in blocks of 50 or 100. It may seem
like a repetitive and at times boring exercise but the essence of great putting is confidence. When you have successfully holed 50 three feet putts in a row, it’s difficult not to be confident. In conclusion when you start to feel your confidence waiver you can quickly replay some of your best putts in your head, immediately giving you a boost and ensuring you have the right mental approach for the next putt.

6. Using positive self talk to maintain your confidence
Any self talk that knocks you back after a missed putt is destructive. As humans we have a habit of undermining our confidence with negative comments. Thus in order to maintain your confidence your self talk should be supportive and encouraging. There’s no need to blame others, yourself or even your putter!
There are many reasons you may feel it’s appropriate to get upset on the greens. A few examples would be misreading the line, losing concentration, not putting over your target, not sticking to your pre-shot routine. The reality is, that these types of things will happen from time to time, the goal though is to ensure this one event doesn’t get to you. Negative self talk will only make you dwell on the error longer than necessary. Instead you should use affirmations to keep a positive mindset and outlook on the rest of your round. What exact affirmation you use is a personal choice, but making references to your memory bank in the tip above will definitely squash any doubt that might creep in.

7. Putting Drills to build confidence
Once you have a working consistent pre-shot routine, it’s time to practice it in tandem with the 6 putting drills explained below. All of these drills will help increase your confidence and keep you in the groove. Simply applying these during a 30 minute session will improve your technique and mindset.

i. Clock drill
First place 4 tees around the hole at 12 o’clock, 3 o’clock, 6 o’clock and 9 o’clock, 3 feet from the hole on a flat area of the green. Next place a ball next to each tee. The objective is to make 4 consecutive putts. If you miss a putt you have to start again and if you hole all 4 holes you move each tee a further foot out from the hole. Thus you are now faced with 4 putts, each 4 feet from the hole. Again if you miss you have to start from 3 feet and if you hole all 4 balls you move onto putting from 5 feet from the hole. This is a perfect drill for practicing your pre-shot routine, holing lots of short putts and storing a lot of positive images of successful putts in your mind. Additionally this drill recreates the pressure you will feel out on the course because you can’t afford to lose your focus and start from the very beginning. You can alter this drill to fit your own personal preferences in a number of ways. Firstly you can decide to hit 3 balls from each tee instead of one. Secondly you can make it harder by setting it up on a slope so as you can practice putting uphill, downhill and with varying amounts of break. This clock drill can be expanded to the point you have 10 balls in a circle around the hole rather
Phil sets himself the task of holing all 10 and then repeating again from the same distance a further 9 times to make a total of 100 putts.

**ii. One ball practice drill**
This putting drill allows you to hole a lot of short putts under pressure, thereby increasing your confidence as you hole more and putt further from the hole. Start by placing 5 tees in a line, with the first one 2 feet from the hole and the last one 6 feet from the hole. Next hole a putt from the tee nearest to the hole and then more to the next tee a further foot away. The pressure will increase as you move away from the hole because if you miss you have to start from the beginning by holing the 2 feet putt again. The alternative is to putt 3 balls from each tee. Seeing yourself hole a lot of putts definitely helps increase your overall confidence.

**iii. Putting to a smaller target drill**
Making yourself putt to a smaller target, helps you focus more and gives you the belief and confidence you can hole any putt when you return to the hole width of 4.25 inches wide. Placing a tall plastic drinks bottle in the hole creates a smaller target. Furthermore using a tee or coin increases the accuracy required to hit your target.

**iv. Developing feel and distance control drill**
Stand 36 feet away from the hole and have 5 golf balls at your disposable. The aim is to putt all 5 balls further than your last putt and short of the hole. Ideally you will putt the first ball 6 feet and then using your feel and touch, putt the next ball 6 feet further than the one before. This drill gives you a real awareness of your distance control.

**v. Reacting to a target drill**
As stated before putting is a target orientated task. Putting is a reaction to a target and this simple drill helps you shift your focus to the target. It revolves around making 10 putts from 2 to 10 feet from the hole. These can be totally random, the key is to putt very quickly without spending anytime on alignment. You should look at the hole and then hit the ball, taking no longer than 2 seconds to execute from the time you initially stand over the ball. There is no need to worry about the result. After each putt, move to a new location and quickly putt to the hole. This drill helps you to tune into the target by reacting to it as soon as you see it.

**vi. Improving your putting technique drill**
Confidence can be ruined by poor technique that stems from swinging poorly on your back swing, causing the putter head to come inside or outside too much. To prevent this and shorten your back swing place a tee directly behind ball with a gap of 6 inches. Now when you putt back you are forced into making a short back swing as you touch the tee. This keeps your putter square and encourages you to accelerate through the ball towards the target.