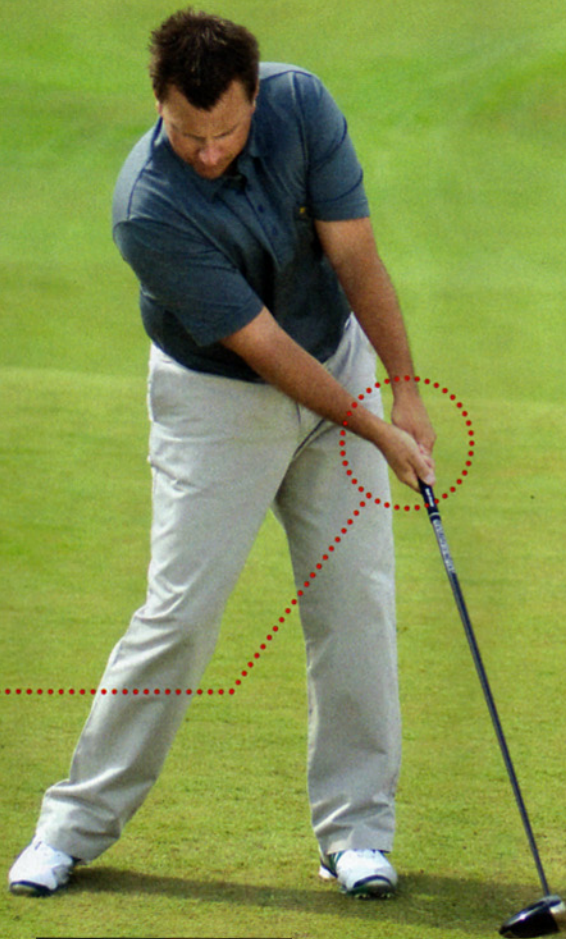


JUST AFTER IMPACT,

the hitter's hands and wrists are not quite fully released, while the swinger's hands roll over quickly.

HITTING



Since the game's beginnings, golfers have been analyzing and even obsessing over the mechanics of the golf swing. But one thing that has not been discussed very often, both around the golf course among fellow players and from analysts commenting on television, is the difference between those who hit the ball as compared to those who swing at it. There is a definite difference, and it is important to know what constitutes it and which of the two methods may be the best for you.



rally or should be a swinger, and vice versa.

In either instance, you can end up with completely incompatible swing mechanics, swing thoughts and swing keys.

The difference between hitting and swinging can be reflected in your personality or particular physical characteristics, but is expressed by a fairly simple yet significant swing mechanic. It comes down to the role of the hands in the swing. Hitters actively hit with the hands through impact, while swingers use the hands as passive hinges, letting centrifugal force do the work for them. Either way, you can achieve maximum power and play just as well.

Technically, a swinger is trying to have the shaft straight at impact with the ball. If this sounds confusing, think of crack-

This knowledge will impact the instruction you take from a professional, who may be teaching you to be a hitter when you are natu-

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ing a whip. You would want the whip's tip straightened out at the point of impact. The hitter's objective, on the other hand, is to retain the flex of the shaft at impact. Each is achieved by different means. The hitter deliberately applies muscular force quickly through the wrists and forearms at the very bottom of the swing arc. The release of the cocked wrists is delayed as long as possible, which means the shaft retains its flex longer.

The swinger relies more on tempo, rhythm and timing to get the job done. It is a more effortless way, with the wrists relaxed so they can hinge freely to allow the whip-cracking effect to take place. When you see a golfer with his veins popping out of his arms and neck, you're looking at a hitter. When you see a golfer who looks like a swan floating on a pond, you see a swinger.

Like spinning a weight on a string, centrifugal force is alive and well for both hitters and swingers. However, the swinger allows centrifugal force to work its magic by allowing the release of the wrist cock to happen