

# FROST PUTTING



*Fred Frost*







**David Frost's Superior Putting Under Pressure:  
The Fastest Way to Shoot Lower Scores**

Born September 11, 1959 in Capetown, South Africa, David Laurence Frost, took up the game of golf at age 14 while caddying for his father. He used to hit golf balls into the family owned vineyard, picked grapes for pocket money to play golf, buy golf balls and golf clothes and also to purchase his first set of golf clubs.

"Frosty" joined the PGA Tour in 1984 and quickly rose to elite status, leading the Tour in scoring average (70.09) in 1987 and was # 1 in putting twice (1993 and 2001) while compiling 10 PGA Tour championships including the 1989 World Series of Golf and 1993 Canadian Open plus 12 international titles over an illustrious professional career.

**Career Highlights**

- Shattered a 16-year standing record for fewest putts (92), 72-hole event, at the MCI Heritage Classic, April, 2005. Frosty one-putted his first 11 greens and chipped in twice from off the green.
- Is a 3-time winner of the Million Dollar Challenge Event, Sun City, S. Africa (1989, 1990, 1992). (Frost is pictured with the hardware, upper right.)
- Is a 2-time winner of the South African Open (1986, 1999).
- Won the Dunhill Cup for his native South Africa in 1997 and in 1998.
- Set a modern day record (65), the Old Course, St. Andrews, Scotland at the 2005 British Open.
- Established a 300-acre vineyard in 1994. Frost Wine produces 7,000 cases of Meritage, Cabernet, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay.

## Putting Insanity

Albert Einstein defined insane people as "People who do the same thing over and over again and yet expect different results!"

Nowhere is that quote more true than in the game of golf. I never cease to be amazed by the number of intelligent people who love this great game YET who play week after week without improvement. Who buy new clubs in the vain hope of buying a game! Desperately clinging to the hope that a new putter will help them sink more five footers and put an end to three putts. Who try to imitate the latest tips in a golf magazine and instead relentlessly ingrain bad habits into their game. There must be a better way! There is!

No matter what skill level you have with the long clubs, putting will still account for roughly 40 percent of your score. Fortunately, putting is the least demanding part of the game when it comes to physical talent requirements. While most of us will probably never hit a golf ball over 300 yards, anyone who can toss a bean bag into a wastebasket has the requisite physical skills to be a great putter. For this reason, putting is the first place to look if you want to gain an advantage on the competition.

### First things first: What Not To Do!

The first thing to realize about putting is that its main aim is completely different than a full shot. The objective with your long game is to move the ball over a great distance with reasonable accuracy. Accordingly, the technique employed in the full swing focuses mainly on power. This is not the case in putting! In putting, you only need to move the ball over a very short distance, but there is a premium on accuracy for both distance and direction.



Due to this fundamental difference in putting and the long game, it calls for a completely different technique. The setup at left looks pretty good for a short iron, but it's no good for your putter! The tell tale signs below of a bad putting setup are:

#### **1. Arms too straight.**

This leads to a mechanical stroke and tends to leave too much weight in the heels at setup.

#### **2. Ball in center of stance.**

This causes the ball to skid or bounce at impact leading to inconsistency in direction and distance.



**4. Hands too close to the body.**

It's difficult from here to swing the putter at all as the legs get in the way of the hands. This will force the club to start back outside the target line.

**5. Shaft angle too flat**

This forces the toe of the putter into the air making solid contact a challenge and causing putts to start slightly left of the intended line.



**6. The eyes are well inside the target line**

This leads to inconsistency in alignment at setup and wreaks havoc on your stroke.

Any one of these common setup mistakes make it very difficult to putt well under pressure, so I urge you to get a mirror or a friend and check your setup now. If this is what you see, then you must improve your setup fundamentals





### Essential Elements of a Pressure Proof Setup

As discussed, there need to be some changes made from the full swing setup to get it right on the putting green. Now that you understand what we DON'T want to see, let's get a clear picture of what we DO want. Look at the pictures at the left and compare them to the problematic full-swing-like setup on the previous page.

The major differences seen in the correct setup at right are:

**1. Both arms are flexed at the elbow joint.**

This promotes a pendulum stroke using the upper arms and shoulders.

**2. Ball positioned forward in the stance under the left cheek.**

Notice that the shaft is set up vertically here. This allows the putter's built in 4 degrees of loft to get the ball rolling smoothly on the intended line and improves consistency in speed control.



**3. The hands are out away from the body**

This lets the player swing the putter back and through freely without interference from the body on the intended path of the stroke.

**4. The shaft is more vertical and almost in line with the forearms.**

As we will see in closer detail in the next segment, this setup positions the grip in the palms and fingertips for optimum feel.



**5. Eyes are directly over and parallel to the target line.**

Not only are the eyes parallel to the target line, but so are the shoulders, forearms, hips, knees and feet. If any of these pieces gets out of position it will lead to trouble.



**Feeling a Great Putting Stroke Starts with the Right Grip**

The correct full swing grip will be in the fingers allowing the wrists to hinge and generate tremendous clubhead speed. The Putter is a precision instrument and needs a different approach. We want a grip that ensures maximum sensitivity in the fingers so we can feel the stroke and the ball all the way.

The best grip for feel is the reverse overlapping grip (left) where the index finger of the left hand extends over the top of the right hand fingers. Here's how it's done:

Place the hands on the grip with the palms facing each other and the thumbs down the center of the flat part of the grip. All four right hand fingers are on holding the club, but only the last three fingers of the left hand make contact while the index finger is down the side.



There should be no gap between the second finger of the left hand and the pinky finger of the right hand on the grip. This lets the hands work together as a unit.

Place the handle of the putter more in the palms and finger tips than you would in the full swing grip (left).

It's worth mentioning at this juncture that while large oversize putter grips may steady a players wrists, they also deaden the sensitivity we're trying to develop in the putting grip and therefore should be avoided.

Grip pressure should be very light. We want to be able to feel the putter head and ball throughout the stroke and the hands are our only connection to the club. Too much grip pressure cuts off this valuable feedback and results in a forced mechanical stroke.



### Getting the right setup

A lot of players make the mistake of setting up with too much weight on their heels (left). You can spot this player by drawing a line vertically down from the shoulder to the foot (far right). If this line hits the ankle, the weight is too far back in the heels.

The resulting stroke will tend to go back too much to the inside. This unbalanced setup also leads to hitting the ball off center as the body moves around and attempts to regain balance.

*Weight is too far toward the heels*



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If we're going to develop a stroke that works under competitive pressure, we need to begin by building a stable, steady platform.

The first step is to push your hips back and bend forward at the hips until the eyes are over the ball (Left). Keep the back straight and let the upper body stand tall.



From here, just let your arms hang naturally from your shoulders. Notice the arms and shoulders are directly over the toes. This puts you in a balanced ready position and ensures a stable platform for your putting stroke.





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The next important part of the setup is to bend both arms at the elbow (Left).



This puts us into a setup that demands we use the shoulders and upper arms to swing the putter.

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This move also gets the hands up and away from the body by so they have room to swing freely back and forth (Left). Notice also the shaft angle which is now much vertical and in line with the angle of the forearms.



Too much of a good thing! Here the weight is off balance and too far forward as evidenced by the shoulders over the toes. This is an unbalanced position giving the player the feeling he'll fall forward. This also forces the player to bend excessively at the elbows and wrists







**See the line!**

The eyes see the target best when they're positioned directly over and parallel to the target line. Getting the eyes into position starts with the right posture as above and can be fine tuned using a simple test

Setup to the ball then hold a second ball between your eyes and drop it. If you're positioned correctly, the second ball should land on the first. If not, you'll need to modify your posture by increasing or decreasing the amount of bend at the hips.

You also want to make sure the eyes are parallel to the target line at address. If the rest of your body is aligned properly parallel to the target line and the head is tilted toward the right shoulder, the eye line will be aimed right of target. You'll tend to swing the putter back to the inside and forward to the right of target. You'll be forced to compensate by closing the putter blade through impact to avoid missing to the right.

If the head tilts toward the left shoulder, then the eye line will be aimed to the left of target. The putter will tend to swing outside the target line going back and forward to the left of target. You'll have to hold the putter face open in order to avoid missing to the left.



### The Inside to Inside Putting Stroke

Putters are not designed to be swung straight back and straight through. I don't care how many NASA scientists try to prove to you that this is possible – it just doesn't work. Half an hour on the practice green with the world's top players will convince you that this is so.

When the putter swings back the blade opens as it swings slightly inside the target line.



The putter should swing on an arc from inside to inside. Going forward, the club squares up at impact and then closes as it returns to the inside on the follow through (Left).

One of the worst positions you can get in is taking the blade straight back or even worse outside the target line. From this position you're forced to manipulate the putter face and hold it open through impact. The results are inconsistent at best.



## One Key Drill to Learn the Inside to Inside Stroke

Here's my favorite drill to avoid taking the putter back to the outside AND promote the right inside to inside arcing path:

Start by addressing the ball as normal, then move the putter further away from you so the ball is adjacent to the heel (Figure 1 Below). Now swing the putter and hit the ball on the sweet spot. To do this you have to let the blade swing to the inside on the backswing (Figure 2 below).



1. Address in the heel



2. Back and to the inside



3. Sweet spot at impact

Try this same drill while your eyes are on the target. You may mishit a few putts at first, but you'll be surprised how easy it is to repeatedly hit solid putts without even looking at the ball. Master this simple drill and you'll never mishit another putt!



## Every Putt is a Straight Putt!

You want every putt to break four inches... down! All kidding aside, every putt is a straight putt... then gravity takes over! There's absolutely nothing your stroke can do to make the ball curve so don't try.

If you have a putt that will break 4 inches to the left, then imagine another cup six inches right of the actual cup. Setup square to this imaginary cup, then just execute your normal routine and stroke it to your imaginary cup.

On uphill putts imagine the cup to be further away, and on downhill putts imagine it to be nearer. The greater the slope, the more your imaginary cup will be away from the hole.



### **A Rock Solid Putting Routine**

Start behind the ball and decide on the line and speed. The decision making process happens when you're behind the ball. Check out the slope and the grain, and then imagine a line and speed that will get the ball in the hole.

All the calculating is done at this point and its time to switch off the brain and just stroke it in the hole. Once you decide on your line and speed, move in next to the ball you move into the action phase of the routine.



Practice swings are a matter of personal preference. Some players like to take them, others don't. Personally I like to take 2 practice strokes alongside the ball prior to stroking the putt. I do this while looking at the target and feeling the right length of stroke for the putt at hand and imagining the ball rolling into the hole.

Then I move in to the ball and take my setup.



## 4 Critical Steps At The End Of Your Putting Routine.

The last and most important thing I do in my putting routine is to take a last look at the hole, and then as my eyes come back to the ball, begin the stroke. A strange and wonderful thing happens when you do this. Your conscious mind doesn't have the time necessary to think about any details of how to get the job done and so it just gets out of the way and lets your eyes tell your body what to do.

You're simply reacting to the target like a baseball batter would to when a ball is pitched to him. With no time to think carefully about what to do, your inborn coordination skills take over and get the job done.

**1. Look at the ball.**



**2. Look at the target.**



**3. Let the putt go.**



**4. Hold your follow through position until the ball drops in the hole.** This gives your mind the time to associate the stroke you just made with the outcome.



**Practice does NOT make perfect! Practice makes PERMANENT**

Whatever actions you repeat again and again in practice become permanent habits that consistently show themselves in the heat of competitive pressure. For this reason, in addition to practicing good mechanics, you must also practice good mental habits so never forget this important rule:

When you practice putting with a ball and a hole, you must always practice MAKING Putts!

In order to putt great under pressure you must make a habit of expecting to see the ball go in the cup and so your practice will be as much mental as physical. If you plan to spend time practicing with a hole and a ball, you must spend that time practicing making putts! I know that 3 to 5 foot putts are not the most exciting part of a practice routine.

That's one of the reasons I recommend the four corners drill where you practice hitting putts in on every edge: Right edge lip in, Left edge lip in, just over the front of the club, back of the cup. This will work on your touch and your aim while helping to narrow focus to a very specific outcome – and you'll see yourself make a lot of putts.

When you get back on the course you'll be amazed at how confident you'll feel when you have the entire cup to shoot at!

## Refine Your Touch For Distance



If you're going to practice long putts then you don't need a hole at all. The reason for this is simple. On long putts you'll miss the majority of them and even though you may consciously say to yourself "it's ok, I'm just working on my touch," your brain notices the ball and the cup and the miss. This will subtly erode the confidence you work so hard to build with your short putts.

Instead roll balls to the fringe from everywhere. Uphill, downhill, sidehill, with the grain, against the grain and from all kinds of lengths until you can roll it consistently the right length.

A great drill to see how this works is to stroke some putts with your eyes on the hole altogether. I think you'll be surprised at two things. First you'll be surprised at how easily you make solid contact (provided you practice to mastery of the ball in heel drill mentioned earlier)





**David Frost, a Talent for Golf and a Passion for Fine Wine!**

Unlike many athletes or celebrities or who lend their name to a brand, PGA TOUR player David Frost and his family have been in the wine business in South Africa for over 60 years. While busy winning over 22 tournaments worldwide and recording the PGA Tour’s lowest putting total ever, his passion for wine was never far from his heart!

His father’s vineyard was the first place he hit balls and the pocket money he made from picking grapes, funded his first set of clubs and an on going supply of balls. Frost bought his own 300 acre vineyard in 1994 in the Paarl wine region and with the help of well known Napa winemaker Jason Fisher, produced his first 3,000 cases of Cabernet Sauvignon in 1997. With a focus on quality, not quantity the wine drew quick appreciation including a rating of 90 plus in a recent Wine Spectator review. This encouraged the production of additional varieties.

Fermented in stainless steel tanks and matured in small French oak barrels sourced from selected coopers, the David Frost Wine Estate range now comprises an exceptional range of fine, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Par Excellence (traditional red blend) and Shiraz. Taste them, you’ll love them all!

From The Desk of David Frost PGA Tour Player & Wine Czar

## The Best Wines of the World You have Ever Tasted and Your Inside Ticket to Life Behind the Ropes on the PGA Tour!

### Dear Wine Lover:

I know there are lots of wine clubs out there, but allow me a few minutes of your time and to share with you why I think you'll find the Frost Wine Club to be the very best in quality, value and VIP Golf extras you simply can't get anywhere else.

***"If you love golf and you love great wine, this is the wine club for you!"***

- Andrew Wood, Author, *The Traits of Champions*

### Ten Great Reasons to Join the Frost Wine Club

1. Choose the club level that best suits your needs:

- 2 different bottles from wineries around the world delivered to your door step each month for only \$19.95, a \$25 value!!

OR

- 3 different bottles from wineries around the world delivered to your door step each month for only \$59.95, a \$70.00 to 80.00 value!!

2. Convenient, monthly "to your door" delivery.


3. Enhance your Wine Knowledge and Discover smaller, award-winning wineries from around the world whose wines are not typically found in local stores or wine shops. You will have full access to: Tasting Notes, Food Pairings & Recipes, Aging Potential, Breathe Time, and much more.

4. Personal contact from me, David Frost, via e-mail every few weeks on life and happenings on the PGA Tour and beyond. You'll get the inside scoop on players, events, courses, wine, travel and equipment as you accompany "Frosty" around the globe.

5. Exclusive contests and prizes for wine club members only, featuring valuable prizes EVERY MONTH including free golf vacations, equipment and teeing it up with me.

6. PLAY BETTER GOLF. While you don't have to be a pro to enjoy these great wines, if you join the wine club you just may play better! You'll get in-depth special reports and tips on improving your game that could only come from a player whose "been there".





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7. First option on some extraordinary, highly rated and extremely rare, LIMITED EDITION wines. You'll hear about them first. Plus, as club member you'll enjoy discounts on all additional wines you purchase at the wine shop.
8. One of opportunities to join Frosty and friends around the globe for wine tasting, golf and travel.
9. Informative monthly e-newsletter.
10. Become a wine club member now and you'll automatically be entered into a drawing to win a trip to South Africa to golf with David and visit the vineyard.

Sincerely,



David Frost  
PGA Tour Player and Proud Owner  
of David Frost Wine

*P.S. If you have enjoyed my  
putting guide or my wine, please  
share this booklet with a friend!*