

## I Want to Hit the Golf Ball Farther: Golf Tips for the Off-season



**N**ow that the golf off-season has arrived, it is the best possible time to improve your game. That may sound counterintuitive, but consider this—core and muscle strength, flexibility and endurance are the keys to a more effective and consistent golf swing, and what better time to improve these aspects of your personal fitness than when you are unable to hit the course?

Think back on this past season, and reflect on how your body served your golfing needs. Did you tire easily, or did certain muscle groups feel tight after a few holes, forcing you to adjust your swing to compensate for pain or stiffness? Concentrating on core strength and golf-specific muscle patterns is essential to off-season training,

but overall fitness is very important, as well. Building the endurance to stay flexible, strong and balanced through 18 holes is a big part of improving your golf game. To get you started, we've included two simple exercises that work the rotator cuff, lower body and hips, improving strength and flexibility in these golf-specific muscle groups:

**1. Arm circles:** Raising your arms out to your sides, make small circles with your hands, keeping your hands loose and light. Gradually increase the size of your circles, eventually using your entire arm. Don't go too fast; keep the movement fluid and steady. After about 15 seconds, switch the direction of your circles and repeat the same routine. Perform two sets of 15 seconds each for each direction. Over time, you may add light weights to your hands to make this more demanding—*BUT* keep the weights relatively light!

**2. Partial squats:** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart; hold your golf club in front of you using both hands. Slowly lower your body by bending at your knees, *not* at your hips. Raise back up, keeping your upper body very erect, concentrating on your posture throughout. Repeat 15 times.

There are a number of exercises that you can do in the warmth and comfort of your own home while the weather prevents golfing. We will gladly evaluate your specific needs and design a training program.