

Trapped Half Way

While most people struggle from green side bunkers, I often see the average player make some crucial mistakes out of fairway traps. Whether you are laying up on a par 5 or going for the green on a par 4 here are 3 keys to ensure solid contact every time.

Step 1: Selecting the Right Club

Too many times I see players select a club that does not have enough loft. You want to make sure that whatever club you choose will clear the front lip even if that means not reaching the green. The worst mistake you can make is hitting into the face of the bunker and not getting out. You also need to take one more club since you will not be using as much lower body during the swing as you would from the fairway. For example, if you would normally hit a 9 iron from the yardage you are at, select an 8 iron.

Step 2: Set-up

For starters you want to play the ball slightly back of center. This is to ensure that you will catch the ball first. As for your posture, you want to stand slightly taller. Put less flex in the knees and don't bend so much from the waist. The first picture is my normal posture from the fairway. In picture two you will notice that I am standing much more vertical.



Step 3: The Swing

The most important aspect to hitting this shot is to make sure that you catch the back of the ball first. So, as mentioned above, we are going to use very little legs. I want to keep my lower body as still as possible. When the lower body becomes overly active there is too much movement in the upper body. If the sternum at impact is behind the ball you will hit the shot fat, leaving the ball in the bunker. If the sternum gets ahead of the ball you will hit the shot thin, driving the ball into the face of the bunker. In the picture below, notice how I have not fully pivoted up onto my right toes. In fact, at impact I was completely flat footed. The right heel did not come off the ground until the ball was gone.



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