

Suzy Cues

Windy Conditions:

The wind is never your friend on the golf course. Wind creates buzzing feedback in your ears, flapping of skirts and pants, and the need for concentrated effort to just stand still. Like unwanted noise, wind is a distraction.

If you learned to golf in Texas or Hawaii, you have an advantage. Other players don't face wind each time they play, so they lack wind experience. Wind is sneaky visitor. Even when you don't feel it, it's always around. I cannot remember a round of golf where at some point I didn't feel its presence. All the same, many players choose to deny the wind and play in their normal way. This is a mistake.

When the wind is blowing over 10 miles an hour, you must manage your game in a different way. Think of wind as a wily opponent who's placed a mental and physical challenge in your way.

Details:

- Swing easy. A golfer's natural instinct is to hit the ball harder when the wind is blowing. But the harder the wind blows and the harder you hit at your ball, the more likely your ball is to balloon into the air, meet with resistance, and result in a shot short of the target.
The swing-easy solution requires you to take more club than you need for yardage into the wind, sometimes 2 to 3 clubs more. This strategy, unlike the bat unleashed at a home run, calms the mind and helps the body make a relaxed swing.
- Find the wind. Look high into the treetops to determine its direction. Throw some grass up into the air to discover its swirling effects at ground level.
- On the tee box, tee up your ball as you always do. Do not set your tee lower, as you might expect. If you do, your mind will intuit you want to hit down on the ball, resulting in a higher not lower shot, losing you yardage.
- When the wind begins to really blow, increase the width of your stance on all shots, even your putts. It will help you maintain body balance and stability.
- Play the shot the wind dictates. I usually draw my ball into a headwind, moving it from right to left, giving me a low flying shot that runs out as it hits the ground. When faced with a crosswind, I ride the wind, adjusting my aim to allow the wind to blow my ball toward target.