



The Non-Technical Skills of Golf

Your score will always be highly correlated to your skill level in both sets of fundamentals – Technical and Non-Technical.

There are many players with good technique, who still don't perform well on the course. There are also many players with not-so-good technique, who are really good at scoring on the course. How do you get good at both?

Keep this equation up front:

$$\text{Technical Skills} \times \text{Non-Technical Skills} = \text{Your Performance}$$

On a scale of 1-3, how would you rate your skills? A 2×0.5 would be a player who is not tour level, but still has a good swing and stroke and can hit many different kinds of shots. This "Player A" might know how to make a decision before a shot, but apart from that has not explored any other skills of playing the game. Their performance is $2 \times 0.5 = 1$. It's a player who hits quality shots and looks good, but doesn't play up to their technical capability.

The technically sound player is playing against a player with a 1×2 . Very basic technique, could be only one ball flight, for example, comes over the top and cuts everything, one shot around the green, but has spent more time learning to manage their tempo, trusting decisions, knows how to focus and understands how to manage the variability of the day and round. Who will win every time? Yes, "Player B" with $1 \times 2 = 2$. It drives "Player A" crazy. This player thinks it's unfair, not right, as they have the better swing.

Let's face this reality and create a better plan for improving your game. Technique is important but insufficient for your best golf. Your technique is influenced by more than technique. If your body is tight and sore, it might limit how much you can rotate. If your mind worries about the future, it might influence your tempo or your decision making. If you are frustrated because the pace of play is slow, it might show up in your grip pressure getting too tight.



It's only when your performance state before, during, and after a shot is functional that your technique and shot-making will show up on the course.

The foundation of these non-technical skills is to know what you want to do before, during, after, and between shots. How do you make a decision you trust? How to be athletic and focused until the end of the swing / stroke? How to best react to a shot to keep creating momentum and confidence? How do you best recharge between shots? We like to use the term “**Human Skills**” for these non-technical skills. You are a human being who plays golf and your body, mind, and emotions create a state that makes your technique function or not function. The body, mind, and emotional states are variable during a round so your level of awareness and management of them becomes essential to be the best you could be.

Unfortunately, most golfers underperform. Many try to get better by working on their swing or short game but still don't shoot the scores they are capable of. Most golfers just lack a sufficient set of skills to play the game. They need a deeper skill set than just a good swing.

Some of you might think, well, my technique is not good enough to be concerned with the human skills. The truth is, you don't know how good your technique is until you have a baseline of a performance state. It happens often during our golf schools that a participant says “I am hitting it better, but I haven't done anything to my swing.” What is often the case is that through balance, tempo, and tension explorations their body is more athletic. Another common reason is that they are done thinking before stepping into the shot and allowing themselves to swing more freely.

If you are a newer golfer, your progress as a player will be a lot more efficient when you learn the technical and non-technical skills as a parallel journey. You learn how to do swing drills and you learn when you play what makes sense to focus on.

Look at the equation again:

Technical Skills x **Non-Technical Skills** = **Your Performance**

What number, 1-3 will you give yourself in each set of skills? The future stars of the game will be 3 x 3, but where are you and what is most important to prioritize?

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