

# Like Parent-Like Child...I golf and I want my kid to golf, too!

## WEEK 3 HOMEWORK: KICKING



This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> part in a homework series for parents. If you missed the previous homework regarding throwing & striking, [click here](#) to catch up. Week Three's homework is also for parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, babysitters, neighbors, and mentors who desperately want to introduce the love of golf to kids.

As previously mentioned, I believe that burn out, lack of "coolness", and high expense are no longer acceptable excuses for kids to not only give up on golf, but even be denied exposure to it. Kids enjoy activities that are fun, that they are good at, and those they can enjoy with YOU! As a golf fitness coach, I would love to see children be able to participate with others and learn life lessons in many team



activities. Sometimes it is just not readily available due to proximity, financial, or other issues. So this is homework for you to do at home with your junior athlete. This "weekly" drill can be done just 5-10 minutes each day. Not only will they help kids with technique, distance, and accuracy transfer...they can help adults too!

## WEEK 3 HOMEWORK: KICKING

Kicking activities help develop foot-eye coordination, rotary power and speed through the hips, as well as dynamic balance and stability when posting on lead leg.

\*\*\* First gather as many large lightweight balls that you can find in your home to safely kick--- soccer balls, dodge balls, kickballs, beach balls, balloons, basketballs, footballs, swissballs.

1) Introduce success at kicking something using a big light ball first. Each should be light enough so the arms are free to swing without heaviness and the ball will move with even the slightest impact. There should be no goal or target at first and the ball should be stationary. Make it almost impossible to miss or "whiff" when kicked.

### Notice the developmental stage your child is in currently.

--- Are the feet just stationary with feet facing direction of ball when ready to kick (not side on)

---Do they naturally rotate their hips through impact at all? How much?

---Do they step back and take a few steps for power before kicking?

---Are they weight shifting from trail leg to lead leg through impact of strike?

---Can you tell if they are kicking in a full body pattern for more power (separation of upper and lower body)?

2) Have your child kick the same sized balls 5 or 6

times in a row and measure the distance the ball travels. It is best to do this in an open area such as backyard, field, gym, parking lot, or calm street. This is the beginning of goal setting and a game your child will most likely enjoy.



- 3) Once they kick a few big balls for distance find a target area (between two cones, trees, soccer net) for your child to aim. Start close to the target area (5ft away). Once they consistently kick within the target area, have them back up or move the target area away 5 feet at a time.
- 4) Then have your child learn how to kick a moving object. You can “pitch” or “roll” a ball to them to kick back to you. Observe whether they are waiting for the ball to come to them or stepping or running toward the ball as it approaches them.
- 5) A more advanced move is the “drop kick” or punt which brings timing into play. If dropping the ball on their own and kicking it is too difficult, they could drop it onto their knee and play “catch” with themselves.

Try the above activities and see if your child comes up with games on their own. Their competitive spirit may come out in order to try to “out-distance” their last kick or “kick closer” to a target than ever before. Then, when they are ready, they may start backing up from their target and discover their own techniques for producing more power.



Object control exercises can also be used to introduce the importance of the small muscles of the leg, ankle, and foot. An obstacle course can be made where a ball has to be maneuvered with the feet through objects (cones) on the floor with as little “touches, taps, or pushes” as possible. This is a fun game that shows the importance of distance control (see pics attached).

Kicking into mitts, paddles, or heavy bag can also teach power production through body movements as well as hand/foot coordination. Be prepared to have proper equipment for this. As balance becomes more proficient, the kicks can get higher and higher to promote dynamic flexibility.

Pointing out the safety rules of not kicking “at” anyone or kicking an object that may be too heavy is important. You will see how vital having a strong, stable leg is while the other leg is moving around the pivot point for power.



Try these for a week. Why is it important for your child to become proficient at kicking objects while maintaining balance? If they can't kick, there is no power for other sports--- NO kickball, NO swimming, NO soccer, NO martial arts, NO gymnastics, NO iceskating, NO football, NO rugby, NO golf.



Please let me know how it goes with your junior athlete. Did they like it?

Stay tuned for jumping/agility/coordination next week!

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*"Fit For Golf! Fit For Life!" has published a golf fitness program on DVD's as well as a book, Synergistic Golf, that outlines each day of the year with golf performance enhancing tips. You can catch demonstrations of golf specific exercises on [Golf America](http://www.golfamerica.com) TV nationwide. Mindi is the official fitness partner of the Arizona Women's Golf Association and is available for private or group sports conditioning training as well as seminars and nutritional consultations. For more information...<http://www.fitforgolfusa.com>*

