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Roll Your Chips Close to the Hole

No, this isn't Advanced Trig. My simple math formula will have you instantly chipping to tap-in range!

Fact: A good chip should spend more time rolling on the ground than flying through the air. This is because flying the ball all the way to the hole takes perfect distance control, which most of us don't have. On the other hand, roll equals control, and the sooner you can get the ball running on the green, the better your results will be. Here's how.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Start by pacing off the yardage from your ball to the hole—let's say it's nine yards. Next, walk off the distance from your ball to a spot one yard deep on the green—three yards, in this instance.

Divide the smaller number (3) into the larger one (9); here, the answer is 3. You now know that the correct trajectory is a shot that rolls three times farther than it carries in the air. Now, just a bit more math: Subtract the roll/carry ratio (the number you got by dividing) from 12, a constant in this chip-trajectory equation. That reveals what club to use, which in this example is a 9-iron [12 minus 3]. Simply take your 9-iron and chip the ball three yards in the air to your landing spot. With good contact, the ball will roll out about nine yards, leaving you right next to the hole. It's not magic. It's math! Let's try another example:

Total Distance: 10 yards
Ball to Landing Spot: 2 yards
Roll/Carry Ratio: 5 [10 ÷ 2]
Club: 7-iron [12 minus 5]

I hope you've spotted a trend: Every club has its own unique roll-to-carry ratio (see below). This makes chipping as easy as determining the roll-to-carry percentage, pulling the right club, and making a swing that carries the ball one yard onto the green. If the shot runs uphill, just increase the overall distance by a yard or so, and subtract a few yards if the green runs away from you.

Scan this photo
to watch a video of this lesson. See p. 8.

CHIPPING CLUB SELECTION

Club	Roll:Carry Ratio
7-iron	5:1
8-iron	4:1
9-iron	3:1
PW [10]	2:1
SW [11]	1:1