

Get the Most Out of Your Game: Use less loft for an uphill bunker shot

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Brandt Snedeker uses a sand wedge or a normally-lofted pitching wedge -- not a lob wedge -- for an uphill bunker shot.

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Key things to remember when hitting an uphill greenside bunker shot:

- Use less loft than normal
- Keep your weight on the left side
- Keep the clubface a little bit open
- Minimize the follow-through

The uphill bunker shot is one of the hardest shots in golf. The hard part is not the loft -- the uphill lie is going to do that for you -- it's the distance. I would normally use a lob wedge in the bunker, but for an uphill lie, I will use a 54-degree sand wedge.

Getting the ball up is not the problem -- the problem with this shot is getting the ball to release towards the hole. You want to help the ball to roll more, which is why you need less club for this shot. Using less loft will give you a little more distance and help get the ball rolling towards the hole.

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The ball is a little above your feet on an uphill lie, so you would play the ball a little bit farther back in our stance than you normally would. You should also dig your front foot into the sand a little deeper to brace against the face of the bunker.

You want to get a little bit lower with your whole weight on the left side so when you splash down, the ball will pop straight up and hopefully roll towards the hole. You don't want to swing up on this at all; you want to swing down and force the club to plop the ball out. This is very different than a normal bunker shot.

This is a kind of a tough shot to hit. It is very inconsistent because you really don't know how the ball is going to come out all the time. Using a little bit less loft will help the ball release a little bit more. Hopefully by bracing yourself in the sand a little bit more, you'll be able to get clean and more consistent contact. The key is bracing yourself on the left side and by placing the ball back a little farther than normal.

The clubface should be a little bit open, and then you should just take it back normally and splash down. You almost want to leave the clubhead in the sand. We really don't want a big follow-through at all. You want to leave the club in and kind of dig in so that the sand plops out and the ball plops out.

I can perform this shot about 50 percent of the time. That is about my average in the bunker. Just remember to brace yourself on the left side against the bunker and let the lack of loft do the work. The more loft you use on an uphill lie, the shorter the ball is going to go, so use more club and let the ball release out.

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