

Winter warmers

When the days are short and cold the best place to practise is indoors. Prepare yourself for those spring fairways with this series of inventive drills

By KATIE DAWKINS Photos XXXXXXXXXX

MEET THE EXPERT



Former England international Katie Dawkins is a PGA professional at Hamptworth where she runs the New Forest Girls Golf Academy

SWING AND GRIP DRILLS



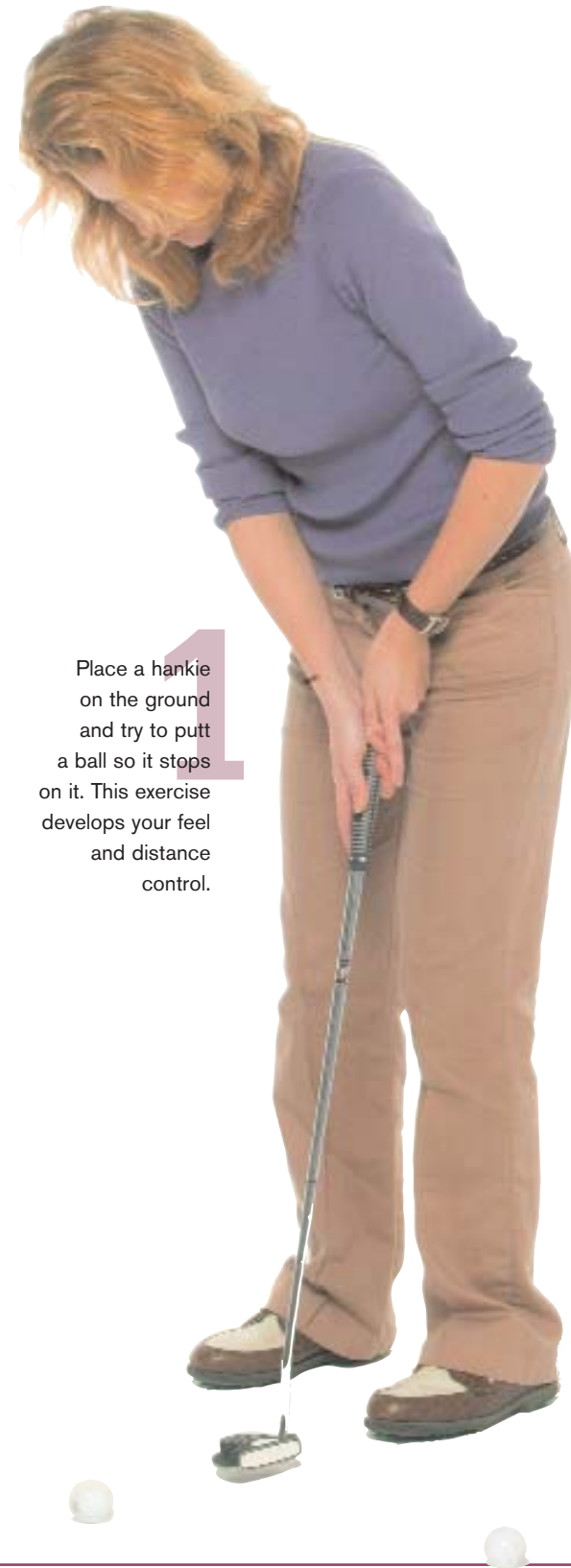
1 Work on your impact position using a bean bag. Take a short swing into the obstacle and hold your position as soon as you make contact. If you can ingrain a solid striking technique you'll have added yards to your game without hitting a ball!

2 Many amateurs need to improve their grips but making major changes in mid-season can ruin your game and spoil your summer. This winter, stand a club up by the bathroom door and every time you walk past, pick it up and make a good grip. You can even work on your grip while watching television. Just make a few decent grips a day and it will slowly feel more natural.

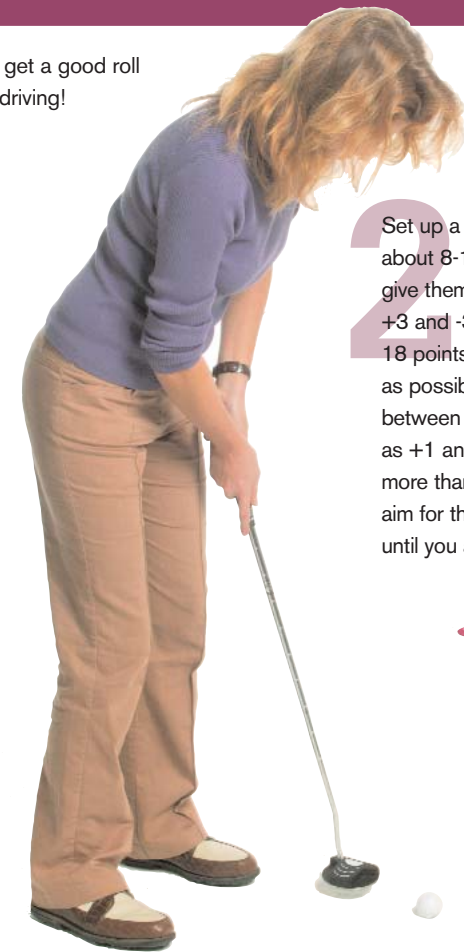


PUTTING DRILLS

Putting is the easiest part of your game to sharpen indoors. You'll get a good roll from most carpets – and it's less dangerous than practising your driving!



1 Place a hankie on the ground and try to putt a ball so it stops on it. This exercise develops your feel and distance control.



2 Set up a row of discs about 8-10ft away and give them values of -2, +2, +3 and -3. Try and make 18 points in as few putts as possible. Spaces between the markers count as +1 and if you score more than 18, you must aim for the minus scores until you achieve your goal.



3 Place a can of hairspray or a felt-tipped pen on the carpet and use this as your target. Try to roll your putt just hard enough to knock the target over. This will encourage a firm stroke and develop your feel too.

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