

How to Choose Instruction

Bob said to Sam “Yeah, I took lessons from that guy and he made my game worse than ever. Sam said “Sounds like you’ve had a bad experience and just need to see my instructor; he’s helped tweak me a bit and shave some strokes.” “I might try lessons again but have no idea who to go to?” said Bob.

Does this sound familiar? We all can be frightened to take lessons in the fear that they will harm our game rather than improve it. Too often than not, we go to a lesson without any facts about what we want to change.

Lesson #1: Stay at home and find your instructor: Think of finding an instructor just like finding a doctor. You want someone who you believe you trust. Be prepared with questions for the instructor first. Don’t hesitate to write them down and fire away. One benefit of asking questions is to see how you relate to their explanations. The first sign to having a good lesson is to develop understanding of how an instructor/pro fulfills your list of questions. It’s quite alright if you have heard of a great instructor in the area and didn’t get a good feeling that you would ‘click’ in a lesson. Then again some instructors gain in popularity because of how they communicate to various personality types in making changes efficiently. A mark of a good instructor will be able to adapt to you and help you quickly. Someone can have the best mind in teaching golf but the worst communication skills to help you. If this is true, you may hurt your game far longer than necessary should you have found someone that helps you see the game as you can comprehend.

Lesson #2: Find out what and why they teach what they do: Ask this question, which should be easy for a good instructor to answer; if you find one who asks you why you need to know then you may want to seek instruction elsewhere. All good PGA/LPGA/USTGF certified instructors should appreciate the idea that a student is interested in what they will be learning. You pay good money to receive insight to this game and especially personalized insight on your swing/game. You have every right to ask and expect a good return. Some instructors/pro’s have websites that explain their particular theories and there you will be able to agree or disagree on the type of theory to be taught in your lesson. In order to know what you should be looking for I recommend using a search engine on the web under: Golf Swing Theories. This will bring a myriad of options for you to read and begin your insight on swing paths, grips, physical attributes, rhyme and rhythm. I endorse a few types of swings but they are always conducive to the make up and physical needs of a player. Try to be honest with yourself. It’s all hard for us to admit we may not be as flexible as we once were, or weigh a few more pounds than last year, how about your short finger complex or even our fetishes with clubs. These all play a part in swing changes, seek them out and feel confident enough you can share these concerns with your instructor.

Lesson #3 is to be committed or else expect little from your Instructor: The pro is not your hero, you are. Keep in mind when taking a lesson you tend to pay more attention, earnestly learn and try to remember the tactics. Your level of commitment to change helps improve your score, yes, however these changes take time to ‘set-in.’ The more you commit early in your lesson changes to adapt, the more quickly you will see results. As a student in a classroom, take notes just after your lesson. Buy a \$0.25 cent spiral pocket pad and jot down the changes. You and the instructor should find ‘trigger’ words that help you to remember your swing changes. Those are the ideas you log. This will aid you at the range or on the course to adhere to the changes in the future.

So this spring when you begin to seek out the right pro for you don’t be afraid to ask questions. You will appreciate your inquisitiveness when you step foot on the course and see changes that lasting, score lasting. Knowledge is power as they say and it’s the same with our inevitable golf game. Seek and you will find.

Shannon ~