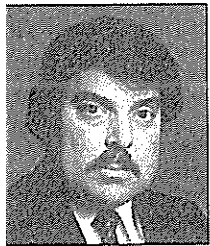


# The Dreaded Three-Foot Putt

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**Tempe eye doctor believes better vision is your best chance to conquer golf's toughest shot**

Dr. Jeffrey Eger says enhanced vision helps golfers trust their stroke, develop "Feel State" to cure one of golf's most enduring problems. The yips.

There, it's out there. Now that I have said the word, take a minute to think about them, and what they mean. Along with the other most dreaded word in the game of golf "shank" the yips are something every golfer dreads, to the point that they don't even want to say the word, much less talk about it.

But the fact is, the yips are common. It is widely believed that they are incurable. And they have sent more than their fair share of golfers "professional and amateur alike" into early retirement, long layoffs or endless hours on the putting green fruitlessly working on a putting stroke that is inherently flawed.

However, I have good news for everyone who has ever stressed over those crucial putts of three or four feet. I believe better vision, not endless practice of new techniques, is the way to overcome the problem.

As a sports eye doctor and the founder of All American Sports Vision, an optometry practice focusing on proper vision skills as a way to enhance sports performance, I have seen every kind of vision problem. Many patients came to me only after exhausting a wide variety of other options because they either thought their vision was fine or that eyesight that was "just a little off" couldn't affect their performance that much. They couldn't have been farther from the truth. Champions trust their vision in order to help them "feel", their game. It's that feeling you hear so much about that is often called "being in the zone." It's what allows a player to trust what they see and make their stroke without over-thinking or over-analyzing the situation. It makes golf more instinctive and keeps golfers from getting bogged down in their own minds. The bottom line is, it makes golf simpler, and therefore makes the player better.

That is my core philosophy. Golfers need to have the belief that they can trust what they see in order to be able to get away from over-thinking their shots. By clearing away all that mental clutter, they allow themselves to get into a "feel state," in other words, they let their instincts, intuition and training take over and play to their maximum potential.

My program isn't just a theory. I have worked with a number of PGA, LPGA and Senior PGA Tour players including Phil Mickelson, Dr. Gil Morgan, Jan Stephenson and others, all of whom saw a dramatic improvement in their play after working with me.

Shortly after beginning a program with me while he was playing at Arizona State University in 1991, Mickelson became one of only two amateurs to win a PGA Tour event in the past 38 years when he won the Northern Telecom Open in Tucson. Morgan also won on the Tour shortly after implementing a program I designed for him.

It's all about making people trust what they see by strengthening the seven skills of vision. The eyes are just like any other muscle; their performance can be improved by exercise and training. Once the eyes begin to function at their peak efficiency, peripheral vision improves, things begin to slow down, and players begin to see the big picture.

Everyone fears short putts because the expectation is that those are the putts should make. Look at the professional tours. Every week, there are players miss one or two short putts that make the difference between winning and losing or between a big paycheck and a modest one. (This was a big issue at the Ryder Cup, but more about that next month). It's the same for high or middle-handicap golfers at every course around the country. The most common area where players lose strokes and the easiest place to lower their scores doesn't come 400 yds from the hole; it comes four feet from the hole.

Putting is the most important part of the game, and by improving their vision player, and I mean anyone can become a better, more efficient putter. It's all about seeing the big picture and trusting what you see, then getting into the "feel state" where you can trust what you see and stroke the putt without worry. The feeling of standing over those short putts and knowing you're going to make them rather than hoping you will is one every golfer hopes to attain, and better vision can help them get that feeling of confidence. The best, most consistent putters are those who have learned to see more peripherally, or see the big picture, as I call it. They trust what you can't think the feel. They see it, trust it, and do it. And with the proper vision techniques, you can, too.

Dr. Jeffrey J. Eger has practiced optometry in Tempe and Mesa since 1975. His practice, All American Sports Vision, is located at 1106 W. University Dr., Suite #1, Mesa, AZ. If you are interested in learning more about innovative techniques and products call 480/964-1111 or visit [www.allamericansportsvision.com](http://www.allamericansportsvision.com).