

Golf Shaft Fitting – Selecting the Shaft so You Don’t “Get the Shaft”

Here’s a little fact of life the golf industry never talks about when the subject of custom clubfitting comes up. There are no established standards within the golf equipment industry for shaft flex. The R flex from one company may have the same stiffness as the S flex from another company, or the A flex from yet another company. The result is a lot of golfers walk away from their club buying experience without the right fit for the shafts in their new clubs.

Accurate shaft fitting consists of four important steps:

- #1. Measure the driver and middle-iron (#5, 6, or 7-iron) swing speeds of the golfer. The golfer’s swing speed measurements must then be compared not to letter codes for flexes, but to a technically accurate list of swing speed ratings of many different shafts. If the swing speed is not known, a suitable but less accurate method of calculating ball flight distances with the driver and 7 iron can be converted to equivalent swing speeds, but these carry distances must be accurate.
- #2. Fit the weight of the shaft to the physical strength and aggressiveness of the golfer’s downswing move at the ball. Physically strong golfer + aggressive downswing transition + fast downswing tempo = heavier shaft weight (>85g woods, >115g irons). Less strong golfer + more passive downswing transition force and smooth tempo = very light shaft weight (<65g woods, <65-75g irons). In between these extremes for the golfer strength and downswing tempo = medium shaft weight (70-80g woods, 75-85g irons).
- #3. Adjust the swing speed rating of the shaft to be chosen for the golfer to the intensity of the golfer’s downswing transition move. Very aggressive transition to start the downswing = choose a shaft with a swing speed rating slightly higher than the golfer’s actual swing speed measurement. Very smooth and easy transition to the downswing = a shaft with a swing speed rating slightly lower than the golfer’s swing speed. Average transition force and tempo = choose a shaft with a swing speed rating in which the golfer’s actual swing speed is in the middle of the range.
- #4. Choose the shaft’s Bend Profile Design to match the golfer’s unhinging of the wrist-cock angle on the downswing, also called the release. The bend profile of a shaft is how its stiffness can be distributed over the length of the shaft. For golfers with a late release, shafts with a tip firm bend profile are a better fit. Golfers who release the wrist cock angle early in the downswing need shafts with more flexibility in the tip design. In between with a midway release means a tip medium bend profile.

One last point to guide your shaft fitting; the higher the clubhead speed, the later the wrist cock release and more aggressive the downswing, the more the shaft becomes a vital component of performance in the club. The slower the swing speed, the earlier the release and less aggressive the swing tempo, the weight of the shaft becomes far more important for the golfer than the stiffness design of the shaft for contributing to shot performance. The only way for all golfers to find the best shaft for their swing is through professional custom clubfitting. Be sure to [FIND A CLUBFITTER](#) that incorporates extensive shaft fitting into their overall clubfitting service.