

Here are some tips to instantly ensure your clubs are ready for the new season.

Get a grip: As a rule of thumb, you should regrip once every year or every 40 rounds. Regardless of how often you play, heat, dirt and oils are constantly at work breaking down your grips. Granted, frequent play and personal preference may dictate regripping sooner, but with normal use there's significant degradation to warrant fresh grips. Because it happens slowly over time, most golfers fail to notice it. Gain the advantage over your golfing partners. Many people find that getting in the routine of regripping every Spring as the golf season "officially" begins is the best path to outplaying your opponents.

Loft and lies: The average golfer likely doesn't know the current loft and lie specs on his or her irons. It might not seem like a big deal, but the loft and lie on a club can change over time, altering flight, distance and the ability to make consistent, solid contact. Because a single swing is usually the difference between second-place and a two-year exemption on the PGA TOUR, pros get their iron specs checked on a regular basis. How often usually depends on the player. The average golfer should probably get a loft and lie check once or twice per season — and even more so if you spend a lot of time practicing on synthetic surfaces.

Groove check: If you spent last season pounding balls on the range and logging three or four rounds per week, you may want to inspect the grooves on your irons and wedges. It may not seem like a big deal at the time, but worn grooves, particularly on your wedges, can lead to a lack of bite around the green. The average wedge costs around \$130 to \$150 and has better performance and more consistency. If it's time to replace a well-worn club in the bag, spend the extra money to get fresh grooves.

Shaft and ferrule inspection: Even if you bought a set of clubs in the last year, you'll want to give your shafts and ferrules a once-over. While still uncommon, clubs that are subject to extreme temperatures and humidity suffer from expansion, contraction and moisture that could weaken the epoxy bond prematurely.

Do a quick check just above the head to ensure the ferrule and shaft are still intact.

ASK CLUB TECH MIKE ROBERTS

REGRIPPING - LOFT/LIE CHECKS - RESHAFTING - FERRULES TURNED