

3. The Grip

3.1. Understanding the Grip

There is only **one** way to grip the mallet to enable control of all the different angles and shots. Your effectiveness will depend on wrist movements during the shots. You do not change the position of your grip when you hit a back shot. The position of the index finger is very important when holding the mallet.

Here are several tips that may help you with your grip:

1. The middle joints of the fingers should be holding the mallet in order for the palm to be pointing at the target at the moment of impact.

2. Think of your grip as if you are holding a gun. The index finger is in the trigger position

3. Also, imagine shaking hands with a friend. It is the same position that you use to grip the mallet.



If you are also a golf player, try using the same grip technique as in golf.

First, grab the mallet grip with both hands as you would grab the golf club.

Then, slide both hands up toward the top end of the mallet grip.

Finally, let the left hand go. Your right hand will be left in the exact position you need for a good polo grip. Practise this until you get used to how a proper grip feels.



3.2. Grip Pressure

Control is transmitted to the mallet head through your hands, but for this to be effective, your wrist and lower arm must have the correct tension, i.e. firm but relaxed. Muscle strength has relatively little to contribute to this. In reality, exactly the opposite applies. The wrist, the lower arm and the hand must collectively transmit power from the larger muscles in the back and shoulder to the mallet head with a freewheeling action. This will require the right grip pressure.

HOW MUCH PRESSURE?

You must use the same amount of pressure you would use to squeeze tooth paste out of a tube.



It would also be like holding a pigeon. If your grip is too tight, you will hurt it, too loose, the bird will fly away.



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3.3. Grip Size

HOW CAN YOU TELL THE GRIP IS TOO SMALL?

The hand easily closes around the grip but the fingers dig into the palm. At impact, the mallet head may rotate, especially with off-center contact.



HOW CAN YOU TELL THE GRIP IS TOO BIG?

There is a gap between your fingertips and the fleshy part of your palm. This can cause a lack of control, and the wrist action in the swing will be inhibited. You will also have to grip too tightly to hold the mallet.



HOW CAN YOU TELL WHEN THE GRIP IS SUITABLE FOR YOU?

The middle two fingers cosily fold around the grip when the grip thickness is ideal. The fingertips just meet the fleshy part of the palm, just beneath the thumb.



Note: Once you determine which grip size suits you, make sure to have all your mallets made or fixed to that size.

3.4. Testing Your Grip

The grip must be **light** not **tight**. A light grip enables you to make a free uninhibited swing in order to achieve head speed. To get used to the correct grip, suspend the mallet from the heel of your hand and into the INDEX finger. You will feel the weight of the head, yet the mallet will be securely placed. Then just wrap the other fingers around the handle.



TOO STRONG

A strong grip will interfere with the natural swing because the arm muscles will be too tight, so therefore you restrict wrist action and shoulder rotation. If the grip is too tight you will not be able to feel the rotation of the shoulder and the swing will be mechanical and not natural. Remember that a good swing has speed, not force, and putting too much pressure on the grip will make you lose speed.



TOO LIGHT

This isn't good because the mallet will rotate in your hand at the moment of impact, changing the direction and distance of the shot.

Note: You can release grip tension by releasing pressure from the ring finger, this way all the arm muscles will be more relaxed.