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Men and Women Are Different

One of the most common swing problems amateur women golfers face is the narrowing of the elbows and collapse of the wrists at the top of the backswing (picture 1). It is often passed off as a lack of physical strength, or that the player is just not athletic enough to support the weight of the club. The fact is that men and women are made differently; specifically, the “carrying angle.” This is the angle that is made from the upper arm down to the forearm (picture 2). Women have a different pelvic girdle than men. Because of child bearing reasons, women have to have a greater carrying angle to allow for reciprocal arm movement while walking. If women did not have this greater

carrying angle, their arms would literally hit their hips while walking.

In males, the normal carrying angle is 5 to 10 degrees, while in females it is between 10 and 15 degrees. To determine your carrying angle, stand tall with the palms of your hand facing forward, thumbs pointed outward, and arms fully extended. Now have a friend extend a line from the middle of your elbow to the middle of your wrist. The difference between the two lines is called the “carrying angle.” A simpler way to test this is to stand tall, extend your arms forward with both hands together with palms facing skyward. Now try to touch your elbows together while your arms are extended straight. Statistics show us

that most women will be able to touch their elbows while most men cannot (picture 3).

The translation here is that it is the natural position for women to have their elbows together at the top of the backswing. The problem is that the golf swing requires the elbows to maintain a certain distance throughout the backswing. Ideally at the top of the backswing the elbows form a triangle (picture 4).

Combating this problem starts with the address position. Instead of having the elbows pointing or positioned inside the hips, move them in such a way that the elbows point outside the hips (pictures 5 and 6). This will make it easier to create this triangle effect at the top of the backswing.

