

So you've found yourself in a greenside bunker and haven't the slightest clue on how to get out of your little beach. Let's start with the equipment. The basic 56 or 60 degree sand wedge will do. You'll need to locate the bunker rake to clean up after yourself when you've successfully landed the ball on the green. Don't worry about your dress for now, that will come in time when you've learned to play golf.

First, look at how you got yourself into the bunker in the first place and remember never to do that again. Once you realize that there is no way out except to hit the ball the following steps will get you out. First, pick the club, a 56 or 60 degree sand wedge. Determine where to hit the ball before approaching your lie. Once you have picked out the target, which hopefully should be somewhat close to the flag, look at the green around it and check for breaks in the green. A break in the green is where the ball will have a tendency to curve to the left or right, depending on the direction of the break. When approaching the ball take the shortest possible route through the sand, leaving you with less clean up of the bunker after the shot.

Once over your ball you can take a few practice swings, but be very careful not to touch the sand because that will cost you one penalty stroke. The last thing you need to do is turn this hazard into an even bigger burden on your game. When you feel ready to hit your ball you need to remember a few basics. When you swing keep your head down and still. Have even weight distribution over the ball, standing directly over the ball, with it in the middle of your feet while in your stance. Take a nice slow and even back swing and the release into a steady fore swing. This swing should be a full swing as with any iron or wood. Be careful, this is not a "chip" shot of any kind. When striking the ball, hit the sand about an inch behind the ball to get the maximum lift and cushioning in the landing.

Now, hopefully you've gotten your ball on the green in the area of your target without spreading sand all over the green and fairway. Once you are done in the bunker you, take the rake and clean up any divots or footprints in the bunker. This maintenance of the bunker is just general golf etiquette. Place the rake off to the side of the bunker so that the party behind you doesn't hit it with their ball.

Congratulations, you're one-step closer to improving your *over all* golf game. Bunker shots are one of the harder golf shots to master. Improving this shot makes it easier to take strokes off your game and stress off your mind. Of course, the easiest way to keep those bunker strokes completely off your scorecard is to become consistent at hitting the fairways and greens in regulation. I hope you enjoyed have this tutorial on the green side bunker shot.