

# *Gripping Specifications*

## **I. GRIPPING**

The most basic job performed by the clubmaker is installing grips. Like any other task, it must be done to the highest standard. Gripping a golf club is not difficult, it is often tedious when compared to other exciting repairs done on a daily basis. Do not take gripping for granted, because like any other job performed on the golf club, it is a sign of your quality of work, or lack of it. Make sure every grip is straight, is installed to the proper size, with the grip cap flush to the butt of the shaft.

### **A. Grip Options**

A vast number of grips are available to the clubmaker. Every texture imaginable can be found in one grip or another. Some are soft as a sponge, while others feel as though they are hard enough to slip out of the hands. The different sizes of grips also make the chore of building up grips to larger sizes much easier. Even with the abundance of grips not every grip is available in every size and inside core diameter. The clubmaker must know how to properly fit and size the grip to the shaft.

### **B. Tape and Solvent**

There has to be some agent to make the grip stick to the shaft and more importantly, to allow the grip to slide onto the shaft. Try to slide a grip over the butt of a shaft and on down the shaft into position without a lubricant. It cannot be done. Grip tape and solvents allow the slip-on grip to be installed with ease.

The type of tape that is used to professionally install grips is a two-sided masking tape that has adhesive on both sides. This tape is available in two-inch and 3/4 " widths. The two-inch wide tape is placed lengthwise on the butt end of the shaft and wrapped around the circumference of the butt. The 3/4" tape can be applied two ways. Most common is the spiral method. The tape is spiraled around the shaft with a small space between the edges of the tape. A less known but easier way to install the 3/4" tape is to place the tape lengthwise on one side of the butt and wrap it over the end of the butt of the shaft and down the other side. Using this method, the tape covers the shaft except for a 3/16" gap on the top and bottom of the shaft.

Until recently the solvents (trichloroethylene) used to lubricate the tape were borderline safe for the environment and the user. Now there are organic solvents that are produced from citrus by-products. These are environmentally friendly and much safer for the user. The organic solvent does not evaporate as quickly in hotter temperatures, which makes installing the grip much easier. The down side is it takes a little longer to set up before the club can be played.

---

The newest entry into the grip installation market is a water soluble tape. The tape is activated by water mixed with a very small amount of soap or shampoo. The grips are as easy to install as with the other solvents and there is no solvent to buy.

The time a grip needs to stabilize depends on the type of tape and the temperature and humidity of the shop. To ensure the grip is set up properly after an overnight dry time, test one by twisting it in different directions. The grip should not move. Never skimp on the amount of grip tape applied to the shaft. Always install the tape to within an inch of the bottom of the grip.

### C. Sizing Grips

Obtaining the correct grip size is as important as choosing the proper shaft. The grip must feel comfortable in the hands of the golfer. Deciding which size grip works for a particular golfer may be as easy as handing the customer four or five demo clubs with different grip sizes and letting the customer hit balls to decide which grip size feels best.

Every shaft has a butt diameter, just as every grip has an inside core diameter. Measure the butt diameter and look inside the bottom of the grip and see if there is a number. The number is the core size of the grip and will be 56, 58, 60, 61, or 62. These numbers represent the inside diameter of the grip. The 56 actually means .560", the 60 is .600" and so forth. Grips are manufactured with these different inside diameters to match the butt diameter of the shaft. However, be aware that not all grips will have their core size molded on the inside of the mouth of the grip.

If a .580" shaft is wrapped with one layer of two-sided masking tape and a 58 core grip is installed, the grip will be "standard" size. Measured at two inches down from the butt, a standard men's grip will have a .900" (29/32") diameter. Install a 60 inside diameter grip on a .600" butt shaft with one wrap of two-sided masking tape and the grip will also be "standard" size.

Most shops do not have the luxury of carrying every grip and the different core sizes. Standard two-inch masking tape is used to increase the butt of the shaft larger to increase the size of the grip. For example, wrap three layers of masking tape around the butt of a .580" shaft, then wrap the two-sided tape next. If you install an M58 grip, the grip is now .930" or (1/32") oversize. The chart at the end of the chapter gives examples of sizing various shaft butt diameters with different core sizes.

To achieve a smaller than standard grip, two methods are used. The first involves stretching the grip longer than the normal placement. By stretching the grip 3/4", the grip will be reduced by .015" (1/64"). Some grips (cord or thermoplastic) will not stretch. To make these grips smaller, the core size of the grip has to be larger than the butt diameter of the shaft.

---

Usually placing a larger core size grip on a smaller shaft butt will not make the grip loose.

#### **D. Installing Grips**

When installing grips make the procedure as effortless as possible. Lay the butts of the shafts parallel to each other and hold the grip next to the butt as close to it's final position as possible. Mark each shaft with a felt marker one inch up from the grip's open end. This will take the guess work out of how far down to apply the tape. If a tape dispenser is used, mount it one grip length from the edge of the gripping station. Pull the tape to the edge of the station, tear and the tape will be the exact length needed.

Lock the shaft in the vise and position a pan or tub under the butt end to catch excess solvent. If there are additional wraps of masking tape being put on the shaft, make sure each layer is wrinkle free. Three layers can be installed to within an inch of the bottom of the grip. If more than three layers are being used, set each successive layer a quarter of an inch closer to the butt. This allows the grip to maintain it's natural taper at the bottom. Six layers wrapped to the same point on the shaft will not look very professional. The two-sided tape should always come to within an inch of the bottom of the grip.

When using two-inch wide tape be sure to apply the tape so it is wrinkle free. The excess tape over the butt should be twisted and pushed inside the butt. Gripping a club with no tape covering the edge of the butt is difficult.

Until you are an expert at installing grips, USE PLENTY OF SOLVENT. Wet the grip tape with solvent. Squirt a generous amount of solvent inside the grip. Seal the vent hole in the top of the grip with a golf tee or cover it with your finger. Pinch the open end of the grip closed and shake the grip to coat the inside of the grip with the solvent. Pour the excess solvent out of the grip and on the grip tape.

Grab the grip with the fore finger and thumb of each hand. Pinch the open end of the grip elliptical and slide the grip onto the shaft from the bottom edge of the butt and over the top. Continue to push and slide the grip until the grip cap stops against the butt of the shaft.

Remove the club from the vise and align the grip. If the grip has alignment markings make sure they are on top of the grip in the 12 o'clock position on the club. Adjust the grip until it is straight and square to the club face. To check if a grip is twisted, turn the grip 90 degrees and sight down the side. If the markings follow the shaft to the head, the grip is straight, if the markings are straight but criss-cross the shaft, the grip is twisted. Allow ample drying time before playing with the club.

## Grip Size Installation

This chart lists the combinations of grip core size, shaft butt diameters and build-up tape to achieve different oversize conditions.

Grip Core		Shaft Butt Diameter	Layers of Build-Up Tape Required to Achieve Stated Sizes				
			STD.	+1/64	+1/32"	+1/16"	+1/8"
M58	+	.580"	0	1	3	6	12
M58	+	.600"	*	0	1	4	10
M58	+	.620"	n/p	*	0	2	8
M60	+	.580"	2	3	5	8	14
M60	+	.600"	0	1	3	6	12
M60	+	.620"	*	0	1	4	10
M62	+	.580"	4	5	7	10	16
M62	+	.600"	2	3	5	8	14
M62	+	.620"	0	1	3	6	12
L56	+	.560"	0	1	3	6	12
L56	+	.580"	*	0	1	4	10
L56	+	.600"	n/p	*	0	2	8
L58	+	.560"	2	3	5	8	14
L58	+	.580"	0	1	3	6	12
L58	+	.600"	*	0	1	4	10
L60	+	.560"	4	5	7	10	16
L60	+	.580"	2	3	5	8	14
L60	+	.600"	0	1	3	6	12

For all cases of grip installation in the above chart, it is assumed that one layer of 2-way grip installation tape will be added to the total number of build-up tape layers.

\* — Grip must be stretched @3/4" longer equally over its length to reduce its diameter and create this size.

n/p — Not possible to achieve this size with this grip core and shaft combination.

## II. GRIP REMOVAL

In order to install new grips onto a golf club, the old grip and grip tape has to be removed. Secure the club in the vise and cut the grip off (away from the body) with a hook blade knife. Always use a hook blade knife when a graphite shaft is involved. Grips may also be cut off with a device such as The Pro-Grip Stripper (#8214) or The Stripper (#7596). Once the grip is removed, lay the head of the club over your shoulder and put the butt of the shaft on the corner of a bench. This will hold the club secure while the tape is scraped off the shaft.

Stripping the tape can be tiresome. Use a thick-bladed knife or a tape stripper and scrape down towards the bench. When the tape has been removed, use grip solvent to clean the shaft.

Graphite shafts should not be scraped with a knife, no matter how dull the knife. A heat gun directed at the tape for a minute or two will allow the tape to be peeled off with great ease. Once the shaft is clean, it is ready for the new grip.

## A. Saving Grips

Occasionally a customer will request to remove the grip currently attached to their golf club and install it on another shaft. There are two recommended methods to safely remove the grip. One uses a blade-style grip remover (with a small amount of solvent) to separate the grip from the tape. The other requires a compressor to blow the grip off.

The blade-style grip remover is a strong metal blade which pulls the grip away from the tape. This is the safest grip removal method. Place a small amount of solvent on the blade and then push the blade all the way under the grip. Place a small amount of solvent in the separation between the blade and the shaft. Then twist the blade around the circumference of the shaft to separate the tape from the grip. Once the grip is loose, simply push the grip off with the blade.

Removing grips with compressed air requires a nozzle to direct the air down the vent hole of the grip. However, anytime air pressure is used there is a chance the grip could stretch and burst. A protective sleeve is essential as a safety device and to keep the grip from stretching or tearing up. A section of plastic golf bag tube reinforced with strapping tape is most effective for covering the grip. Ideal air pressure is 50-60 pounds per square inch.

With an awl, loosen the first 1/2" of the grip from the shaft. Pour a few drops of solvent into the gap between the grip and the shaft. Work the awl and loosen as much grip as possible.

Insert the awl through the hole in the top of the grip and carefully loosen the butt of the grip from the tape. Try not to enlarge the hole in the top of the grip or poke a hole through the side of the grip. Slide the protective sleeve over the grip so that 3/4" of the grip is exposed. Wrap three fingers around the tube and let the index finger circle the top of the grip. Place the air nozzle inside the hole in the butt of the grip and give it air. Twist the index finger and try to loosen the top of the grip. When the top of the grip bulges from the air pressure, twist the air bubble and work the bubble toward the bottom of the grip. Work the air bubble from outside the tube. Do not slide the tube down the grip as the bubble moves down. The grip may burst. When a high pitched squeal is heard, the bottom of the grip has been freed from the tape. Provided the air flow remains constant, the grip can then be pulled off of the shaft.

*We do not recommend the use of any injection-style grip removal device, including a pistol-style grip remover or hypodermic syringe, as there are several easier and safer methods available for this process.*