

The Perfect Golf Swing... the Perfect Jump

Top 12 reasons they are similar:

12. **Learning the basics** is the first step. Practice until the basics are automatic reflexes.

11. **Hands** are critical... They should go with the club swing like going with the horse.

10. **Visualize your goal.** On a perfect jump, you can hardly feel the takeoff and it's smooth as silk, fluid and effortless, horse and rider are

one. The perfect swing is a similar feeling, you can't even feel the face of the club hit the ball, the human body and the club are moving as one. The less excess movement the better. The best golfers generally have the smoothest swings and the best mechanics. The best riders have invisible aids, it looks like they're doing nothing.

9. **Variety of distances.** Be able to execute short distances and long distances equally well... practice both. By the way, a short hopper shot is a Chip.

8. **The course** of nine holes is like a course of nine jumps, there are challenges lying in wait. Make sure you know where you're going so you don't wander off course.

7. The **flat work** is on the driving range and the putting green. Putting is a large part of the game and everything between fences is flat work. It's the element that is practiced least and screws up most.

6. **You have to get out there** and play and ride. Yes, you can get pointers from DVDs and web sites, all proclaiming to have "the answer." The more time in the tack and on the golf course, the quicker you will excel. Don't go to a country club "A" show course until you are consistent at the small courses. Lessons are good, someone with knowledge watching your ride and your swing. Video yourself and compare yourself to the masters.

5. **Traditional attire** is best. Equipment does not have to be expensive, your riding and your playing outshines your outfit. Spend money on lessons before the latest fad. Be comfortable, have sound equipment and sun protection.

4. Getting the right **rhythm** and sticking with it produces the best swings and the best jumps. Break out each component – addressing the ball, back swing, stance as you would working on your riding – hands, leg, posture. Swinging in slow motion is like jumping cavelettis.

3. **Being in physical shape** means your golf game and your riding will be better. Go to the gym, yoga and pilates, become a runner... they will help your swing and your jumps.

2. **Relaxation is key.** Golf and riding are mental activities. Become a student of the game and the basics, and once you have mastered them, try not to over-think. Let the gestalt of it all take over. Enjoy being outside and being in nature as you would on the back of a horse.



1. **Have a positive attitude**, a belief that the ball will go in the hole, that the horse will jump the fence. Negative thinking is counter-productive in both sports. Every rider, golfer and horse can have an off day so shake it off. If you think negatively and the worst happens, you've lived through it twice, haven't you? On the other hand, be humble; your next swing could be a lost ball.

Love your horses and your game!