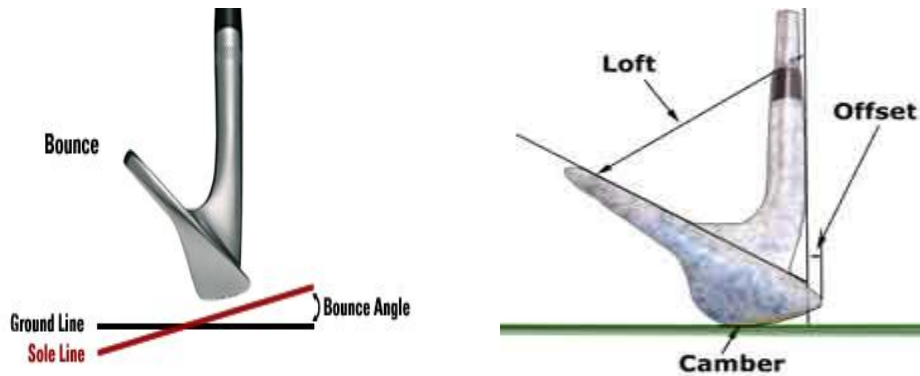


## Use Your Sand Wedge to Your Advantage

By Brad Volker

All clubs have a digging edge and a bouncing edge designed into the club head. In order to make the best use of the sand wedge out of the bunker it is important to use the bounce edge. These diagrams show how to measure the loft and bounce on a sand wedge.



Most wedges will list the loft and bounce on the wedge. For example, Titleist Vokey wedges are labeled “58.08”. This means the loft of the wedge is 58 degrees and the bounce is 8 degrees. The bounce on a wedge can range from 4 degrees to 18 degrees.

It is a good idea to carry at least one wedge in your bag with low bounce and one with a higher bounce. A mid to high bounce wedge (10-14 degrees) is good for hitting shots from bunkers with soft, fluffy sand. Carry a low bounce wedge (4-6 degrees) for tight lies, wet or compacted sand.

Once the bounce edge on the sand wedge is located it is important to know how to set up to a bunker shot and use the bounce edge to your advantage. The easiest way to use the bounce is to open the clubface, or add loft to the club, when you address the ball. A common error made by amateurs is to simply grip the club and rotate both hands to the right to open the clubface. When you swing the club with your hands in this position the club will return to its original, closed position and the club will not get through the sand and you will lose distance on your bunker shot.

The correct way to open the club face and use the bounce on your sand wedge is to first, grip the club normally. Second, lighten your grip pressure and slightly rotate the club to the right in your hands so the face is open and loft is added. Last, take your grip back on the club. Your hand position should be the same but the club will be slightly rotated in your hands. Now when you make a swing in the bunker the club should move easily through the sand and the ball should fly high and straight.

For a video demonstration of how to use your sand wedge to your advantage, go to [www.volker.com](http://www.volker.com) and check out the Tip of the Month.