

PHYLLIS COURT CROQUET CLUB

THE GRIP

There are three common types of grip used by croquet players - the Standard, Solomon and Irish. Each will have its advocates, but it's impossible to say definitively that one is better than another. There have been World Champions with each grip, and each type is widely seen amongst today's top international players.

Beginners are advised to determine which grip is the most comfortable for them and use that. Once one has understood the fundamentals of golf croquet and played a few games, it may be appropriate to experiment again with the alternative grips. But changing grip is not something to do on a whim as it is likely to be accompanied by a period of regression in one's playing performance while one gets accustomed to a new grip.



Standard grip



Solomon grip



Irish grip

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The illustrations above are for right-handed players, with the right hand below the left. Left-handed players would place the left hand below the right. With the Irish grip, knuckles of both hands are pointed backwards, while with the Solomon grip, both sets of knuckles point forward, and for the Standard grip, the top hand knuckles point forward and the bottom hand, backwards.

With the Irish grip, you would generally hold the mallet lower down the shaft, and would probably therefore be more comfortable with a shorter mallet than would be used for the Standard or Solomon grip.

Beginners are advised to hold the mallet with the hands close together. This helps ensure that the hands work together. If they are separated, then one hand may, for example, be going forward while the other is going backwards, creating another element that might go wrong and cause a poorly directed stroke. Having said that, some top players play with a separation of the hands!

Some players overlap their hands with the Irish grip, rather like gripping a golf club. The Irish grip is thought by many to be the best for control of the mallet. However, it is harder to get a big backswing and therefore more difficult to hit the ball hard; this may not be a problem for a beginner, but as players improve, they tend to hit the ball harder. Some who use the Irish grip will have their feet offset (right further back than the left for a right-handed player) to give more room for the backswing.

The Solomon grip may initially feel quite unnatural, but it is a very good grip for giving power as it enables a good, full backswing. It is also best for anyone susceptible to wrist injury as the wrists bear less shock from contact between mallet and ball.

The Standard grip is probably the most popular of the three and is something of a compromise between the Solomon and Irish grips, being somewhere in between in terms of the extent of comfortable backswing and the extent of control.

You might like to try moving one or both hands further down the shaft for playing much shorter strokes which do not require a substantial backswing and for which accuracy and strength of shot are paramount. But make sure you do not touch the mallet head with your hand during the forward swing as that is a fault!