

Titleist 718 Iron Review

Every year when late summer rolls around, Titleist gets set to release a new line of products. From Drivers and Fairway Woods one year to Irons and Hybrids the next, golf enthusiasts everywhere tune in to see what Titleist brings to the market. As a company known for making quality products that deliver consistent results for golfers of different skill levels, Titleist new product releases are always highly anticipated. That being said, the new 718 line of irons does not disappoint!

For years, Titleist has offered the same 4 iron options - MB, CB, AP2 and AP1. They also introduced a new model with some different technology designed to cater to a slightly different part of the market, which was the TMB. These 5 models provided a solid all around product line that gave most golfers an option that would suit their needs. However, I personally felt that Titleist had a hole in the product line that some of the competition did not have. This was causing problems in my fittings for people who liked Titleist, but were not getting the performance that they were seeking from the 716 line.

This is where the new offering for the 718 product line comes into play. The 718 AP3 is a new offering that is going to cover the player that is a lower handicapper, but would like a little more distance without having to look at a game improvement cavity back. A very welcome addition to the 718 product line, this is exactly the area that we at Miles of Golf were noticing that Titleist as falling behind in our fittings. There just was not an option for a better player who was looking for more distance out of their irons. With the 718 AP3, that hole has been filled.

Having recently received our fitting components for the 718 irons, all of the fitters here were interested to see how the 718 AP3 stacked up when compared to the rest of the products offered. To personally find out, I hit 6 shots each with the 716 AP2, the 718 AP2, and the 718 AP3. I was curious to see the differences in ball speed, launch angle, spin rate, and of course carry distance. For this test I used the same Project X LZ 6.5 shaft at standard length, with each head set at 2 degrees upright. So every factor was the same except for the individual clubheads themselves. Results are as follows.

Model	Club Speed	Ball Speed	Launch Angle	Spin Rate	Peak Height	Landing Angle	Carry Distance
718 AP3	93.7	132.1	13.8	7301	101	47.8	185.6
718 AP2	93.2	129	15.1	7739	102	48.6	179.4
716 AP2	93	127.7	14.3	7886	95	47.2	177.1

Interesting numbers here, and I think we can definitely see where the AP3 will differ from the AP2. The reason I chose the AP2 to compare the AP3 to in this test is that I think it is the closest iron to the AP3 in terms of overall size of the clubhead and looks, so I believe the majority of players who will gravitate to the AP3 will be players who would previously fit into the AP2 line.

Looking at the numbers, let's start with the previous model in the 716 AP2. My clubhead speed with each club was right around 93 miles per hour, so that does not have any effect on the results. The ball speed with the 716 AP2 averaged 127.7 miles per hour. For the ball flight my average launch angle was 14.3 degrees, with an average spin rate of 7886 rpms. The average peak height was 95 feet in the air and the average landing angle was 47.2 degrees. The average carry distance was 177.1 yards in the air. Overall these numbers are ok for me, about what I would normally see out of an iron comparable to the 716 AP2. If anything the spin rate is on the high side, which is definitely a trend I noticed with this iron in my fittings. The ball speed is also a hair on the lower side for me as well for a 7 iron, which again is another issue I ran into with this iron in my fittings. Those 2 issues were the main things that I hoped would be addressed with the 718 AP2

As for the 718 AP2, both of those issues have improved slightly in my testing. Average ball speed for the 718 AP2 was 129 miles per hour, an increase of 1.3 mph on average from the 716 AP2. Launch Angle averaged 15.1 degrees, with an average spin rate of 7739 rpms. This led to an average peak height of 102 feet, with a 48.6 degree landing angle. Launch angle was increased by .8 degrees, while spin rate decreased by 147 rpms on average. Peak height averaged 7 feet higher in the air, and the landing angle was 1.4 degrees steeper into the ground. Carry distance increased by 1.7 yards. Now all of these improvements are very minor, and I would caution most players who already have the 716 AP2's and are interested in the 718 AP2's to see a qualified fitter and see what their individual results are. That being said, for a serious player, improving all of these areas would very likely provide a benefit to their scores at the end of the day. Again, the changes are minor, which I am sure is by design. The AP2 product has always been about consistency over distance, and a "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" mentality has worked well for this particular product over the years.

Now onto the new product that everyone who is still reading has been waiting for. The 718 AP3 average 132.1 miles per hour of ball speed. Launch angle averaged 13.8 degrees, with an average spin rate of 7301 rpms. Peak height averaged 101 feet, with a landing angle of 47.2 degrees. Carry distance was 185.6 yards on average. The big difference from the AP3 compared to the other 2 is the ball speed, with the AP3 averaging 3.1 miles per hour faster than the 718 AP2, and 4.8 miles per hour faster than the 716 AP2. Faster ball speeds usually lead to more distance, so the AP3 compares favorably to the other 2 irons in this regard. With the faster ball speeds and slightly lower launch and spin, the AP3 averaged 6.2 yards faster than the 718 AP2, and 8.5 yards longer than the 716 AP2. Essentially, this iron provides exactly what the Titleist iron line was missing in the 716 series. An iron that will provide the player more distance,

with less offset and a thinner topline that better players tend to prefer. I am excited to see the results that this iron provides in my fittings.

The new Titleist 718 line of irons are set for a September 29th release. The usual standbys are back with slight improvements that do not venture too far from the core identity of each product, with a new product introduced that should fill a major gap that was present in previous years. As 1 of 4 Titleist Regional Fitting Centers in the United States, there is no better place to try and get fit for the 718 product line than Miles of Golf.