



World Handicap System

The new World Handicapping is scheduled to start in January 2020. This new system of handicapping is significantly different than the handicapping we have used for the last 25 years. Listed below are the 10 most important changes that every golfer should be aware of. These are covered here in summary format

1. Handicap Indexes

Handicap Indexes will now be calculated using the 8 lowest differentials of a player's most recent 20 scores. This is a change from the current system where 10 differentials out of 20 were used and then a factor of 96% was applied to come to a final Handicap Index.

The maximum allowable Handicap Index is now 54.0 for both men and women. By moving the maximum HI up to 54.0, the USGA is encouraging more golfers to obtain a handicap so they may enjoy the game with their friends and have a viable measure of their progress as a golfer.

2. Daily Revisions

Every time a golfer posts a score their handicap index will be revised that night and a new handicap index will be available the following day. Every golfer is required to post their score as soon as possible after the completion of the round and before midnight on the day of play. Score posting is available by using the Posting Kiosk in the clubhouse, the GHIN Mobile App on a smartphone, or using the GHIN Desktop Dashboard on their home computer.

3. Elimination of 9 hole Handicap Indexes

The new World Handicapping System will neither calculate nor display 9 hole Handicap Indexes. Every golfer in the system will be issued an 18 hole Handicap Index. 18 Hole Indexes are valid

for the purpose of calculating a 9 hole Course Handicap when a player is competing on a nine hole rated course. One-half of the 18 hole index should be used when calculating a 9 hole Course Handicap.

Players may still post acceptable nine hole scores to their scoring record. Each 9 hole score will be held aside waiting to be combined with a second nine hole score to make up a custom Combined 18 hole score that will be used for the Handicap Index calculation. Nine hole scores can be played and submitted in any combination of front or back nines and from any combination of nine holes scores from any rated course.

4. Playing Conditions Calculation

Course ratings are based on normal playing conditions, but the difficulty of a golf course can vary substantially from day to day, due to:

- Course Conditions
- Weather Conditions
- Course Set-up

A new score posting feature called the Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) determines whether playing conditions on the day differed from normal conditions to the extent that an adjustment is needed to compensate. It is a daily statistical procedure that compares the scores submitted by players on the day against expected scoring patterns under normal conditions. The PCC is calculated by the handicap calculation system and is very conservative in nature. It can result in an increase in the scoring differential of +1 when the course was determined to play easier than expected and a -1, -2 or -3 when the course has played more difficult than expected. Any potential PCC adjustment is calculated at midnight each day for each course. If a player's score differential has been adjusted there will be a notation listed in their scoring record.

5. Low Handicap Index

A player's Low Handicap Index represents the demonstrated ability of a player over the 12 month period preceding the day on which the most recent score in their scoring record was played. It represents a reference point against which a player's current Handicap Index can be compared for other possible handicap adjustments. The Low Handicap Index is an official component of a player's handicap scoring record. A Low Handicap Index is only established after a golfer has posted at least 20 acceptable scores.

6. Hard and Soft Caps

The World Handicapping System is designed to limit the upward movement of a Handicap Index. There are two trigger points built into the system:

The Soft Cap - The soft cap is triggered when the difference between a player's newly calculated Handicap Index and their Low Handicap Index is greater than 3 strokes. When a player's new Handicap Index increase is greater than 3.0 strokes, the value above 3.0 strokes is restricted to 50% of the increase.

The Hard Cap - The hard cap triggers to restrict a player's Handicap Index to never increase more than 5.0 strokes above their Low Handicap Index

7. Only 2 types of Handicaps - Course Handicap and Playing Handicap

Under the World Handicap system any confusion about what handicaps people are using when playing in competition against their friends or in an organized event will disappear. There are only two handicaps to be concerned with: **Course Handicap** and **Playing Handicap**.

For handicap purposes, a **Course Handicap** is used to determine the number of strokes a player receives on any golf course and for the correct application of Net Par and Maximum Score adjustments. The new calculation will include an adjustment for the difference between the Course Rating and Par. It is calculated as:

$$\text{Course Handicap} = \text{Handicap Index} \times (\text{Slope Rating} \div 113) + (\text{Course Rating} \text{ minus Par})$$

For equity purposes, the **Playing Handicap** determines the number of strokes each player gives or receives to ensure that all players can enjoy a fair and equal game when playing with or competing against one another. A Playing Handicap is calculated by applying the appropriate handicap allowance to a player's Course Handicap (eg: four-ball stroke play allowance = 85%)

$$\text{Playing Handicap (Standard Calculation)} = \text{Course Handicap} \times \text{hdcp allowance}$$

$$\text{Playing Handicap (When Multiple Tees with Different Pars are used)} = \text{Course Handicap} \times \text{hdcp allowance} + \text{Difference in Pars}$$

(Calculations carry all rounding through until the final step unlike the "multiple" rounding steps used in the old system)

8. Minimum numbers of holes played to be acceptable for score posting

For an 18 hole score posting, a player must play a minimum of 14 holes. For any holes over the 14 that are not played, the golfer will post a hole score of Net Par. Net Par is a score equal to the par for the hole plus any handicap strokes the player is entitled to for that hole.

If a player plays more than 9 but less than 14 holes, then the player will disregard all surplus holes beyond 9 holes and post a nine hole score.

For a 9 hole score, a player must play a minimum of 7 holes within the front or back 9 of a rated course. For any holes over the 7 that are not played, the player will post a hole score of Net Par. Net Par is a score equal to the par for the hole plus any handicap strokes the player is entitled to for that hole.

A hole is considered to have been played if it has been started. For a hole that has been started but not finished, the player should record his/her Most Likely score.

9. Exceptional Score Reduction

When an exceptional score is posted to a player's scoring record, the Handicap index will be reduced in accordance with the following adjustment table:

Number of strokes the Score Differential is lower than the player's Handicap Index in effect when the round was played	Exception Score Reduction
7.0 - 9.9	- 1.0
10.0 or more	- 2.0

- A reduction can be applied based on a single exceptional score
- Reductions for multiple exceptional scores are applied cumulatively
- Reductions are automatically applied after the submission of an exceptional score with the next day's revision

10. Maximum Hole Score

For a player with an established Handicap Index, the maximum score for handicap purposes for each hole played is limited to a **net double bogey**, calculated as follows:

Par of the Hole + 2 strokes + any handicap stroke(s) that the player receives on that hole

- There is no limit to the number of holes in a round where a **net double bogey** adjustment may be applied
- The player's **full Course Handicap** should be used for all applications of **net double bogey** adjustments
- Adjusting a hole score for **net double bogey** can be done either:
 - >> automatically, when the player submits their score using hole-by-hole score entry
 - >> manually by the player, when submitting an adjusted gross score for the round