

World Handicap System (WHS)

Effective January 2020 Golf Canada has adopted the World Handicap System (WHS). The idea for a new unified system was conceived by the USGA and the R&A and developed following an extensive review of systems administered by six existing handicapping authorities - Golf Australia, the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU) in Great Britain and Ireland, the European Golf Association (EGA), the South African Golf Association (SAGA), the Argentine Golf Association (AAG), and the United States Golf Association (USGA).

Features:

- A minimal number of scores needed to obtain a handicap. Scores from 54 holes in any combination of 18-hole and 9-hole rounds are needed to establish a Handicap Index
- A consistent handicap that is portable from tee to tee, course to course, and country to country through worldwide use of the World Handicap System.
- An average-based calculation taken from the best eight of the last 20 scores factoring in memory of previous demonstrated ability for better responsiveness and control.
- A calculation that considers the impact that playing conditions (including course set up and weather conditions) might have on a player's performance each day.
- Daily handicap revisions, taking account of the course and weather conditions calculation.
- A limit of Net Double Bogey on the maximum hole score (for handicapping purposes only). Net Double Bogey will replace the existing Equitable Stroke Control (ESC) procedure for determining maximum hole score.
- A maximum Handicap Index of 54.0, regardless of gender, to encourage more golfers to measure and track their performance to increase their enjoyment of the game.

This feedback has helped shape the WHS, which has been developed by the USGA and the R&A with support from each handicapping authority as well as the Japan Golf Association and Golf Canada.

Acceptable Scores for Posting

A score is acceptable for handicap purposes if the round has been played:

- Over at least the minimum number of holes required. To post an 18-hole score, 14 or more holes must be played. To post a 9-hole score, 7 or more holes must be played.
- On a golf course with a valid Course and Slope Rating, whether at home course, away course, or out of country.
- On a golf course during its active season. (April 15th to Oct 15th in Ontario)
- In the company of at least one other person.
- Scores in all authorized formats of play. Authorized formats are Individual stroke play, Four-Ball stroke play, Individual match play, Four-Ball match play,
- By the Rules of Golf.

Player's Responsibilities

- Act with integrity by following the *Rules of Handicapping* and to refrain from using, or circumventing, the *Rules of Handicapping* for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage.
- Attempt to make the best score possible at each hole.
- Submit *acceptable scores* for handicap purposes as soon as possible after the round is completed and before midnight local time.
- Submit all acceptable scores to provide reasonable evidence of their demonstrated ability.
- Play by the Rules of Golf.
- Certify the scores of fellow players.

Maximum Hole Score

- For a player with no established handicap index the hole maximum score is limited to par + 5.
- For a player with an established handicap index the hole maximum score is limited to net double bogey, calculated as follows: Par for the hole + 2 + handicap strokes received on the hole.

Holes Not Played or Completed

- For holes not played (ie: fading light, bad weather, player injury or illness, match finishing before final hole), provided the minimum number of holes were played, enter net par.
- For holes not completed (ie: result of hole has already been decided or hole has been conceded in match play), enter your most likely score from the point you picked up (ie: ball lies on putting green within 5 ft from hole add 1 stroke. If ball lies between 5ft and 20 yds from hole add 2 or 3 strokes. If ball lies more than 20 yds from hole add 3 or 4 strokes.).

Handicap Index Calculation

- Average the lowest 8 of the most recent 20 Score Differentials (which include any adjustments for exceptional scores and/or a Committee review) and round to the nearest tenth.
- Compute the difference between the average of the lowest 8 Score Differentials and the Low Handicap Index.
 - If the difference is greater than 3, the soft cap calculation is applied, the value above 3.0 is restricted to 50% of the increase.
 - If the difference is greater than 5 after application of the soft cap, then the hard cap is applied, which restricts the increase to no more than 5.0 strokes above their Low Handicap Index.

Low Handicap Index

- The lowest Handicap Index achieved by a player during the 365-day period (one year) preceding the day on which the most recent score in their scoring record was played.

Exceptional Scores

- Score Differential of 7.0 - 9.9 lower than handicap index will force a reduction of -1.0
- Score Differential of 10.0 or more lower than handicap index will force a reduction of -2.0
- A reduction can be applied based on a single exceptional score.
- Reductions for multiple exceptional scores are applied cumulatively.
- A reduction is automatically applied within the calculation of a player's updated Handicap Index following the submission of an exceptional score.
- A reduction for an exceptional score is applied by adjusting each of the most recent 20 Score Differentials recorded in the player's scoring record, which includes the exceptional score. As a result, the impact of the reduction will remain after the next score is submitted but will dilute over time as new scores are submitted.

Course Handicap and Playing Handicap

- $\text{Course Handicap} = \text{Handicap Index} \times \text{Slope}/113 + \text{Course Rating} - \text{Par}$. Rounded to a whole number.
- $\text{Playing Handicap} = \text{Course Handicap} \times \text{Handicap Allowance}$.
- Recommended Handicap Allowances
 - Individual Stroke Play – 95%
 - Four Ball Stroke Play – 85%
 - Individual Match Play – 100%
 - Four Ball Match Play – 90%
 - Foursomes – 50% of combined team handicap