

WORLD HANDICAP FAQ'S

Q. Can a person obtain a handicap without being a member of a golf club?

A. One of the main principles within the Golf Canada Score Centre is that you must be a member of a golf club in order to obtain a Handicap Index. However, Golf Canada has a "Public Player" program that gives golfers the opportunity to play golf at different courses and still have the opportunity to obtain an official Handicap Index and be a member of Golf Canada and provincial golf association. To find out more [click here](#).

Q. What scores are acceptable for posting purposes?

A. With the goal of making Handicapping inclusive and accessible, scores from a variety of playing formats are acceptable, providing golfers with an accurate record of their demonstrated ability. 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, 7-13 holes must be played.
- Those playing a 12-hole round will post a 9-hole score. 3 bonus holes will not be posted.
- 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.
- In the company of at least one other person.
- Scores in all authorized formats of play under the Rules of Golf.

Q. What score do I post if I am conceded a stroke in match play?

A. If a player starts but does not complete a hole or is conceded a stroke, that player shall record for handicap purposes their **most likely score**. The **most likely score** consists of the number of strokes already taken (including any penalty strokes incurred during play of the hole) plus the number of strokes the player would most likely require completing the hole from that position. **Most Likely Scores** should be determined on any hole in accordance with the following guidelines.

Number of holes played	Scaling up	What score(s) to record for holes not played
At least X holes*	Scale up to 9-hole score	Add <i>net par</i> (or equivalent Stableford points).
At least Y holes**	Scale up to 18-hole score	Add <i>net par</i> plus one additional stroke for the first hole not played (or equivalent Stableford points).
At least Z holes***	Scale up to 18-hole score	Add <i>net par</i> (or equivalent Stableford points).

Q. What score do I post for a hole not played?

A. If a player does not play a hole or plays it other than under the Rules of Golf (except for preferred lies), their score for that hole for handicap purposes shall be "Net Par". Net Par is calculated as the Par of the hole plus any strokes that the golfer gives/receives.



Example: A player with a Course Handicap of 10 receives a handicap stroke on the first 10 allocated handicap-stroke holes. If the player does not play the sixth allocated stroke hole (a par 4) because of construction on the green, the player shall record a Net Par of 5 for handicap purposes.

Q. We've made changes to our course and/or don't think our Course Ratings are correct. What do we do?

A. All Course Ratings are determined and issued by your provincial golf association. A club may never rate its own course or make adjustments to the course rating you have been issued. If you have made temporary (e.g. temporary tees/greens) or permanent changes to your golf course your club should notify the provincial golf association.

In the case of temporary changes, the association will decide whether scores made under those conditions will be accepted for handicap purposes and whether the Course or Slope rating should be modified temporarily. If you have made permanent changes to your course, the course will be re-rated by the provincial association.

Q. Does Golf Canada provide handicap calculation software?

A. Yes, all member clubs are entitled to utilize the internet-based Golf Canada Score Centre as a member service.

Q. We have several questions regarding Handicap & Course Rating systems. What do we do?

A. Your handicap committee will receive a copy of the Rules of Handicapping in 2020. Please note, with COVID-19, there may be a delay in receiving your copy. If you have any other questions, please call our toll-free Handicap Help Desk 1-800-263-0009 ext. 399.

Q. Should I post the scores from my winter vacation?

A. If the round(s) played were in an area observing an Active Handicap Season then you must post the score(s). Most of the southern United States observe a year-round Active Season, but you can confirm the Active Season for where you are playing by calling the State golf association for that area.

Q. What are the Active Handicap Seasons for posting rounds played in Canada?

BC = Mar.1 – Nov.15 AB = Mar.1 – Oct.31 SK = Apr.15 – Oct.31 MB = Apr.15 – Oct.31	ON = Apr.15 – Oct.31 QC = Apr.15 – Oct.31 NS = Apr.15 – Oct.31	NB = May.1 – Oct.31 PE = Apr.16 – Nov.14 NL = Apr.1 – Nov. 30
--	--	---

Q. How soon after playing do I have to post my score for handicap purposes?

A. A player should submit their score as soon as possible on the day of play and before midnight local time. This ensures that your score is included in the analysis for the Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC).

Q. How do I posted a Tournament Score?

A. Under the World Handicap System, Tournament Scores will not be weighted the same way as they previously were. Now, any exceptional score (regardless of if it was made in a competitive or recreational round) could impact your Handicap Index to ensure that your Index is accurate based on your demonstrated playing ability.

WHS FAQ's from Golf Canada and Golf Saskatchewan – updated 2020-05-29



Q. Should only a percentage of a player's Course Handicap be used in competition?

A. Handicap Allowances are designed to provide equity for players of all levels of ability in each format of play (over both 9 Holes and 18 Holes). Handicap Allowances are applied to the Course Handicap, with the resulting number reflecting your "Playing Handicap". The full list of recommended Handicap Allowances is available in Appendix C of the Rules of Handicapping.

Q. Does my club have to have a Handicap Committee?

A. Yes. As per the Golf Canada Member Club Handicap License Agreement, in order to issue Handicap Indexes to its members, a club must have a Handicap Committee.

Q. How is a Course Handicap calculated?

A. The way that a Course Handicap is calculated has changed with the WHS. A player's Course Handicap is calculated as

$(\text{Handicap Index}) \times (\text{Slope Rating of the tee played} / 113) + (\text{Course Rating} - \text{Par})$

The resulting figure is rounded off to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward).

Q. In a match between a man and a woman, if a hole is par-5 for women and a par-4 for men and both players score a 4 on the hole, who wins the hole?

A. In match play, par is irrelevant. The player who scores the lowest on the hole wins the hole.

Q. What is the maximum handicap a person can have?

A. The maximum Handicap Index has changed. Where previously there were different values for men and women, now there is one maximum Handicap Index regardless of gender. The maximum Handicap Index is 54.0.

Note: A maximum Handicap Factor will convert to a Course Handicap that exceeds the max. on golf courses with a Slope Rating greater than 113.

Q. I've just played golf abroad. Can I post the scores for handicap purposes?

A. Only scores from courses with a Course and Slope Rating are eligible for handicap purposes. With the alignment of national golf associations/federations, we will see more and more courses with valid Course and Slope ratings. Please note that depending on the WHS launch date in each country, some courses may be delayed in being issued a Course and Slope Rating.

Q. How are 9-hole score combined to create an 18-hole score?

A. 9-hole scores are combined regardless of where they were played, i.e. a front nine score from one course will be combined with a front nine score from another course. The 18-hole combined score is the sum of the nine-hole Course Ratings and the average of the nine-hole Slope Ratings (.5 rounded up).

Q. How do I post a score for hole with a temporary green?

A. If the hole's character and playing length have not been altered and you can play the hole under the Rules of Golf, then you can post your actual score on the hole. Otherwise, you must post a Net Par for the hole.



Q. Can I post a score if I play alone?

A. No, a golfer cannot post a score for Handicap purposes if you are unaccompanied during a round.

Q. Can I post a score if I have played two balls?

A. No. A score made with either ball must not be posted as such scores are not made in accordance with the Rules of golf.

Q. How can I become Handicap Certified?

A. Each provincial golf association conducts a series of handicap seminars throughout the year. The seminars are generally 3 hours long, including a brief quiz. Upon passing the quiz an attendee is then considered handicap certified (every Golf Canada member club must have a representative attend a handicap seminar) and prepared to be part of the Handicap Committee at their club (every Golf Canada club must have a Handicap Committee). Golf Canada will also continue to offer an online certification program which members are able to register to take. The online Handicap Seminar is available now. To begin your World Handicap System Educational session, please click [here](#).

Q. What if I noticed a significant change in my Playing Handicap from 2019 to 2020 depending on the set of tees I/we are playing?

A. Under the new World Handicap System, a player's Course Handicap is now targeted to PAR where it used to target the Course Rating (although many players THOUGHT it targeted par). In a specific case from the Wascana Country Club, the members were inquiring as to why the Playing Handicap was lower. The Handicap Par for the Blue/White Hybrid shows as 73 and the course rating as 70.1 so the new (Course Rating - Par) part of the Course Rating formula rounds to -3. Therefore, the Course Handicaps for all men playing the Blue/White Tees will be about three strokes lower than what it was before the WHS came onto effect. Note that the actual difference is -2.9 and that the rounding takes place after the evaluation of the entire formula so the change may not be exactly -3 for every player. One way of helping a player understand the difference is to point out that under the old system, the Course Handicap on this set of tees was the number of strokes they would need to shoot a net 70, where now it is the number of strokes they need to shoot a net 73.

Set your Target

Your target score is the score needed to “play to your handicap.” Since your Course Handicap changes from each set of tees, so does your target score.

$$\text{Target Score} = \text{Par} + \text{Course Handicap}$$

Course Info				15.0 Handicap Index Player		Target Score	
Tees	Course Rating	Slope Rating	Par	Course Handicap			
Green	72.0	128	70	19	=		89
White	70.0	125	70	17	=		87
Silver	68.0	120	70	14	=		84

As you can see, when you play a more difficult set of tees, you'll be expected to shoot a higher score!

10

If you have any additional questions, please contact members@golfcanada.ca or call 1-800-263-0009 x 399.

WHS FAQ's from Golf Canada and Golf Saskatchewan – updated 2020-05-29

