

FAQs for USGA Implementation of the World Handicap System (WHS)

1. What is the World Handicap System (WHS) all about?

Golf already has a single set of playing Rules, a single set of equipment Rules and a single set of Rules of Amateur Status overseen by the USGA and The R&A. Yet, today there are six different handicap systems used around the world. Each is well developed and successfully provides equity for play locally, but each of the different systems produces slightly differing results. The WHS unifies the six systems into a single system that:

- Enables golfers of different ability to play and compete on a fair and equitable basis, in any format, on any course, anywhere around the world;
- Is easy to understand and implement, without sacrificing accuracy; and
- Meets the varied needs and expectations of golfers, golf clubs and golf authorities all around the world and is adaptable to suit all golfing cultures.
- The WHS will encompass both the Rules of Handicapping and the Course Rating System (formerly the USGA Course Rating and Slope System).

2. What are the benefits of the World Handicap System?

As the world becomes a smaller place with a much greater frequency of international play (as demonstrated by golf returning to the Olympics in 2016), we believe the development of a single handicap system will result in easier administration of international events and, potentially, allow National Associations more opportunity to focus attention on golf development and strategic planning to support the sport. It would also provide the opportunity to evaluate de-personal golfing data to help monitor the health of the game.

How will it impact my handicap?

1. I see that my Handicap Index may change under the World Handicap System. Why?

Your new Handicap Index in 2020 is based on the modernized Rules of Handicapping and more responsive to good scores by averaging your eight best scores out of your most recent 20 (currently, it's 10 out of 20 with a .96 multiplier). In most cases for golfers in the U.S., it will change less than one stroke. So, if you notice that your Handicap Index is different in January despite not having played, this is why!

Metro Seniors will use the best 7 out of your most recent 16 scores for your Handicap Index (Guide) calculation. Metro Seniors will NOT use the .96 multiplier, but will use 100% of the Handicap Index result.

Note: Maximum Handicap Indices (Guides) will now be **54.0** rather than the previous **36.4** for men and **40.4** for women.

2. I read that there is a new Course Handicap calculation that includes Course Rating and Par. What does that mean for me?

Now that Course Handicap is tied to Course Rating and par (historically it has represented the number of strokes needed to play to the Course Rating), your Course Handicap will vary more from tee to tee than it did in the past. For you to play to your handicap, your target score for the day will be par plus Course Handicap.

There is a new formula for calculating your Course Handicap:

Handicap Index * (Course Slope/113) + (Course Rating – Course Par)

This formula will be used for both the Back and Front tees.

Example: Course Slope: Back 112 Forward 107

Course Rating: Back 67.0 Forward 65.0

Course Par 72

Handicap Index 26.4

Back Tee $26.4 * (112/113) + (67 - 72) = 21$

$26.4 * 0.9915 + (-5) = 21$

Forward Tee $26.4 * (107/113) + (65 - 72) = 18$

$26.4 * 0.94690 + (-5) = 18$

Note: Because the new Course Handicap formula has been changed to use Par, your handicaps will generally be lower than last year for a particular golf course. This will have no impact on the competition within flights since everybody is playing to the same formula.

3. I play in a group where we all play from different tees. Do we still have to make a Course Handicap adjustment when we play?

Under the current system, a Course Handicap adjustment is required when players compete from different tees since each set of tees has a different Course Rating. Under the Rules of Handicapping, your Course Handicap factors in both Course Rating and par – meaning an adjustment is only necessary when par is different – which will be far less likely!

OGS will handle this for our Handicap calculation for our weekly tournaments. Special Events will have everybody play from the same tee so no adjustment will be required.

4. Let's say I have a Course Handicap of 9 and the 2nd-ranked Stroke Index hole is a par 4. I hit my drive out of bounds and continued to struggle on the hole so I picked up. Will I be able to post a score for handicap purposes?

Whenever the format of play allows, you are encouraged to pick up once you've reached your maximum hole score for handicap purposes – which is a *Net Double Bogey*. **Metro Seniors has a 9 stroke max per hole! The Net Double Bogey is used by OGS for handicapping purposes only!**

5. I normally post my scores for the week on Sunday night to make sure they're included in the next revision. Can I still do this under the Rules of Handicapping?

Under the Rules of Handicapping, you should submit your scores the day you play for two reasons:

1. Daily Revisions – Each time you submit a score, that score will be factored into the calculation of your Handicap Index for use the very next day. **OGS calculates net Handicap Indices (Guides) as soon as the official scorecards are received.**
2. *Playing Conditions Calculation* – It uses scores submitted each day to determine any adjustment for abnormal playing conditions. **Metro Seniors will not use the Playing Conditions Calculations.**