

Some Key Elements of the USGA Handicap System

- Y An 18-hole score shall be posted for all rounds of 13 holes or more, even if you pick up on some holes.
- Y A 9-hole score shall be posted for rounds of 7 to 12 holes.
- Y Rounds played at all other courses shall be posted as well.
- Y Posted scores must be reduced when you have an unusually high number of strokes on any hole. This procedure is called Equitable Stroke Control (ESC). Details will be found at the end of this document.
- Y Tournament scores must be identified by a "T" when they are posted. If you are not sure if your round is a Tournament event, ask your pro of Handicap Chair.
- Y Your handicap index may be reduced by the Handicap Committee if your tournament scores are consistently better than your scores in informal play.
- Y The USGA requires that each club have a Handicap Committee to supervise the system and ensure that all scores are posted.
- Y The Handicap Committee may adjust the index of those players who do not post their scores or ignore basic handicap rules. Posting will be monitored by the Committee. A penalty score may be assessed if scores are not posted in a reasonable amount of time.
- Y Scoring records of members will be accessible for peer review. Scoring records of all of your Club members may be viewed at the handicap computer in the golf shop, or on the USGA's website www.ghin.com.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. Each month, the computer shows my "Home Handicap" and my handicap index. Why do I need to know my handicap index?
 - A. Under the USGA Slope System, your stroke allowance varies depending upon the course and the tees you play. So, unless you know your index, you will not be able to determine the number of strokes when playing from a set of tees other than your normal "Home Tees". Even at your own club you may be entitled to a different number of strokes when playing from a set of tees other than your normal Home tees.
 - Q. If I have an 18 handicap and only play 9 holes, must that score be posted?
 - A. Yes, if you play 9 holes, select the correct nine and the correct tee, and post them. This 9 hole score will be held in the computer and combined with the next 9 hole score you post; into an 18-hole score. It is marked with a "c" to denote that it is a combination score.
 - Q. When I play more than 13 holes, but do not finish the round, do I calculate my 18 hole score?
 - A. There are 3 steps to calculation:
 1. Total the strokes you used on the holes you played, remembering to use Equitable Stroke Control
 2. Add to that total the total par for the holes you did not play
 3. Then add the number of handicap strokes to which you are entitled on the holes you did not play.
 - Q. If I play less than 13 holes, am I required to post a score?
 - A. If you play between 7 & 12 holes, you are required to post a 9 hole score. If you play 10, 11, or 12 holes, post your score for the first 9 holes played. If you play 7 or 8 holes, follow the three steps above to determine your 9 hole score. If you play less than 7 holes, do not post a score.
 - Q. When I "pick up" on a hole, how do I score it?
 - A. Record the most likely score you would have scored if you would have finished the hole. (Remember to use Equitable Stroke Control). Most likely score is valid only for handicap purposes.
 - Q. Should a "most likely score" score be recorded on a hole not finished in a better ball event?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. When I play a course in a foreign country do I post that score?
 - A. Maybe. The USGA has licensed the Golf Associations of Canada, Mexico, and many other countries to use the Slope System. Therefore, if the course you played has a Course and Slope Rating, the score should be posted. If you are in a country not using the Slope System, the score should not be posted.
 - Q. How often is my handicap index revised?
 - A. In general it is done every two weeks from April through October and once a month from November through March. A Revision schedule is posted at your club, or on the RIGA's website www.rigalinks.org.
- Handicap indexes established under the USGA Handicap System are the backbone of amateur golf. They enable all golfers to compete at our club equitably with one another and with the help of the USGA Slope System, to play away from home with equal ease and equality.
- Please remember to post all of your scores and to adjust your scores, when appropriate, using the Equitable Stroke Control (ESC) as below:
- | Course Handicap | Max. # Posted on Any Hole |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 9 or less | Double Bogey |
| 10-19 | 7 |
| 20-29 | 8 |
| 30-39 | 9 |
| 40 or more | 10 |

About RIGA

The Rhode Island Golf Association is a non-profit organization founded in 1902 whose primary function is to promote the game of golf in Rhode Island and to serve the interest of its affiliated clubs and members.

To the best of our knowledge, there were ten founding member clubs – Agawam Hunt, Choppequonset GC, Long Meadow GC, Melrose GC, Mianatuck GC, The Misquamicut Club, Newport CC, Pawtucket CC, Quinnoequin GC and Wannamoissett CC. Of the original ten, five are still active among the current 48 member clubs.

The Association is operated by an Executive Committee and Operating Committee. The day-to-day operations are managed by an Executive Director and his staff.

The RIGA conducts 17 major tournaments each year, 16 of which are strictly for amateur golfers and include hundreds of competitors. The RIGA also conducts 26 Weekly Invitational tournaments each year which are open to all RIGA members.

As a local arm of the United States Golf Association (USGA), the RIGA provides handicapping services to its member clubs and course ratings services to all golf courses in Rhode Island. The RIGA also answers any inquiries regarding the Rules of Golf.

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**USGA HANDICAP
SYSTEM INFORMATION**