

What is the USGA Handicap Review Tools and how can it impact my scoring record?

The USGA Handicap Review Tool is used by the golf club's Handicap Committee to analyze all scores within the previous 365 days and is used to identify players who are scoring above or below their expected scoring range more often than anticipated or have other abnormalities within their scoring record. In these instances, a recommended adjustment to the player's Handicap Index is provided.

An adjustment will be applied only at the discretion of the Handicap Committee. If the adjustment is applied, the player's Handicap Index will be updated to reflect the adjustment and will be identified with an "M" next to their Handicap Index, e.g., 14.3M.

There is a player at my club who always tends to play well during net events and wins often. Are there any provisions in place to ensure that everyone is playing on a fair level?

There are several safeguards to ensure the integrity of a player's Handicap Index® – including a soft cap and hard cap that limits extreme upward movement over a rolling 365-day time frame and an exceptional score reduction that reduces a player's Handicap Index each time they post a score that produces a Score Differential™ at least 7.0 strokes below their Handicap Index.

A club's Handicap Committee, along with the local Allied Golf Association, also has access to reporting tools that provide additional insight.

The Committee in charge of a competition can protect the field by modifying a player's Playing Handicap™ before or between rounds when appropriate.

Is there a limit on how much a handicap index can increase?

To prevent extreme upward movement of a Handicap Index, every time it is updated, the new value is compared to your Low Handicap Index™ and:

- If the result is more than 3.0 strokes higher, a soft cap will be applied to slow additional upward movement by 50%.
- If the result is more than 5.0 strokes higher (after the application of the soft cap), a hard cap will be applied to restrict any additional upward movement beyond 5.0 strokes.

For example: Player A has a Low Handicap Index of 10.0 and a current 8 of 20 calculation of 13.4. Since any upward movement beyond 3.0 strokes is reduced by 50%, the player's Handicap Index calculates at 13.2.

The Handicap Committee at the player's club can override the soft cap or hard cap if circumstances such as injury or illness exist. (Rule 5.8, Rules of Handicapping)

What is the Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) and how does it work?

At the end of each day, the playing conditions calculation takes place automatically to determine if scores made at the course were significantly higher or lower than the expected scores of the players who made them, primarily due to weather and/or course set up.

If scores were abnormally low or high, a PCC adjustment between -1 and +3 will be applied in the calculation of Score Differentials™ of everyone who played that day. A negative (-) adjustment means the course played easier than expected and a positive (+) adjustment means the course played more difficult than expected. A PCC of 0 means the course played as expected, which will be the case on most days.

The PCC:

- Uses scoring data so no action is required by the club/course staff or golfer (except for posting scores),
- Includes only scores made by players with a Handicap Index® of 36.0 or below,
- Considers both 9-hole and 18-hole scores in the calculation, and
- Only takes place if at least 8 scores were posted on a given day.

(Rule 5.6, Rules of Handicapping)