

USGA Handicap System™ Changes, 2016-2017 Reference Document

Sections

Section 2

- Amend the definition of “Par” using the term scratch golfer

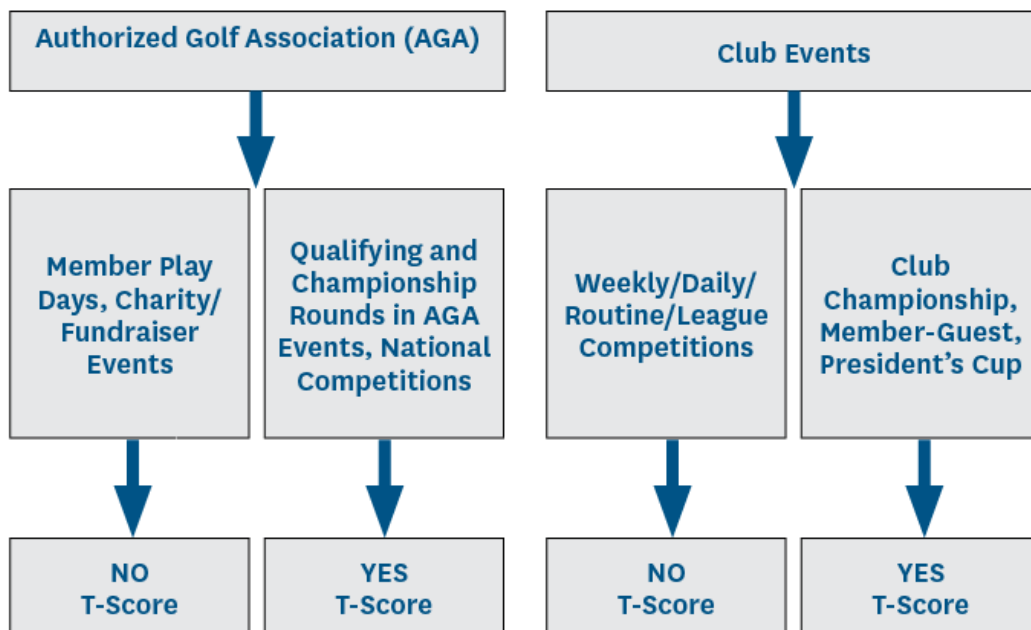
Use of the term scratch golfer is consistent with the definition of scratch golfer in the USGA Course Rating System™.

- Amended the definition of “Score Type” by removing Internet (I)

Internet score posting is a means of posting and not a type.

- Amend the definition of “Tournament Score” to clarify that T-Scores need to be significant events

Amended definition for clarity, added note explaining the consequence of over-designating T-Scores, and inserted a new chart with examples. The note cautions that the consequence of designating too many competition rounds as T-Scores is that the chart value in the Handicap Reduction Table will be diluted. New chart as follows:



Section 4-2

- Amended heading to: Holes Not Played or Not Played Under the Rules of Golf

The term principles have been omitted throughout the USGA Handicap System to align better with “The Rules of Golf.” The USGA Handicap System relies on the player following the Rules of Golf and will become increasingly important as the USGA Handicap System evolves into the initial phase of a possible World Handicap System.

Section 5-1a

- Amend wording for Section 5-1a to eliminate “Principles” of as tied to the Rules of Golf

Amended to clarify that holes must be played in accordance with the Rules of Golf.

Section 5-1d

- Amended to improve clarity and provide examples for whether a score is acceptable for handicap purposes if a player has been disqualified

Amended to provide guidance on whether a score is acceptable for handicap purposes if a player is disqualified from a competition. For example, a score is acceptable if the player fails to hole out, fails to sign scorecard, or the player refuses to apply a Rule in stroke play that affects the rights of another player under Rule 3-4.

However, if the breach is determined to provide an advantage for the player (i.e., Rules 1-2, 1-3, subsequent offenses to Rule 14-3, etc.) the score is not acceptable for handicap purposes.

Section 5-1e

- Added reference to a multiple breach of Rule 14-3, playing alone, and intentional breach of a Rule as an unacceptable score

(v) When a player uses non-conforming clubs, non-conforming balls, or tees; or when a player incurs a second breach of Rule 14-3.

(vi) When a player plays alone;

(vii) When a player ignores one or more Rules of Golf and fails to post an adjusted hole score as required under Section 4-1 and 4-2, or fails to record the appropriate penalty for a breach of rule. For example, If a player anchored the club while making a stroke during a round and did not record a penalty for doing so (See Rule 14-1b), the score would not be reflected as playing under the Rules of Golf and therefore would be unacceptable for handicap purposes.

This was amended to reflect the change in Rule 14-1b and the change in the penalty for a breach of Rule 14-3. Playing alone was added as an unacceptable score to enhance the integrity of the USGA Handicap System.

Section 6-3

- Amended accessibility of scoring records

Scoring records can easily be accessed via a computer/electronic version and need not be a printed list.

Section 8-4c(iii)

- Amended so temporary and permanent disability modifications will be required to be displayed with an “M”

Designation as a modified Handicap Index[®] simplifies the process for the Handicap Committee and player by having one letter designation for all modifications, and will allow the modified Handicap Index to be used outside the player’s home club (i.e., no longer a local handicap).

Section 9-5

- Added new subsection, Flights

This was added to provide recommendations for establishing flights for stroke play competitions and match play draws. Also includes the General Numerical Draw chart.

Section 9-6

- Moved “How to Decide Ties in Handicap Competitions” to Section 9-6

This was moved to accommodate new section title for flights.

Decisions and Appendices

Decision 4-2/1, Explanation of “Holes Not Played” under “The Rules of Golf” in accordance with the USGA Handicap System (REVISED)

Revised with principles being omitted and provides three separate examples.

Decision 4-2/2, Procedure for Applying Section 4-2 for a Player with a Plus Course Handicap[™] (NEW)

Decision clarifies procedure for the player with a plus Course Handicap.

Decision 5-1a/2, Scores Made When Playing Alone (REMOVED)

Removed to reflect the change in Section 5-1e.

Decision 5-1e/2, Scores Made Using a Distance-Measuring Device or Multi-Functional Device (REVISED)

This was revised to be consistent with Rule 14-3 of “The Rules of Golf.”

Decision 5-1e/3, Scores Made using an Artificial Device, Unusual Equipment, or use of any Equipment in an Abnormal manner (REVISED)

This was also revised to be consistent with the change to Rule 14-3 of "The Rules of Golf." A breach of Rule 14-1, and any subsequent breach of Rule 14-3, is an unacceptable score for handicap purposes.

Decision 6-1/1, Procedure for Player who Discontinues Playing Golf for Lengthy Period and Then Resumes Playing (REVISED)

Revised to provide clarity on procedure to use based on the availability of the previous scoring record.

Decision 8-4c/1, Treatment of Player with Temporary Disability (REVISED)

As noted in Section 8-4c(iii) above, also revised this decision so it is no longer a local handicap but a modified Handicap Index.

Decision 8-4c/2, Treatment of Player with Permanent Disability (REVISED)

As noted in Section 8-4c(iii) above, also revised this decision so a modified Handicap Index can be issued in the interim (no longer only a local handicap) before posting five scores to establish a new Handicap Index.

Appendix E

- Revised table

Based on over 7.3 million actual scores, including non-tournament scores, the table was revised, and the range was expanded, to the probability of shooting 3 over to 12 under a player's handicap. The values in the table are based on empirical data disseminated from the USGA Handicap Research Team.