

The USGA Handicap system depends on players posting all of their acceptable scores to accurately determine their handicap index. So, which scores are acceptable for handicap purposes and which are not, and how do you handle it when strokes are conceded, holes are not finished, or other unusual situations?

1. What scores are acceptable to post?

- A. Casual and Competitive Scores made in most types of stroke play and match play rounds are acceptable when you are playing your own ball and a majority of the holes are played in accordance with the principles of the rules of golf. (See #2 & #3 below)
- B. If 13 or more holes are played, you should post an 18-hole score. If 7 to 12 holes are played, you should post a 9-hole score. (see #3 below) 9-hole scores will be added together to make a 18-hole score.
- C. You may post scores made at your home course as well as any other rated courses you play (called Away Scores).
- D. You may post scores if you play by yourself.

2. How to handle unfinished holes or conceded strokes:

If you start a hole but do not complete it (you pick up, or a stroke or a hole is conceded), either in stroke play or match play you must record the score that you "Most Likely Would Have Made" on that hole, as long as it does not exceed your maximum under Equitable Stroke Control (see #5 below). You are the judge as to what your *Most Likely* score is, based on your game. Some examples: 1. Your opponent concedes a 3 foot putt for par to you. If you feel you would make that putt most of the time, you should record a par. 2. You have a 20-footer for bogey, which you pick up because your opponent is already in for par. In most cases you would two-putt from there. You should record a double bogey for handicap purposes. 3. You have a 6 handicap. You have just hit your approach shot into the water on #9. Out of frustration you get in your cart and go to hole #10. You can still post your most likely score on that hole. (your 2<sup>nd</sup> shot went in the water, you would drop 3, hit your 4<sup>th</sup> from the bottom of the hill onto the green, *probably*, and two-putt for an x-6. You would be disqualified if you did this during a stroke-play tournament, but you could still post this score for handicap purposes. Remember, you determine what your most likely score is, based on your game.

3. How to handle holes not played at all, or holes not played under the rules:

Scores for holes not played or not played under the rules must be recorded as Par plus any handicap strokes you are entitled to receive on the unplayed holes. An X is put before these scores. For example: a male player with a handicap of 13 stops playing after 16 holes due to darkness. Hole #17 is a par 5 and the #12 handicap hole, where he would normally get a stroke. He would record an x-6 on hole #17 (*par plus the handicap stroke*). Hole #18 is the #16 handicap hole. He would not normally receive a stroke here, so he records an x-4.

4. What scores not to post:

- When fewer than 7 holes are played
- When a majority of the holes are not played in accordance with the principles of the rules of golf (playing Preferred Lies is OK)
- When played on an unrated course or a course less than 3,000 yds.
- When played with non-conforming equipment or training aids.
- Scores made while playing in a Scramble, Alternate Shot or similar format that does not involve playing your own ball in accordance with the rules.
- If you play two balls throughout the round, you may not post either score. (Continued).....

**5. Equitable Stroke Control (ESC):**

All scores for handicap purposes, including Tournament Scores, are subject to Equitable Stroke Control. ESC reduces high hole scores in order to make handicaps more representative of a player's potential ability. It gives you a maximum score that you can take on a hole based on your handicap:

<u>Course Handicap</u>	<u>Maximum Number on any Hole</u>
9 or less	Double Bogey
10 through 19	7
20 through 29	8
30 through 39	9
40 or more	10

\*Note: ESC is done solely for posting your score on the handicap system. It has no affect on your score for a tournament, or on any games or wagers you have with your golfing group.

**6. Tournament Scores:**

Always a topic of debate, the idea behind identifying tournament scores is to have your most important rounds carry more weight when it comes to figuring your handicap. It also discourages someone from padding their handicap, then playing to their true ability during a tournament, when it counts.

Tournament scores are those made in a competition organized and conducted by a committee. The competition must identify a winner, and must be played under the principles of the rules of golf. If scores are to be posted as Tournament Scores, the Tournament Committee should announce that fact. Both Match Play and Stroke Play scores can be entered as Tournament scores (with the adjustments made in #2, #3 & #5 above).

Tournament scores stay in a player's scoring record for one year and are used in calculating your handicap if they are among your 10 best scores. Your handicap may also be reduced by the committee for "Exceptional Tournament Performance".

When posting a Tournament score, before you hit the final "Post" button, the screen will give you a chance to check all of your information. Here you may change the date, type of round, score, # of holes, and tees played. To post a Tournament score press the "Type" button. On this screen select Tournament if the round was played here, or Tournament Away if the round was played somewhere else. Tournament scores will have a "T" next to them when posted.

Conclusion: I realize there is a lot of information here. Feel free to see me if you need something clarified or if you need help posting scores. - Andy