

WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM



in association with
USGA®

Treatment of Nine-Hole Scores

USGA Handicap System (pre-2020): To submit a nine-hole score, a player must play 7 to 12 holes under the Rules of Golf. When 13 or more holes are played, the score submitted qualifies as an 18-hole score.

A player can have a Handicap Index and/or a nine-hole Handicap Index (N).

- For players with a Handicap Index, nine-hole scores are combined in the order that they are received and used to produce an 18-hole Handicap Differential.
- For players with a nine-hole Handicap Index (N), the most recent 20 nine-hole Handicap Differentials are used in the calculation of their nine-hole Handicap Index (N).

Rule Change for 2020: To submit a nine-hole score, a player must play 7 to 13 holes under the Rules of Golf. When 14 or more holes are played, the score submitted qualifies as an 18-hole score.

- For players with a Handicap Index, nine-hole scores are combined in the order that they are received and used to produce an 18-hole Score Differential.
- A nine-hole Handicap Index (N) will no longer exist.

Reasons for Change:

- To ensure that each player has one Handicap Index and one Scoring Record under the World Handicap System.
 - Under the USGA Handicap System, a player can maintain both a Handicap Index and a Handicap Index (N).
- The method for calculating a Handicap Index will be the same worldwide, and this applies whether a player submits all 9-hole scores, 18-hole scores, or a combination of both.
 - A player's Handicap Index will be interchangeable for both 9-hole and 18-hole play.
- To enhance the integrity of the Handicap Index calculation.
 - When a player with a nine-hole Handicap Index (N) competes in an 18-hole competition, doubling their nine-hole Handicap Index (N) is not always fair – as the player(s) doubling their nine-hole Handicap Index (N) are sometimes at a disadvantage and receive one or two fewer strokes than they would with an 18-hole Handicap Index.