

MGC Welcome Pack, part 4: Handicaps Explained

For an explanation of the terms **highlighted bold**, refer to the [WHS Definitions page](#).

What is a handicap and why do I need one?

A golfer's handicap is a number which defines their skill and ability level.

A handicap gives all standards of golfers an opportunity to compete against one another on an equal level. You require an official handicap to be able to play in club competitions.

How do I obtain my first handicap?

New members who have not previously held an official handicap are required to submit cards marked “*For New Handicap*” from 54 holes of golf played at Mapperley. This may consist of any mix of 9 hole or 18 hole scores, though the preference is for 3 x 18 hole scores.

The cards must be signed by the member seeking a handicap and marked and countersigned by another member with a current handicap. Your initial **Handicap Index** will be based on these scores.

After the allocation of your initial handicap, you are required to submit scores from a further 3 rounds (9 hole or 18 hole) played in club competitions before you are eligible to win prizes in competitions at Mapperley.

Please make it known to the Ladies Treasurer when you are playing your initial 3 competition rounds and you will not be charged an entry fee.

How do I improve my handicap?

Most scores submitted in Singles competitions count for your Handicap. You may also submit scores from **General Play** as long as you register your intention to do so before starting your round.

Each time you submit a new **Acceptable Score** your handicap will be re-calculated. Once you have posted 20 scores you have a fully developed **Scoring Record** and your handicap will be calculated from the average of your best 8 scores from the last 20 rounds.

How many Handicap Strokes do I receive?

Your **Course Handicap** varies depending on the difficulty of the course relative to a benchmark course of average difficulty, as determined by the **Course Rating**, **Slope Rating** and **Par** of the course.

Your **Playing Handicap** depends on the **Handicap Allowance** for the format being played, e.g. 95% in Individual singles play and 85% in some team competitions.

You won't have to perform these calculations yourself because there are look-up tables around the clubhouse and on the website, as well as apps that you can download to your phone.

Further Information

There is much more information about handicaps in the [Rules of Handicapping](#) section of the website.