

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.

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?

The number of strokes that you receive on any course varies depending on the difficulty of the course relative to a benchmark course of average difficulty, as determined by the **Slope Rating**.

- The Slope Rating of the Mapperley red tees (from which most ladies golf played) is 128 for ladies.
- The Slope Rating the Mapperley yellow tees is 137 for ladies.
- The Slope Rating of the benchmark course, against which all courses are compared, is 113.

Your **Course Handicap** is determined by multiplying your Handicap Index by the Slope Rating of the course and dividing by 113.

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.

Taking the example of a lady with a Handicap Index of **32.5** playing from the red tees:

Course Handicap	=	$32.5 \times 128 / 113$	=	37
Playing Handicap (singles)	=	$37 \times 95\%$	=	35
Playing Handicap (team)	=	$37 \times 85\%$	=	31

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 [World Handicap System](#) section of the website.