

The Golf Croquet Handicap System 2014

Golf croquet handicaps are allotted to each player according to their ability, ranging from zero for the strongest players up to 12 for the weakest players. (Similarly to golf, the lower the handicap, the better the player). Your club handicapper will provide you with a handicap card recording your registration number, name, club and initial handicap and index.

Index points are linked to handicaps – you gain (or lose) these points by competing in officially organised competitions (**results in both singles and doubles games affect index points**).

Your handicap index points show how close you are to breaking your handicap – either to a better (lower) handicap, or to a higher (weaker) handicap. If your index points remain stable mid-way between the trigger points (shown below in Table C) for your handicap, then you are playing consistently to this handicap level.

Your Player's Index is recorded on your GC Handicap Card, and will change after each competitive game (eg tournament, pennants; Club competitions). When the index changes sufficiently, it will trigger a change in handicap.

NOTE Players with handicaps 10, 11 and 12 do not lose index points – however, their successful opponents gain index points.

When playing in an officially organised competition or SACA Pennants Match – **Players** will need to:-

- Complete an accurate entry on their Handicap Card for each competitive game played, as soon as possible after the game ends.
- If their handicap changes as a result of any game played during an event players are to have the Official Handicapper (State, Club or Tournament Handicapper) check and sign their card confirming the change **before playing any other games or as soon as practical**.
- Immediately advise their Club Handicapper of handicap changes.

A change to your handicap takes effect immediately – for your next game the index change will be calculated on your new handicap. If you lose your next game and drop back to below the trigger point you just passed, your handicap does not change. There is a 50-point “buffer” (for handicaps of 4 to 9) and your handicap does not change unless you drop to 50 below or increase to 50 above your current handicap trigger point.

Filling out the handicap card

- 3rd column “H or L Game”: L = Level play, H = Handicap play (extra turns apply)
- 4th column “S or D Game”: S = singles, D = Doubles
- 5th column “Your Hcap”: this is your handicap in a Singles game, and the combined handicap of you and your partner in a Doubles game
- 6th column “Opponents Name(s)”: Name of opponent in singles; names of both opponents in doubles game
- 7th column “Opp Hcap”: Opponent's handicap in singles; the combined handicap of your 2 opponents in a Doubles game
- 8th column “Game Score”: Always put your score first, eg 7/5 if you have won the game with 7 hoops to your opponent(s) 5; or 4/7 if you lost scoring 4 hoops to your opponent(s) 7.
- 9th column “Index change”: Calculated as below.
- 10th column “New Index”: Index after index points have been added or subtracted
NOTE Handicaps 10, 11 and 12 do not lose index points
- 11th column “Initial”: you (or your partner in Doubles games) initial your opponent(s) card(s) and vice versa.

Gaining and losing index points

When you play competitive golf croquet games, you will gain or lose index points; in Doubles games you will gain or lose approximately half the points you would in a Singles game. In South Australia, almost all competitions are *level* play, as opposed to *handicap* play. In *level* play, the number of index points gained or lost depends on the difference in handicap between the players.

NOTE Players with handicaps 10, 11 and 12 do not lose index points – however, their successful opponents gain index points.

Index changes in LEVEL Singles games

In level singles games the winner's index increases and the loser's index decreases by the amount shown in Table D. If you win against a player with a lower handicap, you are rewarded with a larger gain of index points, however, if you lose, as may be more likely when playing someone who is supposedly better than you, you will lose fewer points and your opponent also gains fewer index points. For example, a player with a handicap of 9 losing to an opponent with a handicap of 7 will lose 8 points and the opponent will gain 8 points. If the player with the 9 handicap wins the match, the index gain will be 12 points, and the opponent (handicap 7) will lose 12 index points.

Table D: Index Changes for Level Singles Play

		Loser's Handicap												
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Winner's Handicap	0	10	6	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	1	14	10	7	4	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
	2	16	13	10	7	5	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1
	3	18	16	13	10	8	7	6	5	4	4	3	3	2
	4	19	17	15	12	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	4	3
	5	19	17	16	13	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	4
	6	19	18	16	14	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
	7	19	18	17	15	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
	8	19	19	17	16	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
	9	19	19	18	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
	10	19	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8
	11	19	19	19	17	16	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9
12	19	19	19	18	17	16	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	

Index changes in LEVEL doubles games.

In level doubles games the combined handicaps are found for each side. The difference is found, and then table E shows the points gained by both winners and the points lost by both losers.

Table E: Index Changes for Level Doubles Play

Difference in the Combined Handicaps	Larger Combined Handicaps Won	Smaller Combined Handicaps Won
0 to 3	5	5
4 to 7	6	4
8 to 11	7	3
12 to 15	8	2
16 to 24	9	1

For example:

Mary (9) and Bill (7) (= 16 combined handicap) are playing against Jack (5) and Jane (12) (= 17 combined handicap). The difference between the two combined handicaps is 1.

If Mary and Bill win, they will each gain 5 index points, and Jack and Jane will each lose 5 index points –

However, Jane will not have 5 points deducted from her index because she is a 12 handicap.

Index changes in HANDICAP Singles games

In HANDICAP games the winner's index increases and the loser's index decreases by 10.

The extra turns that the player with the higher handicap receives are intended to give each player an equal chance of winning, and so the reward for winning or penalty for losing is the same for each player.

Index changes in HANDICAP doubles games.

In level doubles games the points gained are shared by both winners and the points lost are shared by both losers.

This means that both winners gain 5 points, and both losers lose 5 points - **NOTE Players with handicaps 10, 11 and 12 do not lose index points, but their successful opponents gain index points.**

When handicaps change

Golf Croquet Handicaps change when the player's index points reach a trigger point for a handicap which is not their current handicap. The change takes effect immediately before the next game played, even if the next game is part of the same best-of-3 or best-of-5 match. The trigger points are shown in Table C. Table C also shows the range of index points for which the handicap on that line does not change.

Table C: Trigger Points

Handicaps	Trigger Points for this handicap	Range for which there is no change for this handicap
0	1000	1000 to 801
1	800	999 to 651
2	650	799 to 501
3	500	649 to 401
4	400	499 to 351
5	350	399 to 301
6	300	349 to 251
7	250	299 to 201
8	200	249 to 151
9	150	199 to 101
10	100	149 to 100
11	50	99 to 50
12	0	49 to 0

The maximum index is 1,000. The minimum index is 0.

Changes to handicaps during matches

Please note that in the SACA Pennants competitions handicap cards are filled out after each singles game and each doubles game. If a player's handicap changes after the first or second game, the new handicap applies immediately and is used in determining index points won or lost in the next game.

Handicap cards, index points, and playing order in SACA competitions

Conditions of Play 7.3 is quite clear: "Players are numbered 1-4 in handicap order, 1 being the player with the lowest handicap. If two players have the same handicap the order is determined by index points. If index points are also equal, order shall be based on the most recent changes in index value, the higher index value being ranked higher in order.

Players retain their position 1 to 4 throughout the match regardless of any changes to handicap or index points following their games."

Handicap changes when passing through trigger points

If you gain more index points than you lose, over time your index will reach the next trigger point and your handicap drops (improves). Or if you lose more index points than you win AND your handicap is in the range 0 – 9, your index may decrease and reach the next trigger point and your handicap increases. Once your handicap has reached 10, (which it does when your index points have dropped to 100) you will no longer deduct index points. After this, every game won will help you on your fast track back to handicap 9, (which will occur when you reach 150 index points).

EXAMPLE: Suppose you are a player with handicap 9 and 150 index points. If you win more games than you lose and gain a net 50 index points, your index reaches the next trigger point, 200, and your handicap drops (improves) to 8. However, if you lose your next game and drop back to say 190 index points, your handicap does not change. There is a 50-point “buffer” (for handicaps of 4 or above) and your handicap does not go back to 9 unless you drop down to or below 150 index points. Without this “buffer” a player’s handicap could go up and down like a yo-yo, quite possibly changing twice within one match. This is very important; unfortunately some people think that a handicap changes every time there is a movement, up or down, through a trigger point. THIS IS WRONG.