World Handicap System – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Do we have new ID#s?
Yes. On 1/1/20, all golfers' records under the USGA "umbrella" were moved to one network location, which can then be accessed by any handicap provider. This change happened behind the scenes, and does not refer to changing programs. All Associations will now see the same player lookup and records can be transferred easily. Players will have just one ID# and score record that will follow them, or can be shared between multiple Associations, even if they use different handicap software. The new ID#s are known as USGA #s (or GHIN #s). If you are playing in a tournament out-of-state, this is the ID# you will give them.

Can I use the GHIN software?
Many people are confusing GHIN with the USGA Network. GHIN is handicap software used by many Associations, but there are others, like Golfnet, which Montana uses. The USGA Network is where all handicap software providers connect. The new USGA ID#s can technically be called GHIN #s (a USGA Network term), but they will not work with the GHIN handicap software. You can continue to use Golfnet software as before. The only exception is for multi-members who ALSO have an active membership at an Association that uses GHIN.

Do I have to post scores daily?
Yes. As we move to daily revisions, it's important you post your score the day you played, if at all possible. This improves the accuracy of your Handicap and contributes to the fairness of the game.

How do I post scores myself?
You can download the MSGA app (search "Montana State Golf Association" in your app store) and you can also use the online handicap system at www.msgagolf.org/login. You will need your MSGA login. If you don't know your login or are having problems getting connected, please email support@msgagolf.org for assistance.

I can't get logged in to the new app.
First, make sure you have the updated version. On your device desktop, the icon will have a blue background behind the MSGA logo. If it is black, or if it won't let you log in, try uninstalling and reinstalling the app. You should also verify you have the correct login information. If you need help, email support@msgagolf.org.

What is my maximum hole score?
This is now known as Net Double Bogey, or Double Bogey Plus. It is simply Par + 2 (a Double Bogey) +/- any handicap strokes you receive for that hole. For example, a player with a Course Handicap of 11 receives 1 stroke on the first 11 allocated stroke holes. On a Par 4 hole with a stroke index of 6, Net Double Bogey is 4 + 2 + 1 = 7. For players with a Handicap Index over the maximum of 54.0, or have not established an index yet, the maximum hole score is Par + 5. If you post your score hole-by-hole, the system will adjust it for you.

Why did my Course Handicap change from 2019 to 2020?
We are playing to a different benchmark. Under the old System, a Course Handicap was the number of strokes needed to play to the Course Rating. Under the new World Handicap System, a Course Handicap is the number of strokes needed to play to Par, which is a benchmark golfers are more familiar with. If the Course Rating of the tees you are playing is higher than the Par of the tees, your Course Handicap will go up compared to your 2019 number. If the Course Rating is lower than Par, it will go down. For example, if the Course Rating is 68.0 and Par is 72, your Course Handicap will be 4 strokes lower, because you need 4 fewer strokes to shoot a net 72 than a net 68.

Does a lower Course Handicap mean I'm expected to shoot lower scores?
The Target Score is the score needed to play to your Handicap. Under the previous system, Target Score was equal to your Course Handicap + Course Rating of the tees played. But, under the World Handicap System, Target Score is your Course Handicap + Par of the tees played. The player's expected score has not changed.
BEFORE: Course Handicap 12 + 68.0 Course Rating = 80 Target Score
NOW: Course Handicap 8 + 72 Par = 80 Target Score

For more information about the World Handicap System, go to www.usga.org/whs.