

Applying handicap allowances under the World Handicap System™

What is a handicap allowance?

A **handicap allowance** is the percentage of a *Course Handicap*™ recommended to create equity in casual or competitive games and based on the chosen format of play.

Handicap allowances are applied to each player's unrounded *Course Handicap* prior to determining their *Playing Handicap*™ for the round.



What are the recommended allowances for various formats of play?

While the final decision on the *handicap allowance* is determined for the event by the Committee in charge of the competition, the following recommendations can be found within Appendix C of the *Rules of Handicapping*:

Individual Stroke Play	100% if field size less than 30, 95% if field size 30 or greater	Foursomes (Alternate Shot)	50% of combined team handicap
Individual Stableford	100% if field size less than 30, 95% if field size 30 or greater	Pinehurst/Chapman	60% lower handicap player + 40% higher handicap player
Individual Maximum Score	100% if field size less than 30, 95% if field size 30 or greater	Scramble (2-Person team)	35% lower handicap player + 15% higher handicap player
Four-Ball Match Play	90%	Scramble (4-Person team)	25% / 20% / 15% / 10% from lowest to highest handicap player
Four-Ball Stroke Play	85%		

In match play formats, once the percentage allowance has been applied, the player (or team in foursomes or Pinehurst/Chapman formats) with the lowest *Playing Handicap* plays off zero strokes relative to the other player(s) or team.

How does a handicap allowance impact a “plus handicap” player?

When applying a *handicap allowance*, any adjustment will always result in a *Playing Handicap* closer to zero, including for players with a plus *Handicap Index*®. This ensures relative equity among all players, regardless of ability. Below is an example using four-ball stroke play and the recommended *handicap allowance* of 85%.

