

1

Treatment of 9-Hole Scores

Current Rule: For a 9-hole score to be acceptable for handicap purposes, a player is required to play at least 7 holes under the Rules of Golf and can apply net par for any holes not played.

Once a 9-hole score is posted, a 9-hole Score Differential™ is created, and either:

- Combined with an existing 9-hole Score Differential (if available) to produce an 18-hole Score Differential, OR
- Combined with the player's next 9-hole Score Differential to produce an 18-hole Score Differential.

Rule change for the 2024 Revision: For a 9-hole score to be acceptable for handicap purposes, a player must play all 9 holes from tees with a published 9-hole Course Rating™ and Slope Rating™.

Once a 9-hole score is posted, the player's 9-hole Score Differential produced from the round will be combined with an expected score, based on the player's Handicap Index® at the time the round was played, to create an 18-hole Score Differential. Expected score cannot be used until a golfer has established a Handicap Index, which requires posting scores from 54 holes comprised of 9 and/or 18-hole rounds.

Expected score – The score a player is expected to achieve over a specified number of holes on a course of standard difficulty. It is calculated using the player's Handicap Index and attributes a numerical value against any hole or holes not played during a round.

Reasons for change:

- This treatment of 9-hole scores is more responsive since players will no longer have to wait for a second 9-hole score to be posted for an 18-hole Score Differential to be created and used in their Handicap Index calculation.
- It provides a better representation of how a player will normally perform over 18 holes on a given day, compared to combined 9-hole scores made on different days and under different playing conditions.
- This method produces a more consistent and comparable Handicap Index for those who frequently post 9-hole scores. For example, under the previous method:
 - Combining two independent 9-hole scores often resulted in more volatility with the Score Differentials and was highly dependent on the order in which scores were combined.
 - It was also common for two good 9-hole scores to be combined and produce an 18-hole Score Differential that was better than any of their 18-hole scores made over 18 consecutive holes. The impact of this scenario could lead to an artificially low Handicap Index for the player.