

# SLOPE: IT'S SIMPLE!

**Q:What is the USGA® Slope System?**

**A:**The Slope System is a refinement of the USGA® Handicap System. It adjusts a player's handicap for the difficulty of the course he plays.

**Q:But isn't that what the handicap system, along with course ratings, is designed to do?**

**A:**Not quite. USGA course ratings are based on an expert's game. For example, an expert should play a course rated 70 in 70. He will play a course rated 75 in 75, or close to it. When an average player plays a difficult course, his score tends to rise more than the difference in course ratings. An 18-handicapper might shoot 105 on a course rated 75, for example. The Slope System alleviates this inequity. It also deals with the problem of the golfer who builds his handicap at a very difficult course and scores well below it when he travels to easier courses.

**Q:How?**

**A:**By rating courses according to their *relative* difficulty for all levels of golfers. The Slope System adjusts a golfer's handicap to the course he's playing. This adjustment is based on a mathematical formula derived from plotting the scores of golfers of various handicaps on courses of varying difficulty. If one were to plot a graph of these scores for any given course, it would be a line which "slopes" up from left to right. Hence, the name. The steeper the slope, the higher the Slope Rating for that course.

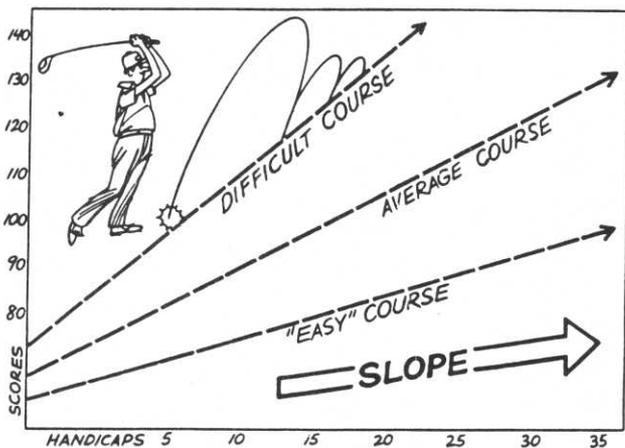
**Q:Does this mean I will have more than one handicap?**

**A:**There are now two numbers to take into account, but only one is your USGA Handicap Index. Here's the difference between the two:

**USGA Handicap Index** — This is expressed in tenths of a stroke. It represents your ability on a course of average difficulty. *You never play with this number.* You convert it to the strokes you will receive, both at home and away, by consulting a table prepared for that purpose.

**Course Handicap** — This is always expressed as a whole number and *this is what you play with.* It will appear on a chart wherever handicaps are posted. For example, if your USGA Handicap Index is 14.8 and your home course, from the white tee markers, has a Slope Rating of 123, the chart will reveal you receive 16 strokes. When you play on another course, or when you play from a different set of markers at home, look at the chart again to see how many strokes your 14.8 receives.

At your home course, both numbers will be posted. When you visit another course, a Course Handicap Table will help you convert your USGA Handicap Index into a Course Handicap. Remember: Play only with the Course Handicap. Use the USGA Handicap Index only to determine what the Course Handicap is.



## GUEST SCORE POSTING SHEET

For Members of GHIN® using the USGA® Slope System

CLUB NUMBER: 08 017 3 CLUB NAME: GREEN VALLEY GOLF CLUB

### USGA COURSE RATINGS AT THIS CLUB

Code	1	2	3	4	5	6
The	FRONT	MIDDLE	BACK	CHAMP		
Slope	68.9	86	70.2	107	71.7	127
				73.4	135	

GHIN MEMBER NUMBER	DATE PLAYED Mo Day	ADJ SCORE	USGA COURSE RATING / SLOPE OR CODE	GUEST OR MEMBER NAME		GUEST HOME COURSE AND ASSOCIATION NAME <small>IF A MEMBER OF THIS CLUB LEAVE BLANK</small>
				LAST	FIRST OR INITIAL	
059-663	7-18	86	70.2 / 117	BROWN	T	LAUREL DOWNS C.C.
024-158	7-18	92	71.3 / 127	SMITH	J	TARRY BRAE G.C.
061-729	7-12	118	68.9 / 86	LILLY	G	LONG COVE C.C.
	7-10	88	70.2 / 107	JONES	L	HOMINY HILL G.C.
	7-22	101	70.2 / 107	TYSON	S	OLYMPIA FIELDS C.C.
		79	71.3 / 127	BOROS	B	ROLLING RAPIDS G.C.
				GAINES	B	GLEN COE C.C.
					T	FAR HILLS G.&C.C.
						TOMS RIVER G.C.

GHIN NO.

SCORE

COURSE & SLOPE RATING

**Q:Should I expect to have a lower or higher handicap when playing "away"?**

**A:**That depends. Slope Ratings range from 55 to 155, with the average being 113. When you play a course with a Slope Rating higher than 113, your Course Handicap will be higher than your USGA Handicap Index. When you play a course with a Slope Rating lower than 113, your Course Handicap will be lower than your Handicap Index. That goes for your home course, too.

Recording scores is easy under the Slope System.

**Q:How much of this will I have to remember?**

**A:**Very little. At your home course, both your USGA Handicap Index and your Course Handicap will be posted. (You will often have a different Course Handicap for each set of tees, since they are, in effect, different courses.) When visiting another course, you simply have to know your USGA Handicap Index and refer to the appropriate Course Handicap Table. After your round, post your score, along with the Course and Slope Ratings of the course you played, just as you do now.

**Q:What if I forget to record the score at the "away" course or if the course is in a different computer system than mine?**

**A:**In that case, record your score at your home course. You must then note the Course and Slope Ratings of the "away" course, as well as your score.

**Q:What about Equitable Stroke Control (ESC)? Which handicap do I use?**

**A:**Your Course Handicap.

**Q:And to which handicap does the USGA maximum apply?**

**A:**Your USGA Handicap Index (36.4 for men and 40.4 for women). If you have the maximum Handicap Index your Course Handicap could exceed 48 on a high Slope Rated course.

**Q:What if I play a course not involved with Slope?**

**A:**Use your Home Course Handicap from the most used tees.

**Q:What if a visitor comes from a non-Slope area to my course?**

**A:**He has only one handicap, a USGA Handicap, so he uses only that one.

**Q:A fellow club member and I have nearly the same USGA Handicap Index but his Home Course Handicap is one stroke higher than mine. Why?**

**A:**His Home Course Handicap has probably been rounded up because his scores are slightly higher than yours, indicating he is not quite as proficient as you.

**Q:When will everyone have Slope?**

**A:**Soon, we hope, but it is optional for Regional Golf Associations to implement the Slope System. Currently, almost every state is using the system. Results are good.

**Q:How can I check my USGA Handicap Index to make sure it's accurate?**

**A:**Simply call your local golf association if you think there's been an error or refer to the 1987 edition of the **USGA Handicap System and Golf Committee Manual** for calculation procedures.

**USING THE COURSE HANDICAP TABLE**

Open Flats Golf Club  
**LOW SLOPE COURSE**  
(90 Slope Rating)

FOR A USGA HANDICAP INDEX	YOUR COURSE HANDICAP IS:
From: <b>15.7 to 16.9</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>17.0 to 18.2</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>18.3 to 19.4</b>	<b>15</b>

Panther Mountain G. C.  
**HIGH SLOPE COURSE**  
(135 Slope Rating)

FOR A USGA HANDICAP INDEX	YOUR COURSE HANDICAP IS:
From: <b>16.4 to 17.1</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>17.2 to 17.9</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>18.0 to 18.8</b>	<b>22</b>

Prepared by Bob Carney, Golf Digest

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