

USGA Handicap System (pre-2020): There is no restriction on the upward movement of a Handicap Index built into the calculation.

- The Handicap Committee at a golf club is responsible for monitoring extreme upward movement of any members' Handicap Index and make modifications where appropriate.

Rule Change for 2020: A "Soft Cap" and "Hard Cap" will be included within the Handicap Index calculation.

- The Soft Cap will suppress the upward movement of a Handicap Index by 50 percent if a 3.0 stroke increase takes place within 12 months.
- The Hard Cap will restrict upward movement if, after the application of the Soft Cap, a 5.0 stroke increase takes place within 12 months.

Reasons for Change:

- A new term, "Low Handicap Index" will be included within the Rules of Handicapping and will be made visible to players. This value will serve as the baseline for the Soft Cap and Hard Cap procedures.
 - A Low Handicap Index will be established once a player has at least 20 acceptable scores in their scoring record. At this point, the Soft Cap and Hard Cap procedures will begin taking effect.
 - A newly determined Low Handicap Index will be considered each time an acceptable score is submitted and a Handicap Index is updated.
- There is no limit on the amount by which a player's Handicap Index can decrease, but the Soft Cap and Hard Cap will ensure that a temporary loss of form does not cause a player's Handicap Index to increase to a level inconsistent with their demonstrated ability.
- The automatic calculation will prevent extreme upward movement of a Handicap Index, as well as assist Handicap Committees as an anti-abuse safeguard.
 - When special circumstances exist, such as injury, the Handicap Committee will have the ability to override the Soft Cap or Hard Cap.
- This procedure will favor the consistent player, as players who have significant volatility in their scoring history over a 12-month period will be impacted by it more often.