

How stroke index allocation works under the World Handicap System™

Who determines the stroke index allocation at a golf course?

While it is ultimately up to the Handicap Committee at each course to determine their stroke index allocation, the World Handicap System includes a recommended method designed to accommodate both stroke play and match play.

The procedure can be summarized in the following three steps:

Step 1: Course Rating data is evaluated

The course contacts the local Allied Golf Association (AGA) to start the process and determine the best tee to use for each gender in the evaluation. The AGA then uses effective playing length and obstacle data gathered during the most recent Course Rating™ as the basis for evaluation.

The benefit of using Course Rating data is that it provides a simple, objective method without having to collect scorecards from a wide range of players, which can be challenging and produce inconsistent results.



Step 2: Holes are ranked based on difficulty

The Course Rating data is then used to generate a **raw ranking** of the difficulty of each hole **relative to par**. This results in net par and net double bogey calculations that are more equitable.

To help spread out strokes over 18 holes, the front 9 is assigned odd strokes and even strokes are assigned on the back 9. This can be switched if the back 9 is decidedly more difficult than the front 9.



Step 3: Additional adjustments may be made

Match play is most equitable when consecutive low strokes and low strokes at the beginning or end of each nine are avoided. As a result, other minor adjustments may take place. For example:

Hole #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Raw Ranking	11	5	15	3	17	7	13	1	9
Final Allocation	11	5	15	1	17	7	13	3	9

Hole #	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Raw Ranking	12	16	8	2	4	10	18	6	14
Final Allocation	12	16	8	2	6	10	18	4	14

The final recommended allocation is then provided to the club and subject to further adjustments if needed.