Ladder Scoreboard - Handicaps

How the starts work and how handicaps change

Every player has a handicap in points. Lower means stronger: a top player might be -20, a beginner +30.

1. The start

When two players meet, the weaker player (the higher handicap) starts each frame with the **difference between the two handicaps**. The biggest start allowed is **75**.

Player A	Player B	Start
Rodger -20	Stuart +10	Stuart receives 30
Mike +20	Gabriel +20	Level - no start

The start shows on the TV and the phones and is announced at the beginning of every frame. It stays the same for the whole match.

2. Every frame of a completed match

The handicaps move using the **final score of the frame, with the start included**:

- The **winner's handicap goes down** (they get less start next time).
- The **loser's handicap goes up** by the same amount.
- The amount is **a tenth of the winning margin**, with a maximum of **3 points per frame**.

Final score (start included)	Margin	Stuart (was +10)	Rodger (was -20)
Stuart wins 70 - 60	10	+9 (down 1)	-19 (up 1)
Rodger wins 80 - 75	5	+10.5 (up 0.5)	-20.5 (down 0.5)
Rodger wins 95 - 40	55 (capped at 30)	+13 (up 3)	-23 (down 3)

When the handicaps are right, frames finish close and hardly anything moves. A player who keeps winning easily keeps coming down until the frames are close again. Handicaps are shown rounded to whole numbers; the scoreboard keeps the halves.

3. New players (P)

A new player is marked **P** (provisional). For their first **8 frames** their handicap moves **twice as fast** (up to 6 points a frame), so they find their right level quickly. After 8 frames the P disappears and they move at the normal rate.

4. Ladder points and positions

Ladder points are separate from handicaps:

- **3 points** for winning a match.
- **1 bonus point** for a whitewash (opponent wins no frames).
- If the lower-placed player beats the higher-placed player, they **swap places** on the ladder.

5. Good to know

- **Only completed matches count.** Handicaps, points and places change when the match is won; an unfinished or abandoned match changes nothing. The start does not change during a match.
- If a frame is undone and played again, it only counts once.
- Every change is written to *ladder-handicaps.log* on the scoreboard PC, so you can always see why a handicap moved.
- Handicaps can be corrected by hand in **Ladder & handicaps** on the PC.