

Understanding Player Ratings

Ratings-Based Rankings Overview (From Club Locker)

A rating based ranking system provides all squash players of any age and gender a common language to determine their relative playing level. It is a single framework to encourage level-based play and integrates juniors, college players, adults, school team players, and players from different geographical regions. A rating is a number ranging from 0 to 8 that is assigned to a player based on any recorded match they play. To be assigned a rating a player needs just one win and one loss and as match results are recorded the rating will adjust.

The rating-based system is a long-term indicator of level, using matches up to 45 months old, giving a heavier weight to those most recently played, specifically to those played in the previous 15 months. A player rating will be adjusted after each match and is not dependent on the level of event nor the round or finishing position. The type of organized play that produced that match, whether a tournament or league for instance is not a factor. Only that specific match and who played. The rating algorithm is therefore applied for each match independently and considers the reliability of each players rating, the rating differential between players together with the actual match result in terms of games to calculate appropriate ratings adjustments for each player. A player with many recent match results would be considered to have a reliable rating and their rating would be expected to be accurate and move slowly, regardless of results. A player with few match results or who only has older results would be considered to have an unreliable rating. Their results could have a more significant effect on their rating. Each match effectively has an expected outcome and players need to meet that expectation for their rating to remain stable. Exceed the expectation and a rating will improve. To perform below expectations and a rating could decrease.

The ratings based ranking system is effective in helping players find competitive matches across all types of organized play. Matches do not need to be tournament based; friendlies, league, and ladder matches can all count.

The ratings algorithm is complicated and multifactorial, and in the case of small fluctuations of ratings, explanation for rating adjustments is virtually unachievable. Yet the adjustments are based on consistent treatment of match interactions for all players within the system. The algorithm was developed between 2012-2014 by **Elder Research**, a data mining and predictive analytics firm based in Charlottesville, VA known for their work in sports data analytics.

WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR RATING

In order to improve their rating a player will need to play often, play well and be patient.

Exceeding expectations is the easiest way for a player to improve their rating. Winning that extra game in a tough match against a higher rated player could help. Making sure to not let your opponent get that extra game could also help. Winning in itself may not be enough. Losing may not be a bad result. Players may need to win 3-0 rather than 3-1, or conversely lose 3-2 instead of 3-1 to see their rating improve.

Since the rating algorithm uses the results of many matches to calculate rating, one result will not always have a significant effect. Even if it is a significant result where a player exceeds expectations. The rating reflects a trend in a player's ability, it will not react to one result but in the long term will adjust and be accurate.

About Squash Canada's National Rankings

The new rankings system will list players in descending order of their Club Locker player **rating** within any given category. The player's rating will be based upon thousands of match results entered into Club Locker. Any tournament, ladder or league play that uses Club Locker will see those results fully automated into the system, with ratings being updated nightly. Club Locker is Squash Canada's comprehensive home for ratings/rankings as well as our tournament management platform.

A rating reflects a player's level that is calculated based on a universal algorithm used for players all over the world. With Club Locker's algorithmic ratings based rankings, as match results are entered into the system, players receive a rating. It is based not only on a player's own results but the results of opponents they have interacted with. The more information the system has, the more accurate the ratings for players become.

The ratings algorithm builds connections between players as they compete against each other and adjusts ratings due to wins and losses. The strength of a match result is considered, the relative ability of the opponent and whether the game score of a match was 3-0, 3-1, 3-2. Matches played more recently have more weight than those played further in the past. In fact, if someone doesn't play for a while, their rating even starts to degrade.

Matches affect a player's rating for up to 45 months, or until 50 newer matches have been played. Players who have more results in the system will have more stable ratings, whereas those with fewer matches will adjust more quickly as the system gains new information on them.

The rating scale begins at 1.5 with a top rating of around the 7.0 mark for higher world-ranked professionals. The majority of club-level squash players are in the 3.0 – 4.5 rating range, which would coincide to what we would often refer to as "C" or "B" level club players. Professional players generally play at a 6.0+ level.

Ratings are calculated in one pool, for all players including juniors and adults, women and men. Ratings can then be filtered by age categories as well as by club, league and provincially.

The benefits of the new system include the universality of rated playing abilities across age categories, genders and national borders. It facilitates even the player who doesn't travel outside their region to be assigned a valid rating as to their playing ability and to see where they stand in the nation. Junior players in some regions who have fewer players in their age group to play against can benefit from playing adults to both accelerate their development and have match results that will contribute to their ranking. Contrarily, the previous Canadian rankings system disregarded junior versus adult matches and tournament play below a 1-star rating,

league play and other meaningful matches, leaving a large portion of the playing membership excluded from the national rankings system.

More information about ratings and rankings can be found at the bottom of this page: [Canadian Rankings](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't I see the rating move match-to-match on the "matches" tab of my profile?

The new algorithm runs many iterations of the calculation for each player each time it is processed. Therefore, there isn't a new rating calculated for each match; instead, the algorithm looks at all results and determines the most appropriate ending rating for each player in that period.

Do all my matches count equally?

Generally, all matches are taken into account. A player's most recent matches, however, are weighted more heavily in the calculation than older matches. Only the players' most recent fifty matches are factored, and no matches outside of the previous three years are used in the algorithm.

How do I get a rating?

Any players playing matches in the Club Locker system, in Canada or elsewhere, receive a rating, whether those matches are friendly, league, box or tournament matches.

How do I view my rating?

All Club Locker account holders can view their rating on their Club Locker player profiles.

What happens if I have taken a break or am coming back from injury?

If a player has taken a break, due to injury say, the initial matches in the comeback will take on more significance and a player rating will likely be prone to short term volatility until it iterates to a stable and accurate position. Player ratings will remain on their profile for 45 months and so a player coming back from time off will remain on the rankings and in position

until the system has new information. That new information becoming more important due to it being more recent.

Is there any benefit to playing against players who are rated below me?

Higher rated players can still improve their rating if they perform better than expected. A higher rated player will be expected to win, but the margin by which they win will matter. The closer players are in rating the more likely the match result will be 3-2.

What level of player should I play?

Any result between players who have more than 0.5 differential in rating will be discarded if the higher rated player wins. This protects any negative ratings change for the higher rated player.

If the lower rated player records the win US Squash will be alerted so that the result can be verified as this is expected to be a result in exceptional circumstances only.

Therefore, players should focus on competing with players who are within +/- 0.5 of their rating.

Is there a strategy to increase my rating?

Some players try to increase their rating by playing well against higher rated opponents. Some try by playing well against lower rated opponents. It is not about who you play per se, the key is to try to exceed the expectations for the match.

Do I need to play in tournaments for matches to count towards rating?

Any match recorded in Clublocker will count for rating. This could be a match played in a tournament but it could also be a ladder match, box match, league match or an agreed friendly match. Players can choose which method of play works for them.

How often are updates made to my rating?

Player ratings are calculated daily and show on player profiles in the Club ranking section. National rankings are recorded weekly on a Wednesday morning and are based on the daily rating update on that Wednesday.

Are ratings the same across the country or ages?

The rating system measures players ability on a unified scale. Therefore, player ratings are consistent across all squash players. The rating algorithm relies on match information being logged from all sources. The more data the more accurate the information. While many players compete only within their group or club, those that play in many groups provide the cross over data that calibrates ratings across the country, ages and gender.

Can my rating change if I don't play?

Yes. The rating algorithm is processed daily and therefore the significance of each match is calculated daily. If you have played against a player who is active and improving, even if you aren't playing your rating could improve also. Conversely your rating could decrease if your opponents rating decreases.