

Basic Beginning Bridge All Lesson Review

More information: <https://bridge.careytutor.com>

The Overall Flow of a Bridge Game

Setup



Bidding – to set up a contract



Playing – to win tricks



Scoring

Bidding Basics

- Fundamentals:
 - Dealer has the opportunity to make the first bid.
 - “Pass” means “I don’t care to bid at this turn, thank you.”
 - A bid specifies a number (in excess of 6) and a potential trump suit (or No Trump)
 - Example Contract: **3 Hearts** → promise to take $6 + 3 = 9$ tricks with Hearts as the trump suit
 - Each bid must be higher than the previous bid.
 - After the opening bid, three consecutive passes close the bidding.
 - The last (high) bid determines the contract.

Bidding – Hand Evaluation

- **High card points (HCP)**

- Ace = 4
- King = 3
- Queen = 2
- Jack = 1

- **Suit length** (opening bidder in a suit)

- 1 point per extra card in long suit(s)

- **Suit shortness** (responding bidder, after a suit has been agreed)

- 3 points for void, 2 points for singleton, 1 point for doubleton

Targets – Combined Partnership Hands

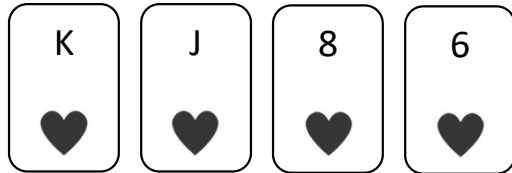
26 – 29 – 33 – 37

Bidding Communication

- Each bid communicates:
 - The length of a suit
 - Overall strength of the hand
 - Total points for suit bids
 - Some bids clearly define a narrow range of length and strength.
 - Other bids merely give a broad range and have to be clarified with a **rebid**.
- Attempt to find a suit **fit** if possible.
 - **A fit** is a suit with 8 or more trumps between the two partners' hands.

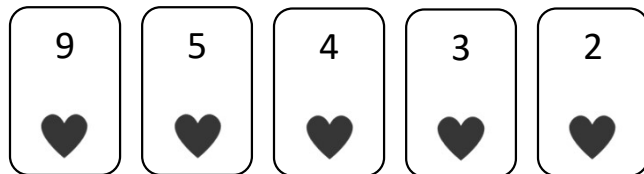
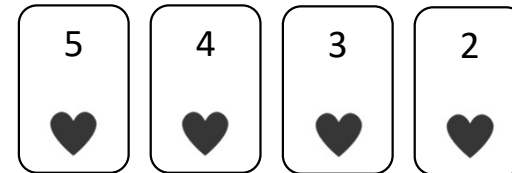
What Is a "Fit"?

Your Hand

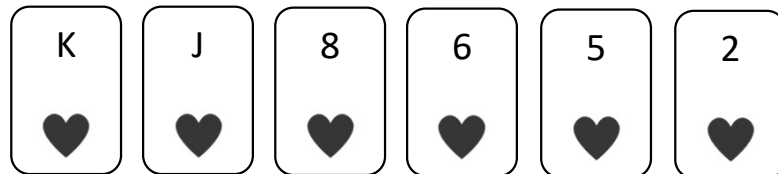
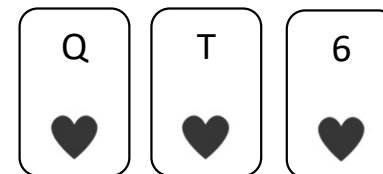


4 - 4

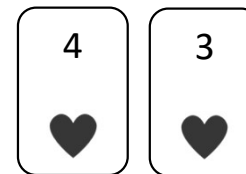
Partner's Hand



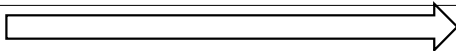
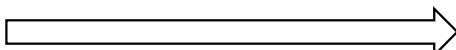
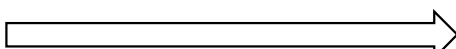

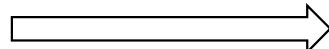
5 - 3



6 - 2



Opening Bid Choices

- **2 No Trump**  **20 – 21 high card points & balanced**
 - *2 Clubs*  *22+ total points*
 - **1 No Trump**  **15 – 17 high card points & balanced**
 - 1 Spade
 - 1 Heart
 - 1 Diamond
 - 1 Club
-   **12 – 21 total points**

Opening Suit Bids

- With 12 – 21 total points plan to bid in a suit at the one level.
- Do you have one or more 5-card (or longer) suits?
 - Bid at the one level in your longest suit.
 - If equal length (5-5 or 6-6), bid at the one level in the higher ranking suit.
- With no 5-card or longer suit:
 - Bid at the one-level in your longest minor.
 - If 4 – 4 in minors, bid 1 Diamond.
 - If 3 – 3 in minors, bid 1 Club.
- Thus, a bid of 1 Heart or 1 Spade indicates 5 or more cards in the suit.

Responder Point Ranges

6 - 9 Points – minimum

10 - 12 Points – medium

13 - 15 Points – strong (game)

16+ Points – massive (game or slam)

Responder Priorities

Support opener's major suit with at least 3 card support.



Bid a **new suit** with 4 or more cards in the suit (**forcing** for one round).



Bid some number of **no trump**.



Support opener's minor suit with at least 4 (preferably 5+) cards.

- Show the strength of your hand as soon as possible.

Opening Bidder Point Ranges

12 - 15 Points – minimum

16 - 18 Points – medium

18 - 21 Points – strong

22+ Points – massive

Rebids

- Opening bidder
 - Minimum – lowest possible bids (including pass if responder's bid is limited)
 - Medium – jump bid in existing suit, reverse, raise responder NT
 - Strong – jump shift to new suit, jump in NT, jump to game in suit
- Responding bidder
 - Try to place the contract if possible.
 - If a game bid is not possible, show preference to one of opener's suits (or rebid own suit at lowest level).

Opening No Trump Bids

- 1 no trump opening bid
 - 15 – 17 high card points
 - Balanced hands:
 - 4 – 4 – 3 – 2
 - 4 – 3 – 3 – 3
 - 5 – 3 – 3 – 2
- 2 no trump opening bid
 - 20 – 21 high card points and a balanced hand
 - Stopper(s) in at least 3 suits

Responder Point Ranges (1 NT Opening Bid)

< 8 Points – pass or bid a long suit

8 – 9 Points – 2NT or bid a long suit

10+ Points – bid to game (NT or suit)

15+ Points – bid to game or slam

No Trump Opening Summary

- 12 – 14 high card points and a balanced hand – bid a suit, then rebid lowest NT
- **15 – 17 high card points** and a balanced hand – **open 1 NT**
- 18 – 19 high card points and a balanced hand – bid a suit, then jump in NT
- **20 – 21 high card points** and a balanced hand – **open 2 NT**
- *22 – 24 high card points and a balanced hand – open 2 Clubs, then bid 2 NT*
- *25 or more high card points and a balanced hand – open 2 Clubs, then bid 3 NT*

Playing Basics

- Fundamentals:

- You must “follow suit” – play a card of the suit led, if you have one.
 - If you don’t have a card of the suit led, you may play any card.
- When each player has played one card, that set of four cards is a trick.
- The highest trump in the trick wins. If there are no trumps in the trick, the highest card of the suit led wins.
- The winner of the trick leads to the next trick.

Plan the Play – As Declarer

- Plan the play before playing to the first trick.
 - Count winners or losers in each suit
 - Start with one hand and fill gaps from the other hand.
- In No Trump contracts: count **immediate winners**.
 - Set up **potential winners** by **promotion**.
- In suit contracts: count **losers** = missing A, K, or Q.
 - **Eliminate losers** by a) discarding when playing a long suit and b) ruffing.

How to Win Tricks - Basic

- Immediate winners (A, AK, AKQ, etc.)
- Promotion of winners – sequence (e.g., win 2 tricks with KQJ)
- Promotion of winners – long suit
- Ruffing – play a trump after clearing a short suit
- Playing trumps – (usually) play trumps early so opponents have none
- Finesses – try to win an extra trick (e.g., lead toward AQ and play Q – 50% chance)

Plan the Play – As Defender

- Plan the play before the opening lead. Revise the plan as needed.
- Count high card points in your hand.
- Estimate opponent's high card points:
 - Opponents' 2-level contract: about 20 high card points
 - Opponents' 3-level contract: about 23 high card points
 - Opponents' 4-level contract (or 3NT contract): about 26 high card points
- Estimate partner's high card points (subtract your points and opponents' from 40).
- Try to set up tricks for the stronger hand.

Common Defensive Strategies

- Lead **through strength** and **toward weakness**
- General guideline: **cover an honor with an honor**
 - When covering the honor promotes one of your cards (or your partner's)
 - Cover any isolated honor: they hold Qx – play your King if they lead the Queen
 - Cover the last in a sequence: they have QJT – play your King on the 3rd round
- General guideline when 2nd to play on a trick: **second hand low**
 - Exception: when that gives up a trick you'll never recover
- General guideline when 3rd to play on a trick: **third hand high**
 - Exception: when a lower card will drive out an opponents' high card
 - Exception: when you need to wait and win the second trick in the suit to give partner a ruff

Competitive Bidding

- **Overcall**
 - 10 – 17 total points (high card + length)
 - 5 cards in the bid suit, KJTxx or better
 - Primarily to suggest a lead; to interfere with opponents; or to win a contract
- **Double (for takeout)**
 - 13+ total points (high card + length)
 - 3+ cards in unbid suits, 4+ in unbid major suit(s)
 - Primarily to compete for a part score or game bid

Scoring Basics

- Examine the scoring summary sheet
 - We will use the sheet to help us score from this point onward.
- A **game** is scored when a team scores 100 points or more **below the line**.
 - Only tricks bid and made are scored below the line.
 - A score fewer than 100 points is considered a **part score**.
- All other scores (bonuses, penalties) are **above the line**.

Scoring Review – Trick Values

- **Major suits** (Hearts/Spades): score 30 points per trick

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- **No Trump**: score 40 for the first trick, 30 thereafter

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- **Minor suits** (Clubs/Diamonds): score 20 points per trick

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