

# 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

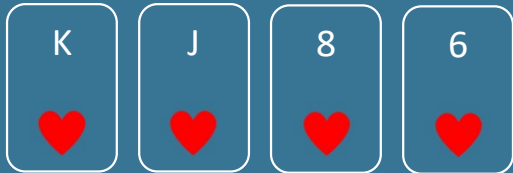
26 – 29 – 33 – 37

# 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.

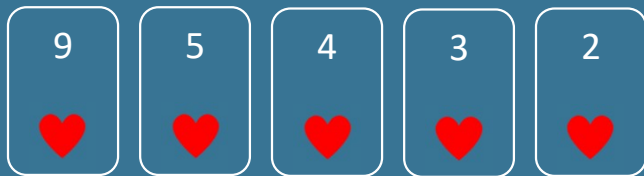
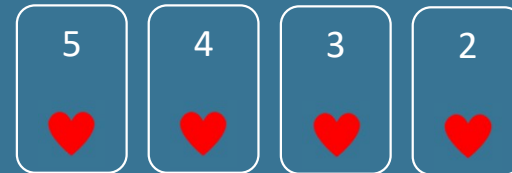
# What Is a "Fit"?

Your Hand

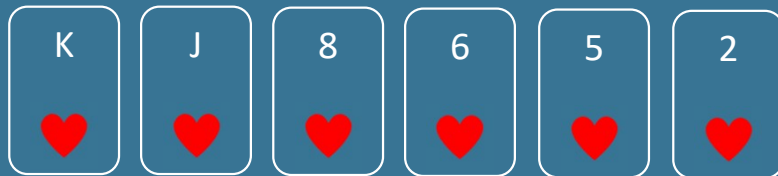
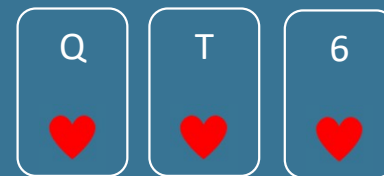


**4 - 4**

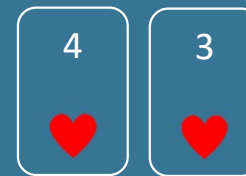
Partner's Hand








**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 3<sup>rd</sup> round
- General guideline when 2<sup>nd</sup> to play on a trick: **second hand low**
  - Exception: when that gives up a trick you'll never recover
- General guideline when 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

- Overall
  - 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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