

Basic Beginning Bridge

Lesson 1 – Bridge Fundamentals

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

Welcome

- Fill out place cards with your name
 - Back and front
- Add your name and email address to the class list.
- Group background
 - Previous bridge play?
 - Previous spades, hearts, bid whist, euchre, pinochle, rook, 500?

Class Approach

- Overall goal of the class
 - Ability to play in a social bridge game with friends and acquaintances
- Objective for the first lesson
 - Understand the suits and cards of a bridge deck
 - Learn how to set up for a game, shuffle, and deal
 - Learn the basic mechanisms of bidding, card play, and scoring
- Class structure
 - 1 hour for discussion and student interaction
 - 30 – 60 min for practice bidding, playing, and scoring

What Is Important in the Game of Bridge?

- **Communication** with partner (it's a team game!)
- Evaluation and planning of bidding and play
- Inference from incomplete data – it's all about **probabilities**
- “Rules of Thumb”
- Integrity with respect to the Laws of Bridge

Some Basic Concepts

- Observe the decks of cards
 - 52 cards in 4 suits, 13 per suit
- Ace is high, then King, Queen, Jack, Ten, ..., Two
- Spades and Hearts = **Major suits**
- Diamonds and Clubs = **Minor suits**

The Overall Flow of a Bridge Game

Setup



Bidding – to set up a contract



Playing – to win tricks



Scoring

Setup

- **One time (or per Rubber or every 4 hands in Chicago):**
 - Select cards from a spread deck for partners – two highest cards, two lowest cards
 - High card deals first
- **Every hand:**
 - Shuffle the deck (or decks, if playing with two)
 - Cut the deck
 - Deal the cards – clockwise (to the left)
 - After all cards are dealt, each player picks up their cards and sorts into suits.

Bidding – Hand Evaluation

- **High card points (HCP)**

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

- **Suit length** (opening bidder)

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

Practice – High Card Points Evaluation

- How many high card points in each hand?
- Did you find 40 high card points in all four hands?
- Who had the most high card points?

Bidding Basics

- Each contract bid consists of a number and a proposed trump suit (or **No Trump**)
 - If a suit is bid, that suit is suggested as **trumps** – the most powerful suit.
 - If No Trump is bid, then all suits are of equal power.
 - You may also **Pass ...** or Double or Redouble.
- Contract bids are “in excess of 6”
 - Example: 3 Hearts bid → goal of taking $6 + 3 = 9$ **tricks** with Hearts as **trumps**
- Order of suits (Clubs → Diamonds → Hearts → Spades → NT)

Bidding Basics (cont.)

- The **Dealer** makes the first bid and subsequent bidding proceeds in a clockwise direction (to the left).
 - The first bid is called the **opening bid**.
 - Each bid must be higher than any preceding bid.
- Each player has an opportunity to bid at least once.
 - After the opening bid, bidding is closed after three consecutive passes.
 - The last bid made (**high bid**) determines the **contract**.
 - The first person on the high-bidding team to bid the contract suit (or No Trump) is the **Declarer**.
 - The hand of the Declarer's partner becomes the **Dummy**.

Practice – Bidding Basics

- How many high card points in each hand?
- Which hand will be Declarer? Which hand will be Dummy?
- How many tricks has Declarer promised to take?
- What was the final contract?

Playing Basics

- A **trick** is a set of 4 cards, one card played from each hand
 - All players must play a card from the led suit.
 - If they have none, they may play any card.
- The player to the left of the Declarer makes the **opening lead**.
 - Make the lead face down before exposing.
- After the opening lead, partner places the Dummy hand face up.
 - The Declarer plays the Dummy hand. The Declarer's partner is mostly silent.
 - Play proceeds clockwise (to the left) until four cards are played.

Who Wins the Trick?

- The highest trump in the trick wins. If there are no trumps in the trick, the highest card of the suit led wins.

4 Hearts Contract

The diagram illustrates a card trick in a 4 Hearts contract. The cards in the trick are: King of Diamonds (K♦), 8 of Clubs (8♣), 2 of Hearts (2♥), 8 of Diamonds (8♦), Queen of Diamonds (Q♦), and 3 of Clubs (3♣). The Ace of Spades (A♠) and Ace of Clubs (A♣) are also shown. The King of Diamonds is the highest trump in the trick.

- The winner of the trick leads to the next trick.

Practice: Play of the Hand

- Did you win enough tricks to satisfy the contract? Or did your contract fail to make?
- Did you win any extra tricks?
- Did you have a long suit outside of trumps? Was that suit useful to you?
- Did you have any short suits? Were they useful to you?

Bridge Scoring Sheet

WE	THEY

The **Line**

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**.

Summary

- **Setup**
 - Partners, shuffling, cutting, dealing, sorting
- **Bidding**
 - Hand evaluation, # of tricks (over 6) and suit/no trump, trumps, and Declarer/Dummy
- **Playing**
 - Opening lead, tricks
- **Scoring**
 - See the provided scoring summary.