

Basic Beginning Bridge Lesson 1 – Supplemental

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

Lesson Topics

- Lesson 1 – Bridge Fundamentals
 - High-level introduction to the entire bridge process
- Lesson 2 – Declarer Play
 - Ways to plan the play and win tricks
- Lesson 3 – Opening Suit Bids
 - Opening 1-level suit bids
- Lesson 4 – Suit Responses & Rebids
 - Ways for responder to describe their hand after an opening suit bid
- Lesson 5 – No Trump Opening Bids (and Responses)
 - Opening NT bids and other ways of showing a balanced hand
 - Ways for responder to show an unbalanced hand
- Lesson 6 – Defense
 - Defensive play and bidding – how to fight back

Terminology

- **Hand** – one set of bidding/playing/scoring; also, an individual’s set of 13 cards.
- **Trick** – a set of 4 cards played, one for each player. There are 13 tricks played during one bridge hand.
- **Bid** – a call by a player indicating the suit to be trumps (or “no trump”) as well as the number of tricks promised to take (in excess of 6 tricks); example: a bid of 1H promises to make $6 + 1 = 7$ tricks with hearts as the trump suit.
- **High bid** – the final suit/No Trump bid in the bidding of a bridge hand; the high bid determines the contract.
- **Contract** – the commitment by a team to take a certain number of tricks with a given suit as trumps (or with “No Trump”).
- **Trumps** – a suit determined by the “high bid” to be the highest set of cards – all trumps are more powerful than any cards from the other suits.
- **No Trump** – a contract where no specific suit is bid as trumps; all suits are equal in power.
- **Below the line** – only tricks bid and made are scored below the horizontal “line” on the scoring sheet and only those points count toward scoring a “game”.
- **Above the line** – all other points (penalties, bonuses) are scored above the “line”; those points are included only in the final total score.
- **Game** – a score of 100 points or more below the line.
- **Rubber** – up to three games required for one partnership to win 2 games. The winner of the rubber may score 2 – 0 or 2 – 1.
- **Game bid** – making a sufficient bid that, if made, would score 100 points or more below the line from a single hand.
- **Part score** – any score less than 100 points below the line.

Terminology (cont.)

- **Major suits** – hearts or spades (those scoring 30 points per trick after the first 6 tricks).
- **Minor suits** – clubs or diamonds (those scoring 20 points per trick after the first 6 tricks).
- **High card points** – a means of evaluating a hand prior to bidding (A = 4, K = 3, Q = 2, and J = 1).
- **Partnership** (aka “pair”) – the two players that make up a team (North/South or East/West)
- **Dealer** – the player who deals the hand; the first dealer is often chosen by cutting cards (high card deals).
- **Declarer** – the player on the high-bidding team that bid the contract suit first.
- **Dummy** – the partner of Declarer
- **Pass** – a bid indicating that the player does not presently care to bid.
- **Double** – a bid that doubles the point values during scoring. The bid is also used for other purposes.
- **Redouble** – a bid that redoubles the point values during scoring. The bid is also used for other purposes.
- **Vulnerable** – a team is “vulnerable” if they have already won one game in a rubber. A team is “not vulnerable” if they have not yet won one game.
 - In rubber bridge (social bridge) a “rubber” is won when a team wins two games.
 - In duplicate bridge vulnerability is artificially identified on the score sheet.
- **Void** – no cards in a suit
- **Singleton** – 1 card in a suit
- **Doubleton** – 2 cards in a suit

Terminology (cont.)

- **Balanced hand** – a hand with no more than one doubleton (i.e., 4 – 4 – 3 – 2, 4 – 3 – 3 – 3, and 5 – 3 – 3 – 2 distributions).
- **Stopper** – a high card winner that can capture the lead and stop the opponents from winning all the tricks in a suit during a No Trump game
- **Honor cards** – Ace, King, Queen, Jack, and sometimes Ten.
- **Opening lead** – the initial card played by the player left of the Dealer.
- **Ruff** (aka “trump”) – to play a trump card when void in the suit led.
- **Overtrick** – any extra trick won above the tricks promised by the bid; e.g., if the bid is 2H (6 + 2 tricks), any tricks above 8 are overtricks.
- **Winner** – an immediate winner is a high card sequence (A, AK, AKQ) that will immediately win a trick or tricks; a potential winner is a card that, once other cards are removed, is a winner.
- **Loser** – a quick loser is a missing high card (A, K, or Q) that will immediately lose a trick or tricks; a slow loser is a card that may be a loser once high cards are removed from Declarer’s or Dummy’s hand.
- **Promotion** – to elevate cards to winner status by a) driving out higher cards or b) playing cards in a long suit until remaining cards are winners.
- **Drawing Trumps** – to play one or more rounds of the trump suit until opponents have few or no remaining trumps.
- **Finesse** – to play a card toward a high card (when a higher card is present in one of the opponents’ hands), with the hope of promoting that card.
- **Set** – any deficit in tricks won below the tricks promised by the bid; e.g., if the bid is 2H (6 + 2 tricks) and only 6 tricks are taken, the contract is set two.
- **Small Slam/Grand Slam** – any bid of 6 or 7 (promising to take 12 or 13 tricks, respectively).

Terminology (cont.)

- **Fit** – the combined holdings in a potential trump suit for a partnership. An optimal fit is 8 or more cards.
- **Forward-going bid** – any non-signoff bid made to provide additional information.
- **Invitational bid** – any bid made to ask partner to bid game (or slam) with a maximum holding.
- **Preference (correction) bid** – a bid to choose between one or partner’s previous bids. This bid is a signoff bid and not a forward –going bid.
- **Jump bid** – a bid that “jumps” over a lower bid – e.g., 1H – pass – 3H bypasses 2H and jumps to 3H. In our simplified standard American bidding system a jump bid is always strong. In other systems some jump bids may be weak.
- **Jump shift bid** – a bid that not only jumps but also shifts – e.g., 1H – pass – 1S – pass – 3C bypasses 2C (jump) and shifts to a new suit.
- **Natural bid** – the suit named in a natural bid indicates an actual holding in that suit.
- **Artificial bid** – the suit and number specified in an artificial bid both have an artificial meaning – they don’t indicate a specific holding in the named suit nor do they suggest playing at the level of the bid. Example: a 2C opening bid purely indicates a strong 22+ high card point hand with no known holding in clubs.
- **Preemptive bid** – an opening bid at the 2, 3, or 4 level used to preempt the opponents by taking away valuable bidding space.
- **Competitive auction** – a bidding sequence where one or more players from each partnership are involved in the bidding.
- **Rebid** – the second or subsequent bids by a player.

Scoring Basics

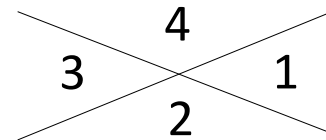
- Tricks bid and made (above the first six) count **below the line** as follows:
 - No Trump: 40 points for the first trick, 30 thereafter
 - Majors (Hearts and Spades): 30 for each trick
 - Minors (Clubs and Diamonds): 20 for each trick
- A **game** is scored when a team scores 100 points or more **below the line**.
 - A score fewer than 100 points is considered a **part score**.
 - Once a team has won one game, they are considered **vulnerable**. Any part scores are closed out.
- Rubber Bridge:
 - A **rubber** is scored when a team wins two games out of three → rubber bonus
- Chicago Bridge:
 - Pre-defined vulnerability
 - A 4-hand **wheel** comprises the set → **bonus** for scoring a game

Scoring Basics (cont.)

- All other scoring is **above the line**.
 - Any extra tricks (**overtricks**) above the number bid
 - Penalty points are awarded to the defending team if they **set** the high bidder.
 - Example: if the high bid is 3 Hearts (promising to make 9 tricks) and the Declarer makes only 8 tricks, the Declarer is set one trick.
 - Bonus points are also awarded for bidding and making 12 or 13 tricks.
 - 500 points for making a **small slam** (bid and make $6 + 6 = 12$ tricks)
 - 1000 points for making a **grand slam** (bid and make $6 + 7 = 13$ tricks).
- Double and Redouble change the above point values.
- Vulnerability changes the above point values.

Scoring Example

- Bids:
 - 2D by “They” – made 9 (none vulnerable)
 - 3H by “They” – made 9 (dealer vulnerable)
 - 3NT by “We” – made 7 (dealer vulnerable)
 - 4S by “We” – made 10 (both vulnerable)



We	They
	20
500	300
	200
	40
	90
120	

Further Reading

- The American Contract Bridge League site provides a Learn Bridge section
 - Bridge basics are described at <https://www.acbl.org/learn/#how>.
 - A robot-based playing tool is available at <http://www.learn2playbridge.com/map> (you'll need to register on first use). You can play a number of sample hands to practice trick-taking skills. Start with the "Tutorial" under "Play of the Hand".
- Karen Walker, a bridge teacher, provides a basic bridge intro on her website:
 - <http://kwbridge.com/start.htm>