

Bridge 101 – Lesson 1

Introduction:

Please always remember: “Cherish your partner and respect your opposition”

Before we get started, I'd like to share some classroom “rules”.

Please try to get here on time.

All chat should go to the table please.

If I am going too fast for you type “stop”.

or if you have a question, type a question mark. ?

There are no “stupid” questions.

Don't be shy about asking.

Basics:

Today we are going to “level the playing field”.

Many of you will know most or all of the answers but by running through the basics, we will all begin “on the same page”.

How many cards in a deck? (52)

How many suits in a deck? (4)

What are the four suits? (clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades, have fun with making symbols)

The suits are “ranked”. ♣, ♦, ♥, ♠ are the suits ranked from lowest to highest.

The two highest ranked suits are called the major suits, they are ♥ and ♠.

The two lowest ranked suits are called the minor suits, they are ♣ and ♦.

Within each suit there are ranked from highest to lowest, 13 cards: Ace (A) , King (K),

Queen(Q), Jack(J), 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2

Some cards are referred to as honor cards. They are A, K, Q, J and 10.

Bridge is played by four players seated around a table.

North and South are partners playing against East and West

When all 52 cards are dealt to the four players, each player receives 13 cards.

One card is played by each of the four players for a “trick” so there will be 13 tricks.

We say 13 is a “magic” number in bridge.

Point values are assigned to each Ace, King, Queen and Jack as follows.

A – 4 points, K – 3 points, Q – 2 points, J – 1 point

In each of the four suit there are 10 hcp's

There are 40 hcp's in the deck.

A Hand of Bridge:

A **hand** of bridge consists of two sections: the auction (bidding) and the play of the hand.

A **bid** (other than a pass) is a declaration of level (which is a number) and denomination (or strain).

The denomination is the proposed trump suit or a proposal that there will be no trump suit.

There are five denominations then: ♣, ♦, ♥, ♠ and NT (no trump).

The **level** (the number in the bid) refers to tricks in excess of six that need to be taken.

Each bid must be “**legal**”. That is, compared to any previous non pass, a bid must be of a higher level or the same level if the suit is of a higher rank.

So 1♣ is the lowest possible (no pass) bid and 7NT is the highest! (can't take more than 7 over the excess of 6).

The last bid before the three passes is called the **final contract**.

Within the partnership that has the final contract, the **declarer** is the one who first names the denomination (suit) of the final contract.

The Play:

The person to the left of the declarer plays a card (called the **opening lead**).

The declarer's partner becomes the **dummy** whose cards are then face up. A card is played from the dummy's hand by the declarer. The person to the right of the declarer plays a card then the declarer plays a card. This is the first **trick**.

A **trick** is a set of 4 cards played by each player in turn, during the play of the hand.

The highest card played in the suit that is lead will **win** or “**take**” the trick (provided no trump has been played).

When playing a card you must follow suit. That is, you must play a card of the same suit as the one that was first led in that trick. If you can not follow suit, you are allowed to play any card from your hand.

If such a card is one of the trump suit cards then it will “over power” (**trump**) the other cards and take the trick.

The player winning the first trick leads the first card to the second trick. Players play in clockwise rotation. The player winning the second trick leads to the third trick and so on until all 13 tricks have been played. The hand is then over and a new hand is dealt and we do it all over again!

Scoring:

When you play on BBO you play what is called “**duplicate bridge**”.

Duplicate bridge is a form of bridge where the same deal (called a **board**) is played at several tables and scores are compared.

There are two parts to scoring.

Points you score on a particular hand (deal, board).

Points awarded when these points are compared to what other tables did with the same hand (deal, board).

Today we will talk about points you score on a particular hand.

On a given hand, should you make your contract, you will score points.

Should your opponents keep you from making your contract, they will score points.

BBO keeps track of this for you.

Which is both good and bad.

Nice that they do that but ...

If you don't know what score you will get for a contract (or keeping a contract from being made), you won't have the information you need to make decisions.

Scoring is not just about whether or not you make the contract but whether or not you are what is called “**vulnerable**” or “**invulnerable**”.

Vulnerability revolves around the table.

You will know whether you are vulnerable or not by the software on BBO (see the red/white).

Notes from here on out we did not cover but should have. Please read and if you have questions ask them!

There are contracts that are called “**part score**”, ones that are called “**game**” and ones that are “**slam**”.

The **game contracts** are 3NT, 4♥ or 4♠ (so four of a major) and 5♣ or 5♦ (so five of a minor).

Any contract that is less is considered to be a part score contract.

A **slam** contract is 6 or 7 of any denomination.

Scores depend on which of these (part, game or slam) you are in and whether or not your are vulnerable or invulnerable.

You earn 40 points for the first no-trump trick scored and 30 points for each one after; 30 points for each spade and heart trick; 20 points for each club and diamond trick, **over your book of six**.

We have not yet talked about bids called **double** and **redouble** but trick values double in doubled contracts and are doubled again for redoubled contracts. Another day.

When a partnership makes a slam, or a game, or a part score, they collect, in addition to the trick score, an immediate bonus.

The bonuses depend on whether you are vulnerable or invulnerable.

Some example game bonuses are:

Making a vulnerable game 500

Making a non-vulnerable game 300

If you bid 4♠ and make exactly 10 tricks when you are nonvulnerable you will earn the game bonus of 300 points plus 30 points for the 4 tricks over book for a total of 420 points.

If you bid 4♥ and make exactly 10 tricks when you are vulnerable you will earn the game bonus of 500 points plus 30 points for the 4 tricks over book for a total of 620 points.

If you go to <http://www.acbl.org/learn/scoreDuplicate.html> you can download the [ACBL Duplicate Instant Scorer](#)

They have a lovely one page explanation on scoring.

Happy Bridging and remember to “Cherish your partner and respect your opposition”