

## INTRODUCTION

Bridge is a game of logic where two partnerships play against each other in two steps:

- 1) the bidding :- players make bids to show each other the value of their hands - how many tricks their 2 hands will take, and
- 2) card play.

### THE CARDS.

The deck you will use consists of 52 cards which breaks down into four suits. The suits are ranked in the following order;

- ♠ Spades
- ♥ Hearts
- ♦ Diamonds
- ♣ Clubs

The spade suit is the highest and the club suit is the lowest. In each suit are the **honour** cards AKQJ10 and then the lower rank cards ranging from 9 to the 2. The 2 is the lowest card and the Ace the highest.

### TRUMP

The "trump" suit is decided during the bidding - **a trump** beats any other card. It can be played when you have no more cards in the suit led and will win the trick. When more than one trump is played the highest wins.

### STEPS IN THE GAME OF BRIDGE.

#### 1) Deal

#### 2) The Bidding Period (Auction)

As soon as all cards are distributed, each player picks up his hand and arranges it according to suits (spades altogether, hearts altogether, etc.)

Dealer makes the first bid and then his left hand opponent makes his bid and so on, rotating around the table in a clockwise movement.

The bidding closes when three players have made a pass in succession.

A bid is an undertaking to win the stated number of tricks plus six with the chosen suit as trumps. You can bid from 1 to 7 in any suit or notrumps. The minimum number of tricks which you can

contract for is seven. A bid of 1 club contracts to make 7 tricks with clubs as trumps. A bid of 2 clubs contracts to take 8 tricks in clubs. A bid of 5 clubs contracts to take 11 tricks in clubs.

Each bid must beat the previous bid. This can be done by bidding for more tricks or by bidding for the same number of tricks in a higher-ranking suit. (Suit rank: NT, Spades, Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs). In other words, any player at his turn can make a higher bid. A bid is higher than a previous bid if it is larger in number than the previous bid (eg. 3 clubs is higher than 2 hearts) or if it is the same number but in a higher rank (1 heart is higher than 1 club).

The Declarer is the player who first bids the trump suit from the partnership that wins the contract. Declarer plays both partnership hands.

### 3) OPENING LEAD

The player on declarer's left makes an opening lead the first card to be played.

4) REVEALING THE DUMMY. The partner of the declarer places his hand face up on the table.

### 5) THE PLAY PERIOD

One card played from each hand constitutes a trick. When all cards are played 13 tricks will have been played. The player who plays the highest ranking card of the suit led wins the trick. You must follow suit when possible. If you cannot follow suit you can play any other card, e.g. if the king of spades is led, the ace of clubs will not win the trick (unless clubs are trumps).

The aim of the card play, is to make your contract or to stop the opposition making theirs. As declarer, play on your long suits, counting your hand and dummy.

### 6) SCORING

Briefly, the first six tricks do not count. The score for the seventh and subsequent trick depends upon which suit is trumps.

- 30 points in spades and hearts (major suits)
- 20 points in diamonds and clubs (minor suits)
- 30 points in no trumps, plus 10 points bonus for no trumps

In addition to the trick score you also get a bonus of 50 points for making the contract, known as the part score bonus. There is also a game and slam bonus you will hear about in later lessons.

## BIDDING.

The aim in the bidding is to win the contract and to bid the full extent of your hands.

The first bid at the table is known as the opening bid - bid your longest suit or NT if you do not have a long suit.

The opener's partner's (known as the responder) first move will be to agree with partner on a trump suit - called FINDING A FIT - very important. You have a suit fit when you hold 8+ cards between the two hands, e.g.

OPENING BID	PARTNER
♠ AK982	Q73
♥ 5 4	9642
♦ AK7	Q8
♣ 964	A732

1 ♦                      2 ♠

In the above you opened 1S with your longest suit. Partner (the responder) raised the spade suit confirming the "fit".

Another example:

OPENING BID	<u>PARTNER</u>
♠ AJ76	K9832
♥ J2	A93
♦ AQJ76	84
♣ 76	Q82

This time the opening bid is a diamond, the long suit but this time partner suggests an alternative and you agree - you have found a fit in spades.

**FINDING A FIT IS IMPORTANT BUT FINDING A MAJOR FIT IS VERY IMPORTANT.**

**HAND EVALUATION FOR OPENING BIDS.**

### Two Considerations.

High Card Point Count

A    4  
K    3  
Q    2  
J    1

Hand Patterns

voids, singletons and doubletons

### Hand Pattern or Shape.

The pattern of the hand describes the length of each suit in the hand starting with longest suit. For example to say that a hand is a 5-4-2-2 shape means it contains a 5 card suit, a 4 card suit and two doubletons (2 card suits) while a 6-3-3-1 pattern means that the hand has a 6 card suit, two 3 card suits and a singleton (1 card). A void suit means the hand contains no cards in that suit.

The value of distribution points when you are the opening bidder is

1 Point for 5th card in suit.

Add the high card point count to distribution points and if you have the

LUCKY 12 (or more) you can open the bidding.

### CARD PLAY. How to defend.

You defend when the opposition wins the bidding. Whether you play high or low depends whether you are first, second or third player to the trick.

#### The Lead.

Lead your longest suit:

- \* lead the highest card it is headed by a sequence of honours.
- \* lead a low card if your honours are not in sequence.

but

If the Ace is the honour, you must lead it. The Ace is **not a good lead** – it should be used to "chop the head" off the King when the opposition leads it.

(In suit contracts)

#### Examples:

- \* KJ72 lead 2 - honours are not next to each other
- \* KQJ6 lead K – sequence of honours
- \* AK742 - lead A - K is adjacent.
- \* A 10942 - lead A – **never underlead** an Ace meaning do not lead a card lower than the ace.

Choose another suit

#### Second Hand play Low.

play low to give partner a chance to win the trick. Only play high with a sequence of honours and play the lowest equal value.