

Bridge

Players: 4

Type: Trick-Taking

Card rank: A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Suit rank: NT (No Trumps) > ♠ (Spades) > ♥ (Hearts) > ♦ (Diamonds) > ♣ (Clubs)

Objective

Following an auction players score points by taking tricks during the play and aim to eventually win a rubber of two games. Note that there are several bridge variations, this is just one.

The Deal

The game is played with four people, playing as two pairs. Partners should be seated across the table from each other and facing each other. Traditionally the pairs are referred to as North-South and East-West. Pairs can be randomly assigned by making all players draw one card. The two highest cards are partners against the two lowest, and the player with the highest card is dealer. Each deal requires a regular, shuffled 52-card deck and each player is dealt 13 cards one at a time, starting with the person to the dealers left, in a clockwise direction.

Bidding

Bidding is commenced by the dealer. The position of dealer rotates clockwise per round so players take turns in bidding first.

A bid is a number 1-7 plus a suit (♣, ♦, ♥, ♠ or NT). The number, added to six, indicates how many tricks your pair must win with the suit bid as trumps. As an example, the lowest bid, 1♣, is a contract your pair would fulfill by taking at least 7 tricks with clubs as trumps. Similarly, 1♦ indicates 7 tricks with diamonds as trumps; 3♦ means 9 tricks with diamonds as trumps; 3 NT means 9 tricks with no suit as trumps. The bidding can start with any opening bid. During the auction, players in turn may pass or bid (or may double or redouble - see below). Each new bid must be higher than the previous bid. The new bid may be in a higher-ranking suit without increasing the number of tricks. The suit rankings are (from high to low): NT > ♠ > ♥ > ♦ > ♣.

The auction ends as soon as three players in a row pass. The last bid becomes the final contract. Whichever partner first bid the winning trump suit is called the declarer the partner to the declarer is called the dummy. The dummy's hand will be played openly by the declarer.

Double and redouble: If your opponent has made the most recent bid, at your turn you may double (just say the word "double"). This means you double the stakes, i.e., if you make your contract, you win double the number of points (and likewise could lose more points). Either opponent can then redouble.

The Play

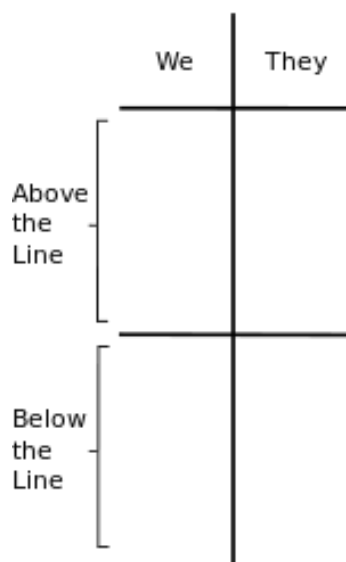
The defender to the left of the declarer lays first. Once the first trick is led, the dummy reveals his hand and the declarer will tell the dummy what card to play on each of his turns.

Once all of the tricks have been played the scores are calculated.

Scoring

In bridge, you aim to win a rubber. A rubber is won by making 'game' twice. To make a game you need to score 100 points 'below the line'. Once a pair have won a game they become vulnerable which means that contracts carry more points but have higher risk.

Each player usually keeps their own score so they can track the progression of the game. When scoring a rubber, think of yourself and your partner as "We" and the opponents as "They." The first thing to do is to start by drawing a line so your score pad looks like the following:



Beneath the horizontal line goes your score toward the 100 points needed to make a game, whilst above the line go the following:

- Your overtricks
- The points you pick up when your opponents don't make their contract (you gain their penalty)
- Various bonuses you can pick up, such as for winning the rubber

After either side scores 100 or more points beneath the first line, you draw a new line, indicating that a game has been bid and made. Now both sides have to start all over to score 100 points because neither side has any points under the new bottom line. When you eventually add everyone's score at the end of the rubber, it doesn't matter whether the scores are above or beneath the line; the points all count the same. But during the rubber, what's under the bottom line is important because it tells you whether either side has a partial score toward game. Most packs of cards include a scoring card like the one below with all the relevant point information displayed. Whilst a little daunting at first glance it is fairly simple to use.

CONTRACT BRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCORING						
TRICK SCORE ~ Below the line	for each trick bid & made			Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
	in ♣ and ♦			20	40	80
	in ♥ and ♠			30	60	120
	in No Trumps-the first trick - following tricks			40	80	160
			30	60	120	
GAME is 100 points below the line. Best of 3 GAMES wins a RUBBER						
PREMIUM & PENALTY SCORE ~ Above the line						
	Not vulnerable			vulnerable		
	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
PENALTIES						
1 undertrick	50	100	200	100	200	400
2 undertricks	100	300	600	200	500	1000
3 undertricks	150	500	1000	300	800	1600
4 undertricks	200	800	1600	400	1100	2200
5 undertricks	250	1100	2200	500	1400	2800
6 undertricks	300	1400	2800	600	1700	3400
7 undertricks	350	1700	3400	700	2000	4000
PREMIUMS	Trick value	100	200	Trick value	200	400
Each overtrick						
For making a doubled or redoubled contract		50	100	—	50	50
Slam Bid Score	Small	500		750		
	Grand	1000		1500		
Rubber Bonus Score	in two games 700	in three games 500	Unfinished Rubber - for one game 300	Unfinished Rubber - for part score(s) 100		
Trump Honours in the same hand A.K.Q.J.10.	Four 100	Five 150	For Aces in no. Trumps 150			
This scoring applies to Rubber Bridge only for Duplicate scoring refer to the World bridge Federation revised laws of 1987						
WADDINGTONS FINE PLAYING CARDS						

This section refers to the points earned for winning each trick that was bid. Notice that different suits are worth different points and the first NT trick won is worth more.

All the following are above the line and do not count towards game:

If a pair fail to fulfill their contract, the opposing team gains points depending on the number of tricks they fell short of the contract by.

Bonus points for each trick won over the number bid

Bonus for doubled contracts

Bidding + winning 12 tricks

Bidding + winning 13 tricks

Left: Points for winning the rubber.
Right: If players end the game before a rubber is completed.

Bonus points for being dealt a good hand!

Terminology

Auction: bidding for number of tricks to be taken in the game

Contract: number of tricks declarer must take to satisfy his or her bid

Declarer: winner of the auction, the player who tries to make the contract

Dummy: declarer's partner; the dummy hand is laid face up on the table

Double: in the auction a bid to double the score or the penalties if a contract is made or set

Major: a heart or spade card

Minor: a diamond or club card

Not vulnerable: a side that has not won a game yet in a rubber.

Overcall: a bid made after opponents have opened the bidding

Raise: a bid in a suit that partner has already bid

Rebid: your second bid

Redouble: doubling a double

Response: your call in the auction when your partner has opened the bidding

Rubber: two games

Ruff: to trump

Set: to defeat a contract

Singleton: just one card of a suit

Table: the dummy

Undertricks: number of tricks the declaring side falls short of the contract

Void: no cards in a suit

Vulnerable: a side that has won a game in a rubber

Tips for Bidding for Beginners

“When you are first learning to play bridge, determining what to bid can be confusing. As you continue to play, you will quickly learn that making an intelligent bid is key to winning the game. It will take a lot of practice to understand all the nuances of bidding, and we won't get into any of the fine points here -- whole books have been written about bidding strategies! However, to help you get started, here are some basic guidelines to help you develop your bidding skills.

Arrange your hand according to suit. Now assign points to your cards in the following way: Aces, 4 points; kings, 3 points; queens, 2 points; jacks, 1 point; singleton (only one card in a suit), 1 point; void (no cards in a suit), 2 points. Add up your points. Now look at your cards to determine which is your strongest suit. To bid a suit as trump, you'll want to have 4-5 of the suit with a minimum of 1-2 high cards. If you have 16-18 points and a fairly even distribution of cards in each suit, you may consider bidding no trump.

The general rule of thumb is to open a bid (to bid first on your team) only if you have 13 or more points. Of course, it's a different story if your partner has already bid because he is signaling to you that he already has sufficient points to open. In that case he is asking you if you can support his suit or if you have another suit you'd like to introduce. In answering your partner's opening bid, you should have at least 6-8 points to support his suit and 8-10 if you're introducing a new suit. On the other hand, if your partner has passed and you don't have 13 points, it may be wise for you to pass as well.

As you and your partner bid back and forth, try to ascertain how many points you have as a team. For instance, if you believe that your partner's points and your points combine to total 28 or more, you should have enough to take a bid of 4. For a bid of 6, 33 points should suffice, and for a bid of 7 (a "grand slam"), you should have 36 points between you. There are numerous other point-counting conventions, but these cover some of the essentials.

Of course, every rule has some exceptions, and you must also pay attention to your opponents' bidding. You may find that they're bidding a suit that is particularly strong in your hand. Then you have to decide, based on what your partner has bid and your own points, whether it would be a better strategy to allow your opponents' bid to go through and try to set them or try to win the contract yourself and thus earn game points.”