

BEGINNERS BRIDGE

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Lesson One

Introduction

Rules

Playing simple hands

Declarer Play:

Planning the Play

Finesses

Declaring No Trump

BEGINNER'S BRIDGE LESSONS

Class 1

Introduction and Rules

Some things to consider

1. Bridge is a **partnership** game. Care and feeding of partners is important. Be courteous and helpful. Criticism must be constructive, and held until after the session is over.
2. Bridge is primarily a game of **communication**. There are three phases to the game.
 - a. The **Auction**. You will attempt to describe your hand to your partner using only the allowed bids, with the goal of reaching the optimum 'contract'.
 - b. The **Defense**. You will attempt to help your partnership defeat the contract by signaling with the cards you play and discard.
 - c. **Declarer Play**. You will need to maintain communication between your hand and the 'dummy' (maintain 'entries') in order to make your contract.

In the beginning...

1. Fan the cards face down on the table. Each player chooses one card; the person choosing the highest card is the first **dealer** of the evening. For the remainder of the session, the deal will pass clockwise to each player in turn.
2. Dealer deals 13 cards to each player, starting with the player to dealer's left and dealing clockwise.

Dealer's partner shuffles a second deck of cards in preparation for the next hand and places the shuffled deck to their right.
3. Each player should count his cards *before looking at them* to ensure that they have exactly 13 cards.
4. Each player should sort the cards into suits. It is recommended that you alternate the red and black suits.
5. Following the deal, the auction commences. The dealer makes the first bid.

Bidding

1. Dealer is the first person to bid.

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2. Bidding proceeds clockwise around the table.
3. Everybody gets to bid as often as they like (even if they have previously '**passed**').
4. The bidding is over when there are three consecutive 'passes'. The final bid is known as the '**contract**'. It specifies the number of tricks that must be taken by the partnership which won the contract, and what the **trump** suit, if any, will be.

The Play

1. At the conclusion of the bidding, the *first person to have bid the final 'suit'* is the '**declarer**'. Note, that this *may not be* the person who made the final bid.
2. The Player to the declarer's left is the opening **leader** and makes the **opening lead** (is the first person to pick a card from their hand and place it on the table.) The lead should be made face down, then turned up if there are no irregularities and the bidding has been reviewed, if desired by any player.
3. Declarer's partner places their cards ('hand') on the table, suits laid out separately, with **trumps**, if any, on declarer's left. This is the '**dummy**'.
4. Declarer says 'Thank you, partner' (regardless of how pleased they are with what they see!)
5. Declarer will play both his hand and dummy's.
6. Declarer will take a minute to plan how to take the number of tricks they have contracted for.
7. Declarer plays a card from dummy. Leader's partner plays a card. Declarer plays a card. The four cards thus played constitute a '**trick**'. There are a total of 13 tricks in each hand.
 - a. Every player must play a card in the same suit that was led (i. e.: 'follow suit'), if they can.
 - b. If a player cannot follow suit, they may play any card from their hand that they please, including a trump. They are not obligated to trump if they prefer not to.
8. If all four cards are the same suit, and none is a trump suit, the highest card played wins the '**trick**'.

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9. If any of the cards played are trumps, the highest trump wins the trick.
10. Whichever player won the trick must lead to the next trick, including dummy.
(Note that it is frequently important to a partnership which hand will be leading to the next trick. Careful planning is required.)
11. Play continues until all thirteen tricks have been played.
12. The hand is scored depending on whether the declarer fulfilled their contract or not.

Play a simple hand

1. Play a Simple Hand in NT¹

Dealer: North

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

- a. This Hand is played in 3NT
 - i. North is the Declarer and South is the Dummy
 - ii. North must take 9 tricks (3 + 6)
- b. North counts his/her winners.
 - i. There are 9 winners: A♠, AKQJ♦, AKQJ♣
- c. East leads to the first trick
 - i. East Leads the K♠
- d. North takes the A♠ and the remaining winners 'off the top'.

¹ Club Series/Vol. 1 - Lesson 2, Exercise 9