

# INTRODUCTION TO BRIDGE

Bridge is a game for four people playing in two partnerships. A standard pack of 52 cards is used.

There are four **Suits**: ♠ Spades, ♥ Hearts, ♦ Diamonds and ♣ Clubs.

Each suit has thirteen cards in the order: Ace, King, Queen, Jack, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. Ace is always high.

## THE PLAY

The cards are dealt so that each player receives 13 cards. It is best to arrange them in your hand with alternating red suits and black suits.

The bidding starts with the dealer. After the bidding is over, one pair become the declaring side. One member of this pair called the **Declarer**, plays the hand while the opponents **Defend** the hand.

The partner of the declarer, called the **Dummy**, puts all of his cards face up on the table and takes no further part in the play. Declarer plays both hands, his own and dummy's. The first person to play a card is the person on the left of the declarer, this is called the **Opening Lead**.

The cards are played clockwise round the table until four cards have been played.

The highest card played wins the trick.



\* the card is placed like this if your side won the trick,



or like this if your side didn't win the trick.

## TRUMPS

You must always follow suit if you can, but if as a result of the bidding there is a trump suit, then any card in the trump suit beats any card in the other suits. So, if hearts are trumps, the ♥2 would beat the ♣A. You may only use a trump when you are unable to follow suit, but you don't have to - you may choose to **Discard** (throw away) a card from another suit. Playing a trump card is known as **Ruffing**.

## HIGH CARD POINTS

Each player estimates the value of their hand by using a scale of points for the high cards. Ace = 4, King = 3, Queen = 2, Jack = 1

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| Ace   | 4 |
| King  | 3 |
| Queen | 2 |
| Jack  | 1 |

# MINIBRIDGE

We'll start by describing MiniBridge which is a great introduction to bridge for players of all ages. MiniBridge enables you to start playing bridge right away without having to know all the rules for bidding. Everything you learn in MiniBridge is relevant to real bridge i.e. counting your points, how to play the cards, game and part score contracts, scoring etc.

## HOW TO PLAY MINIBRIDGE

1. The cards are dealt out one by one to the four players, playing in two partnerships sitting opposite each other – thirteen cards each.
2. Each player estimates the value of their hand by using a scale of points for the high cards. Ace = 4, King = 3, Queen = 2, Jack = 1.
3. Each player announces their points starting with the dealer and going clockwise round the table. The total should add up to forty.
4. The pair with the most points between them becomes the declaring side, the other pair become the defending side. If both sides have twenty points, redeal the cards. The person on the declaring side with the most points becomes the declarer and their partner becomes the dummy. If both players have the same number of points, then declarer is the one who announced their points first.
5. The dummy's hand is put down on the table for all to see and declarer chooses the contract. He announces either 'part-score' or 'game' and either no-trumps or a specific trumps suit. The goal for a part-score is 7 tricks, and the goals for game contracts are 9 tricks in no-trumps, 10 tricks in ♥ or ♠ and 11 tricks in ♣ or ♦.
6. The first person to lead a card is the player on the left of the declarer. Each person plays a card in turn clockwise and whoever puts down the highest card wins the trick, any trump beating any card in another suit. If either defender wins a trick, it counts as a trick for their side.
7. The cards are then turned over. The winner of the trick leads the first card for the next trick.
8. Declarer controls the play of dummy's cards and if the winning card comes from the dummy, the first card for the next trick comes from the dummy (but the declarer says which card it should be).
9. After all the cards have been played, the players agree how many tricks were won by each side and calculate the score.
10. The position of the dealer moves round the table clockwise with each deal.

## SCORING

1. The declaring side only scores points if they win the target number of tricks (or more).
2. No points are won for the first six tricks. For each additional trick, points are scored according to the contract, as follows:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| No Trumps      | 40 points for the first trick,<br>30 points for each subsequent trick. |
| Hearts/Spades  | 30 points  |
| Clubs/Diamonds | 20 points  |

(Note that the goals of 9 tricks in No Trumps, 10 tricks in Hearts or Spades or 11 tricks in Clubs or Diamonds, will lead to a total of 100 points – the requirement for 'game')

3. If 'game' has been announced before the play of the cards and it is achieved you gain a bonus of 300 points.
4. If 'part score' has been announced and 7 or more tricks have been made you gain a bonus of 50 points.
5. If you do not reach your goal, you do not get any points for the tricks that you do make. Instead, the defenders get 50 points for each trick that the declaring side is short of their target

## SUIT RANKING ORDER

Notice it is alphabetical. Clubs are the lowest ranking and No Trumps the highest.

| NT       | No Trumps   |
|----------|---|
| Spades   |  |
| Hearts   |  |
| Diamonds |  |
| Clubs    |  |

## TARGET CONTRACTS

| Points  | Tricks (in NT) | Tricks (In Trumps) |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|
| 21 – 22 | 7              | 7 – 8              |
| 23 – 24 | 8              | 9                  |
| 25 – 26 | 9              | 10                 |
| 27 – 28 | 10             | 11                 |
| 29 – 30 | 11             | 11                 |
| 31 – 32 | 11             | 12                 |
| 33 – 36 | 12             | 12                 |
| 37+     | 13             | 13                 |

'Part Score'  
50 points bonus

'Game' in No Trumps  
300 points bonus

'Game' in ♥ or ♠  
300 points bonus

'Game' in ♣ or ♦  
300 points bonus

Remember that no points are scored for the first six tricks.

## 'Game' contracts

A 'game' is when the score for the tricks you bid and make adds up to at least 100. When your partnership has at least 25 high card points you should usually choose a 'game' contract as follows:

9 tricks in No Trumps (3NT) =  $40 + 30 + 30 (= 100) + 300 \text{ bonus} = 400$   
 10 tricks in ♥ or ♠ (4♥/4♠) =  $4 \times 30 (= 120) + 300 \text{ bonus} = 420$   
 11 tricks in ♣ or ♦ (5♣/5♦) =  $5 \times 20 (= 100) + 300 \text{ bonus} = 400$

## 'Part Score' contracts

A 'part score' is when the score for the tricks you bid and make adds up to less than 100. If your partnership has less than 25 high card points you should choose a target of 7 tricks (i.e. as low as possible).

There is no advantage in choosing a target of 8 tricks over choosing a target of 7 tricks. A contract for 8 tricks making exactly 8 tricks scores the same as a contract for 7 tricks making 8 tricks.

## EXPECTED NUMBER OF TRICKS

The table below shows the expected number of tricks you will make from your partnership's combined point count. It is important to know by heart the ones shown in bold.

| Points         | Tricks (in NT) | Tricks ( In Trumps) |
|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>21 – 22</b> | <b>7</b>       | <b>8</b>            |
| <b>23 – 24</b> | <b>8</b>       | <b>9</b>            |
| <b>25 – 26</b> | <b>9</b>       | <b>10</b>           |
| 27 – 28        | 10             | 11                  |
| 29 – 30        | 11             | 11                  |
| 31 – 32        | 11             | 12                  |
| 33 – 36        | 12             | 12                  |
| 37+            | 13             | 13                  |