

## Bridge 101 – Basic Terminology and Illustration

### A Hand of Bridge

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When a hand of bridge is played it consists of two sections – **the auction (bidding)** and **the play of the hand**.

#### 1. The Auction

The auction (or the bidding) is just as though you were at a farm home country auction bidding on a set of fine china. The highest bidder gets to take the china home. In an auction at the bridge table, the highest bidder wins the contract. According to the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, the auction ends after three players “pass.”

- a) Starting with the dealer who is designated by the BBO software, players make increasing “legal” bids or pass. Legal bids depend on the level of the suit that is bid. (See Bridge 101 Suit Rank Study Sheet.)
- b) Each player must make at least one *bid* or as it is sometimes referred, a “call.”
- c) The player who is the *first player who bids the contract’s suit* is called the **declarer** and plays the cards for their partnership.
- d) A contract may be reached with “no trump” designated—a NT contract.
- e) **Partners** sit on opposite sides of the table and are referred to as E/W or N/S. Here West opens the bidding with a “pass.” North bids 1♥. West’s partner East passes, etc.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
2♣	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

- f) In the above bidding sequence, note that players may *pass* (“I have nothing to say at this time, partner”) but may re-enter the bidding later provided there have not been three consecutive passes. Also, while North makes the highest bid to set the contract at 4♠, South will be **declarer** having bid the ♠ suit first.

## 2. The Play

The phase of bridge in which the players try to take tricks to determine the outcome of bets made during the bidding.

### a) The Play-Defining our Words

- A **play** consists of taking a card from your hand and placing it face up in the center of the table or clicking on that card on BBO. The four cards played, one from each player in clockwise rotation, constitute a **trick**.
- The player who wins the trick makes the next **lead**.
- The first card played to each trick is called the **lead**. The defender to the left (Left Hand Opponent – LHO) of the declarer must make the first lead on each deal. This is called the **opening lead**.
- The player who leads may lead any card in his hand. The remaining three players must then *follow suit* if able; they must play a card of the same suit. If unable to follow suit, a player may play any card in his hand.

### b) Play of the Dummy

- Immediately after the opening lead is made, the **dummy** spreads his entire hand face up on the table, neatly arranged into suits for all players to see. BBO will do this for you. The **dummy** is the partner of the declarer.
- If there is a trump suit (we will get to the meaning of trump below), it should be placed on the right as viewed by the dummy. As viewed by declarer, trumps would be on the left. Again, thank you BBO.
- The player who is the dummy does not select his own cards during the play. Declarer must play his own hand and the dummy's hand, although each hand must be played from in proper turn. All four players are responsible to see that declarer's plays from the dummy are legal, i.e., following suit when able.
- The player who is the dummy may warn another player against infringing any of the rules. For example, if *clubs* are led and declarer plays a *spade* from his hand, dummy might inquire, "No clubs, partner?" to prevent a **revoke** (failing to follow suit when able). Playing online will not allow revokes so we don't have to worry. You can worry when you go to your local club and play face to face (f2f). ☺

- c) **A Discard** – The player, who wins the trick with the highest card, leads the first card for the next trick. If a player at the table does not have a card in the suit led, he **discards** a card in another suit. A **discard** is when you cannot follow suit. If you are playing a suit contract, rather than a "no trump contract," and are unable to follow suit, you may "trump," as below.

**d) What is Trump?**

- Trump is the suit selected in the bidding process by the partnership that wins the final contact—the partnership that bids the most. It could be spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs or NT. This is a basic concept of duplicate/rubber bridge.
- When you are unable to *follow suit*, that is when you do not have any cards in the suit led, you may *trump* to win the trick. If two players trump, the player that plays the highest trump card wins the trick.
- A trick not containing a trump card is won by the player who plays the highest card of the suit led.
- The winner of each trick leads a card to begin the next trick. Note that the dummy is considered a separate “player” even though declarer actually selects the cards.

e) **What is a Board?** A board consists of the 52 cards in the deal. In duplicate bridge play, the *board* is passed from table to table with the same 13 cards placed in individual pockets of the board for N, S, E, and W players. On BBO, we may refer to a board in this manner, “Partner, on Board 17 of that tournament, we might have reached a contract of 4♠.” Thirteen tricks are in each board, each player has 13 cards.

**Quick Exercise on taking tricks:** If diamonds are trump, which card would win each of the following tricks? Answers on next page.

<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
A.	♥6	♥J	♥K	♥10
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
B.	♠7	♠10	♦6	♣Q
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
C.	♣7	♠8	♠A	♣8
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
D.	♦10	♦J	♠Q	♠K
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
E.	♥Q	♥A	♦2	♦3
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
F.	♣2	♠J	♠Q	♥K

Answers:

- A. ♥6 is led. The highest ♥ played takes the trick—the ♥K.
- B. Though a ♠ is led, the ♦6 takes the trick as diamonds are trump in this contract.
- C. A ♣ lead and the highest ♣ played takes the trick—the ♣8.
- D. With the ♦10 trump lead, the highest trump played takes the trick—the ♦J.
- E. ♥Q lead . . . 3<sup>rd</sup> player is *void* in hearts (has no hearts) and may *trump*. He does so with the ♦2; but the 4<sup>th</sup> player, also *void* in hearts, *overtrumps* the ♦2 with the ♦3, winning the trick.
- F. ♣2 is led, no one has any clubs left (all are now *void* in clubs). No ♦ trump card is played. The little ♣2 wins the trick!