

Bridge Etiquette, Manners and Best Behaviour

Here are some good habits to get into to make sure everyone has an enjoyable duplicate bridge session.

Before you play:

- Make sure any mobile phone is turned off.
- If possible, discuss any conventions beforehand, and complete a conventions card if required by the club.
- Please pay attention to the layout of the tables, so you know where East-West are moving to, and where the boards are moving.
- A good tip for East-West to identify the East-West pair at your next table. You will be following this pair throughout the session.
- A good tip for North-South is to double-check you are playing the boards in order.

Arrival at the table

- When you arrive at the table, please greet your opponents or introduce yourselves. Please especially make newer players feel welcome.
- Once your opponents arrive, do not carry on a discussion about the previous round!

Bidding

- It is North's responsibility to make sure the boards are pointed the right way, and in order. If you are playing several boards each round, you can remove some of the boards, but the board in play must remain on the table.
- Generally you can start bidding the first round as soon as the boards arrive.
- Count your cards before you look at them.
- After you have sorted your cards, count them again, to make sure no cards are hidden.
- Try as far as possible to bid "in tempo": neither excessively slowly nor quickly. Think about what you are going to bid before you make your bid, and take the bid from the bidding box smoothly. **Do not fiddle with your bidding box while you are thinking about your bid.**
- Use the Stop Card before any jump bid.
- Do not comment on any bid or speak unless necessary during the auction. It is discourteous to players who need to concentrate.
- Try not to look at your partner or stare intently at anyone during the bidding or play.
- If you want to know what an opponent's bid means, you can ask (the partner), but only at your turn to bid, and only if you really need to ask. It is often better to save any questions until the end of the auction. If you end up as a defender with your partner on lead and have some questions about any of the bids, you should wait until your partner has led, and then ask your questions. This is to avoid the possibility that your question might influence your partner.
- If your partner fails to alert or announce your bid, do not say anything! After the auction has finished, if you are declarer or dummy, tell the opponents before they lead. If you end up as a defender, tell the opponents at the end of the hand. e.g. "There was a failure to announce my 2 heart bid – which was a transfer to spades". In either case, call the director if you may have been damaged by the failure to alert or announce.
- After the last bid has been made, leave the bids out until the opening lead has been made.
- If you are on lead, lead face down, saying "My lead?" or "Any questions?" and then turn your card over. This is to help prevent the wrong defender making the opening lead. "Any questions?" is a signal to your partner that you have chosen your opening lead and that they can now ask any questions about the bidding they may have. **Make the opening lead without pausing to record the contract**, either on your scorecard or on the bridgemates.
- After the lead has been made, put away the bids. Some people like to leave out the final bid, as a reminder of the contract. Strictly speaking this is not allowed by EBU regulations, but it is allowed in many clubs.

The Play

- If the wrong defender leads, either on opening lead, or later on, you should call the director. Do not try to sort it out yourselves.
- If declarer leads from the wrong hand, either opponent can point out the error, and declarer must replace the card, and lead from the correct hand. Alternatively the next person to play can decide to accept the lead.
- If the lead is made from the wrong hand, but the next person plays a card, the lead is deemed to have been accepted, and play continues.
- At the end of a trick, you should only turn your card over when you no longer wish to see the opponents' cards. If your opponents turn over their cards, you can ask them to turn them back up until you turn your card over. Once you have turned over your card, you can no longer turn it back – **not even to see where is the lead is**. If you are not sure which hand won trick, ask the opponents/dummy. If there is a disagreement, you will have to call the director.
- Both dummy and the defenders can (and should) check that their partner is not revoking when they fail to follow to a suit for the first time. E.g. “No Clubs, Partner?” If a revoke is noticed and corrected, the penalty for this is less severe than if it is noticed later on (but call the director, anyway).
- Never touch another player's cards!

Dummy's Responsibilities

- Never play a card without being told to play.
- Keep track of tricks won or lost.
- Dummy can warn any other players they have placed a card incorrectly, but NOT after play to the next trick has started. It is a good idea for dummy to keep an eye on what's wrong, so that the other players can be told at the end of the hand.
- Dummy can prevent declarer leading from wrong hand, by for example, pointing at dummy if dummy is on lead. Do not do this unless declarer finds this helpful, and be careful NOT to point to any particular suit or card.
- Dummy cannot point out an irregularity (e.g. lead from wrong hand) after it has happened.

At the end of the hand

- Making a claim. It is considered good practice to claim, once the outcome is clear. State your line of play if there is any choice. E.g. “Draw the last trump, and then I have 4 clubs”. If there any dispute, you should normally call the director. However **if all 4 players agree**, you can instead agree to “play it out”, instead of calling the director.
- **Make sure both sides agree on the number of tricks won and lost before you collect up your cards.** If there is a disagreement, identify the tricks that are in dispute and turn over those cards.
- North is responsible for entering the score on the scoreslip or on bridgemates. However he does not have to do this himself.
- East and West should check they agree with the score.
- If you are using bridgemates, East or West should place the bridgemate flat on the table, so that all players can see it, and press confirm.
- Do not criticise your partner, or make any comment or suggestions to the opponents. Do not offer advice, unless you are asked for it. The only comments you should make are things like “Well done”, “Nicely played” or “Bad Luck”. Do not offer advice like “Why didn't you...?”
- You should shuffle your hand a little before returning your cards to the board holder. This is so that no inference can be made from the order of the cards.
- Once the next round is called, please say goodbye and to thank the opponents.
- Please report any examples of rudeness or bad behaviour. You can stay anonymous if you wish.