

12. Playing the hand

- In a trump contract it is usually correct to **DRAW TRUMPS** first. This means to have enough rounds (usually 3 tricks) to take out all the opponents' trumps. Then go about making tricks in the other suits -you don't want the opponents to ruff (trump in) your other winners.

- Try to make extra tricks by **playing towards lower honours** (K, Q, or J) and hoping they are placed over the missing honour. Don't just take all your Aces – they will always win tricks!

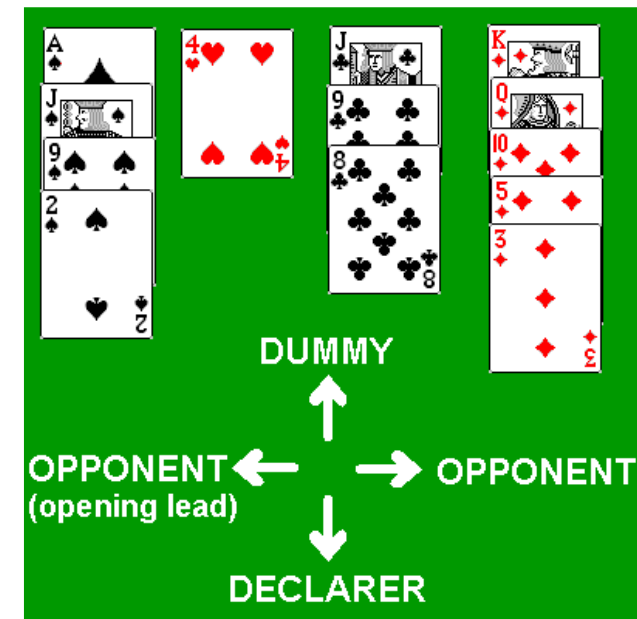
- **Long suits** can often generate tricks – count the cards that have gone to see if your last card/s are winners!

- Against a **NT** contract, attack and **lead your best suit**

- If you are defending a contract **only lead an honour if you also have the honour immediately below**. (Eg: Ace promises the King, Q promises the J) Otherwise lead a small card.

The Mini Bridge Pack

An introduction to the best card game in the world



NZBridge

MINI BRIDGE

This simplified version of bridge is a great way to introduce the game to learners, young and old – try these at home before your friends attend lessons. These notes are from Lesson 1 of the beginners notes which are available on www.nzbridge.co.nz Some explanation of bidding is given here, but Mini Bridge can be played for several months before introducing real bidding.

The Game of bridge is played in 2 distinct phases

1. The Auction

This phase is not used in Mini Bridge

Both partnerships compete to win the contract. Compass directions (NS/EW) are used for the four players.

The **DEALER** is the first player to call. A player may **PASS** or make a positive bid. A positive bid must be higher than the previous bid.

The auction continues in a clockwise direction until there are 3 consecutive **PASSES**. The **CONTRACT** is the last bid made before those passes. The player who first bids this suit, will be the **DECLARER**

- **Declarer** nominates the card from the dummy hand as well as playing a card from their own hand

- A **TRICK** is a collection of four cards – 1 from each player in turn.

- The player who wins this first trick then leads to the second trick.

- This continues until all 13 tricks have been played.

11. Scoring

If you want to score then do as follows:

- If you bid and make a part-score = +1

- If you bid and make a game = +5

- If you bid and make a slam = +10

- If you take the opponents down = +1 for every trick down

- Either set a target score, for example 30 or 50, or a set number of hands, to find a winner. (Depending on the time available)

10. Rules of Mini-Bridge

Who Becomes Declarer?

Each player, starting with the DEALER, adds up and announces their HCP.

The pair with the majority of points becomes the declaring side. The player of the partnership with the most points is the DECLARER. That is the end of the Auction phase at this stage.

What Happens Next?

The partner of the declarer, who is called **DUMMY**, places their cards in suits on the table. Declarer studies the dummy cards and their own hand and then decides what the contract should be - one of the **SUITS** or **NOTRUMPS (NT)**.

The partnership must try and find a **FIT** which is 8+ cards between the two hands. If there is a fit, then declarer chooses this as the trump suit. Trumps are then placed on dummy's right. (Left from Declarer's view) The partnership **MUST** always try for a **MAJOR** fit first. If no good fit is possible, then they choose a **NT** or minor contract.

Declarer now decides whether to bid **GAME**. If the combined point tally of both hands is 25 or over, the contract is declared in Game. Otherwise declarer plays in a **PARTSCORE** and needs to make 7 tricks, which is the minimum number to make any contract. If declarer thinks they can make 12 tricks then they can declare a **SLAM** !

Then What?

- The opponent on declarer's left leads a card to start the play.

2. The Play

The winning partnership must now fulfil the contract

- The **DECLARER** is the player who plays the hand
- **DUMMY** (Declarer's partner) places their cards face up on the table
- The faced cards on the table are also referred to as the **DUMMY**

- The **OPENING LEADER** is the opponent on declarer's left

- Declarer makes all decisions in the play of the hand; both their own and DUMMY'S cards
- Dummy cannot suggest a play to declarer

- A **TRICK** is a collection of 4 cards – 1 from each player in turn
- A player must follow suit if possible
- If a player can't follow suit, they can play any other card

- Highest card of the suit led wins the trick (unless a **TRUMP** is played)
- The next trick must be played from the hand which won the previous trick

3. How the Cards are Placed

The cards are placed individually in front of each player - vertically (towards us) if we win the trick, and horizontally (towards opponents) if we lose.

4. Ranking of Cards in a Suit

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

5. Ranking of the Suits

Notrumps (NT)

Spades (called the **MAJOR** suit)

Hearts (called the **MAJOR** suit)

Diamonds (called the **MINOR** suit)

Clubs (called the **MINOR** suit)

6. Naming a Suit

- Naming a suit declares that suit to be **TRUMPS** (the dominant suit)
- A **TRUMP** card beats any card from any other suit
- **NOTRUMPS** means that there is no dominant (trump) suit

7. Value of the Honour Cards

(HCP = High Card Points)

A = 4 K = 3 Q = 2 J = 1

Each suit total = 10 HCP Each deal total = 40 HCP

8. What is the partnership looking for in a contract?

Their aim is to find the best contract at the correct level. There are 3 levels to bid to:

- Part-score combined points less than 25
- Game combined points 25-32
- Slam combined points 33+

9. What is Game?

You get a large bonus when you make a Game, but you must make a certain number of tricks to succeed. The number of tricks varies according to the trump suit or NT.

Game is:

- 3NT – 9 tricks
- 4S/H – 10 tricks
- 5D/C – 11 tricks

Slam is to get 12 tricks and a Grand Slam is all 13 tricks!