

## LESSON 1: STUDENT NOTES

### Introduction to Bridge

Bridge is a partnership game, which is both its challenge and its fascination. It is a trick-taking game: a **TRICK** is a collection of four cards, one played by each player in turn. Thus in each deal of bridge, there are 13 tricks.

The game of Contract Bridge – to give it its full and proper name – is played in two distinct phases:

<b>The Auction</b>	The partnerships compete to win the contract to make a certain number of tricks
<b>The Play</b>	The winning partnership must now attempt to fulfil the contract

### The Auction

- We use compass directions (N/S/E/W) for the four players
- The **DEALER** is the first player to call. A player may **PASS** or make a positive bid
- A positive bid suggests the intention to make at least 7 tricks in a contract (you need 6 tricks before you start to score, so a 1-level contract must make 1+6 tricks etc.)
- A positive bid **must** be higher than the previous bid – see below for ranking of suits
- The auction continues in a **clockwise** direction until there are 3 consecutive passes
- The **CONTRACT** becomes the last bid made before those passes.

### Ranking of the suits

Spades	♠	}	Spades and Hearts are also called the <b>MAJOR</b> suits
Hearts	♥		
Diamonds	♦	}	Diamonds and Clubs are also called the <b>MINOR</b> suits
Clubs	♣		

The ranking of the suits determines what bid is higher e.g. 2♠ is higher than 2♥.

### Naming a suit

- Naming a suit suggests that suit to be **TRUMPS** (the dominant suit)
- A card from the trump suit is more powerful than cards from any other suit
- **NOTRUMPS** means that there is **no** dominant (trump) suit
- A bid of **NOTRUMPS** ranks above any suit bid at the same level.

### Ranking of cards in a suit

(high) A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 (low)

## Value of the honour cards (HCP – High Card Points)

A = 4	
K = 3	<b>Total in each suit = 10 HCP</b>
Q = 2	<b>Total in the pack = 40 HCP</b>
J = 1	

## What is the partnership looking for in a contract?

The aim is to find the best contract at the correct level. There are 3 levels to which the partnership may bid. For a simple starting point, let's say that the HCP requirements are:

<b>Partscore</b>	combined points less than 25
<b>Game</b>	combined points typically 25-32
<b>Slam</b>	combined points typically 33+

## What is a Game contract?

You get a large bonus score when you make a Game contract, but you must make a certain number of tricks to succeed. The number of tricks varies according to the trump suit or notrumps: 3NT = 9 tricks, 4♥/♠ = 10 tricks, 5♣/♦ = 11 tricks.

## The Play of the Hand

- The **DECLARER** is the player who plays the contract: this is the player who first bids the denomination (suit or notrumps) in which the contract is to be played.
- **DUMMY** (the 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 player must follow suit if possible
- If a player can't follow suit, she/he 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.

## How the cards are placed

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



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