



## Check Venue

- Room accessibility. Security/Locking arrangements
- Catering facilities
- Lighting
- Ventilation/Heating
- Toilets – accessibility
- Parking
- Table/Chair/Presentation Facilities
- Table Cloths; Table Number Labels; Bidding Boxes

## Teaching Checklist

- Helper per table
- Curriculum
- Lesson plans / Notes / Quizzes
- Presentation materials/Hand Out/Follow Up Emails
- Pre-dealt boards (one set per table)
- Homework Alongside lessons?

## Planning

- Plan course so not across school holidays
- Are you going to use Helpers/senior players?
- Always have a helper to collect the fees/give name tags on the first day. (see Teacher's Assistant below)
- Helpers must be carefully picked – “friendly and kind” is more important than bridge knowledge!
- Hold a preliminary session – with the teacher's assistant & the lesson helpers. Discuss practicalities, goals and strategies.
- If possible run free catch up/practice sessions with volunteer helpers who reinforce the previous week's lesson – use hands from earlier lessons (each helper has a hand record) If possible, have a helper for each table and after each hand, analyse bidding/play. The hand can be replayed, with players swapping places.
- Graduation for beginners at the end of lessons, with a certificate and drinks.
- What comes next – how to practice / Supervised sessions

## Fees

- Some clubs charge a fee for lessons – ideas you may include are: first lesson free, free membership with the lesson fee, free lessons or money back if you join the club. Refresher and Improver lessons could be free or include a small charge.
- Allow FREE repeat attendance at beginners' lessons

## Lesson Planning

- Try not to have a student sitting South when teaching from the front of the room (hard to turnaround). If using Helpers have them sit South
- What visuals are you going to use if any?
- What do you need to print before class – quizzes, student notes, teacher notes
- Who & when will you take fees
- Bidding boxes versus paper
- What are you going to do if get 1 extra, 2 extra or 3 extra people. Suggestions:
  - 1 extra – watch one hand then substitute in
  - 2 extra – have both watch at different tables then substitute in
  - 3 extra – have them play. Check bidding but once complete Dummy becomes a defender
- When playing hands encourage fast players to review hand via Double Dummy
- Quizzes – when about 2/3rds of room have finished start to go through.
- Either encourage or suggest players swap partners every break
- Do all Helpers understand Double Dummy technique?
- Decide approach if student misses a lesson. Encourage them to read notes and maybe offer a 30 minute Zoom lesson or F2F lesson before normal lesson starts

## Teacher's Assistant

- Get students mobile numbers (set up Group Chat)
- Get students email addresses (send weekly notes after lesson). Keep it cheery and encouraging. Keep privacy so best to blind CC everyone
- Can make up numbers at a table
- Taking money, printing name tags
- Keep the attendance register. If someone misses a lesson ring the person to find out why – maybe offer a catch up lesson etc
- Ensure tea, coffee & biscuits are available
- Assist with housekeeping chores

## Techniques

### Prepare cards to show examples

- Showing cards at the table can help illustrate concepts eg if finessing a K show it works if A is before the K but not if after. Similarly for Forcing out high cards, length, high from the short side, ruffing etc

## Double Dummy

- Students place their cards face up on the table in the same layout as if they were Dummy so everyone can see all 4 hands. Teacher/Helper can then discuss the bidding, the lead, the Plan & the play.

## Helpers / Buddies

- Helpers should NOT TEACH OR TELL STUDENTS WHAT TO BID/PLAY – just reinforce what the teacher has said (give the helpers a set of hand notes with the bidding, to assist the learners) Helpers could ask students to work out what the bidding has shown and suggest some possible bids to make next. Don't comment on card play except when this has been covered in a lesson.
- Need to be patient, kind & understanding – far more important than bridge ability
- Read the pre prepared hand records for play that has the expected bidding sequence for each board (deal files prepared by Bridge NSW have these hand records). Check what they have learnt and don't teach anything new. Please stick to these notes.
- Always be friendly, courteous, helpful and encouraging.
  - The lessons should be FUN – have a joke, but not at the expense of a learner!
  - Don't offer advice unless you are asked
- Bid ONLY and EXACTLY to the system taught to the beginners
- No matter what they bid/how they play – do not criticise.
  - Don't say "You should have....." Rather say "Sometimes it can work better if..."
  - Always speak in a quiet, calm voice
  - Don't comment on the play before they have covered this in the lessons – they have lots to remember as it is!
- Encourage the learner to work out their choices rather than telling them the bid to make or card to play. Ask things like:
  - "What has your partner's bid shown?"
  - "Have they shown a minimum or strong hand?"
  - "Do you have a fit?"
  - "Do you want to a) show a minimum, b) invite to game c) show/or bid a game?"
- ONLY after they have learnt some card play, ask:
  - "Where would you like the King to be?" "Can that K/Q win a trick?"
  - "How many trumps are you missing?" "Have you drawn trumps?" "Do you remember the order to play these honours?"
  - "Which suit will provide you with the most tricks?"

## Etiquette

Here are some good habits to practise from the outset:

- Always be courteous to your partner, and the opponents – greet your opponents, introduce yourself.
- Once the bidding has commenced, general conversation is not encouraged. Keep post-mortems until after the session.
- Practise good table manners:
- Cards are counted face down
- Decide on your bid before taking a bidding card from the bidding box / pen to paper
- All bids remain on the table until the auction is complete, & the opening lead is tabled
- Opening lead card is tabled face down by the player on the left hand side of the Declarer. After acceptance by their partner, the card is turned over
- As Declarer, thank your partner when the Dummy is tabled
- At the end of the hand, do not pick up your cards until the result is agreed with the opponents
- Shuffle your cards at the end of the hand
- Thank your opponents for the game!

## Retention

- If have lesson break, say over school holidays, have Helper / Teacher's Assistant call and encourage them to come back
- Help Find a Partner / Buddy especially in the early days
- Ideally run social supervised sessions as a next step
- Run a fun social event introducing beginners to regular club members, eg Teams of 3, BBQ
- Monthly newsletter &/or celebrate successes
- Educate club members to expect slowness & more noise when beginners join regular club sessions. Remind club members of the "rules" when playing with beginners, eg no advice unless asked ...
- One idea is to give students an opportunity to stop after about 6 weeks if they decide bridge is not for them. Often they then speak better about the club and their experience, if they stop then, than if they keep coming for a bit and then get disillusioned

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