

BRIDGEPADS / BRIDGESCORERS

Bridgepads have a 2 big advantages over manual scoring: they enable the Director to get scores out immediately at the end of the night, and scoring errors are virtually eliminated.

To start ('Initialize')

- Type in Table Number and, in the order requested, players' NZBA numbers. If you make a mistake, just press BACK to correct. If you can't remember your number, press '0' and let Director know.
- At the start of each round, the bridgepad shows you which pairs should be at the table and which boards are to be played. Check before playing.

Scoring

- Traditionally South scores, but it saves time if Dummy does it.
- Type in the contract and lead card as soon as it is led.
- For the second option on a key, press it twice (e.g. on the N/S key, press it once for North and twice for South).
- Type in the number of tricks made or lost, e.g. '5' if you were in 4S making 5 or '-1' if you were in 3NT going one light.
- If everyone passes, press PO for 'Passed Out'.
- When you have typed in your result, remember to let opposition check it and press the final NEXT.
- You can go back and correct a mistake if you press the ERROR button. Otherwise, call Director.
- At the end of the game, press NEXT and you get a brief time to look at what other players have made. The scores given are all NS (negative ones are EW) and beside them are the number of pairs who have got the same score. Unfortunately, you just have to guess what contract they were in! There is a time limit to how long this is visible to prevent players moving on from the next table accidentally seeing it.
- At the end of the round, the bridgepad will show where EW moves to.

Leave your bridgepad ready for the next session

- At the end of the session, keep pressing NEXT until you reach the end of your results, then press option 2 for 'Start New Game'. This will bring up 'Welcome', ready for the next session.

BRIDGE PROTOCOL

Stuff you should know!

1. About the Rules
2. Alerting
3. Bidding
4. Bidding Pads/ Boards/ Bridgepads
5. Cards and Play
6. Calling the Director
7. Claim/ Concession
8. Conventions/ Artificial bids
9. C Points/ Masterpoints
10. Dummy
11. Hand Records
12. Leading / Opening Leads
13. Penalty Cards
14. Slow Play/ Time Limits
15. Your System
16. Tournaments
17. Unauthorised Information

Common Mistakes

- a) Bid out of turn
- b) Insufficient bid
- c) Opening lead out of turn
- d) Lead out of turn
- e) Revoke

Carla Heslop 2013

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

You may not be surprised to learn that Bridge is the most popular card game in the world. However, the rules and expectations at the Bridge table are a bit of a puzzle for new players. This booklet will clarify many of them for you and – of course – make you a better and more knowledgeable player.

- *Naturally, as you gain experience and knowledge, your bidding, play and system agreements will change. The best idea is to keep things simple to start with, and the suggestions in this booklet will help you do that.*
- *While this booklet has some advice about how to play Bridge, it is more about all the things you **don't** learn in the classes.*

Answers to some common questions

- *This booklet came about after 6 years of directing Juniors and Intermediates and hearing the same questions time and time again. In 2011, I wrote answers to these questions on the club whiteboard and kept a record so I wouldn't repeat myself. At the end of the year I realised I had enough notes for a small booklet.*
- *Information comes from the NZ Bridge Manual and the rule book (Laws of Duplicate Bridge). Thanks also to my fellow directors from Christchurch, Crockfords and Akaroa Bridge clubs for their input.*

Fifth Edition

If another player thinks you have revoked and you disagree

Don't get upset. Call the Director.

Penalties (i.e. rectification)

Penalties are assigned according to which hand the revoke occurred in and whether any subsequent tricks were won by offending side.

The penalties for revoking vary from awarding zero to 2 tricks to the opposition.

This is to compensate them for what they would have won if the revoke had not occurred. It is not about punishing the guilty party, but about giving the opposition what they were due.

In the rare case where the opposition would have won more than 2 tricks had the revoke not occurred, the Director will award extra tricks.

No Penalties

Many people think that a revoke should be a hanging offence, but actually there are no penalties in the following situations:

If offending side didn't win revoke trick or any subsequent trick

For a second revoke in the same suit

If revoke was from a penalty card or Dummy

If revoke noticed after the hand has been played

If revoke occurred on the 12th trick. Director must still be called in case offender's card has given his partner unauthorised info that affects his play

When both sides have revoked on the same board.

Avoiding a Revoke – always the best plan!

When your partner fails to follow suit, ask: "Having none, partner?"

Or if the opposition fails to follow suit, Declarer can ask a Defender if they are out and vice versa, but Dummy can only ask Declarer.

e) REVOKE

A revoke is failure to follow suit, and then immediately or later in the game finding a card of that suit! Unless players stay calm and go about this systematically, sorting out a revoke can take up valuable playing time.

- Always call the Director. Sometimes you can correct it immediately and sometimes you will be asked to play on and sort it out at the end of the game.
- It is important to keep your cards in order.
- No player may touch another's cards.
- Don't pick up or disturb your cards until the revoke issue has been sorted out.
- Use 'revoke' not 'renege'.

If you have revoked

- If you spot your revoke before you or your partner have played a card to the next trick, you must correct it – but call the Director first.
- If it is too late to correct the revoke, keep quiet. It is up to the opposition to spot it. (If they do, there are no added penalties for not fessing up straight away.)
- If it is noticed, or you choose to fess up – and it is too late to correct it – note the trick and continue. Call Director at the end of the game as that is when penalties (if any) are assigned.

If you think another player has revoked

- Move your turned-over card on that trick down a bit. At the end of the game you can then go back to that trick and check what was played.
- If there is any disagreement, call the Director immediately. Otherwise, sort out exactly where the revoke occurred and then call the Director.
- If you are not sure where the revoke occurred, then start where you think it did, with each player turning over **their own card** to the same trick – **one card at a time** – so you can track who led what and who played what.

BRIDGE PROTOCOL

Sometimes tensions can run high at the Bridge table: Kansas City, 1929, Charles Bennett lied about his opening bid and ended up in a dicey contract. He played it badly and his wife, Myrtle, told him off – in front of their friends. He slapped her. She shot him.

She got off. (Yes, she did! The jurors were so fascinated by the game that they learnt to play it in their breaks, and managed to bring in a verdict of accidental death in spite of the fact that 4 bullets were fired, in front of witnesses!) But it didn't make Myrtle popular at the Bridge table.

Bridge protocol, or table etiquette, can be summed up in one word:

COURTESY

- **Be seated on time (at least 10 mins before start of session).** This is so the Director can determine how many boards to put into play, whether there are feed-ins and if there is a phantom.
- **Listen carefully to your Grade Convenor and Director.** The notices are to let you know what's happening around the club or during the session. Don't talk or pick up your cards until they have finished speaking.
- **Never criticise your partner at the table.**
- **Apart from brief comments, avoid debating hands or your system at the table.**
- **Say hello to the opposition, and a brief thanks at the end of the game.**
- **Don't let your desire to do well make you forget your manners.**

1. ABOUT THE RULES (LAWS)

There are 93 laws (rules) in Bridge.

- Their usage is updated annually in the Bridge Manual, which Directors are required to read.
- **Many of the laws are not applied at Junior level, or not applied in full.** However, it is good to learn about them right from the start.
- The aim of the laws is to provide **rectification rather than penalties** for infractions. Rectification means ruling to obtain the most likely result from the board had the infraction not occurred (which makes it fairer on you and on the rest of the field). Rectification is sometimes referred to as 'restoring equity'.
- If equity cannot be restored, (e.g. if the boards are played at the wrong table because they have got out of order), pairs are awarded a percentage score – 40%, 50% or 60% – depending on who is at fault. A 50% score gives players an average board.

d) LEAD OUT OF TURN

There is a lot involved in this law, so if someone leads out of turn, you can't just let them pick it up or leave it on the table as a penalty card. You must call the Director.

- The lead is considered to have been accepted if a card is tabled by the next player.
- Any lead out of turn may be accepted – unless the player has been misinformed by the opposition (into leading when it is not their turn), in which case another law applies.
- If Declarer leads from the wrong hand, either Defender may accept it (by saying, "I accept the lead") or refuse it. If Defenders disagree, the player next in turn has the deciding say.
- If the card is not accepted, Declarer replaces this card without penalty and leads from the correct hand.
- For a Defender, an unaccepted lead out of turn becomes a penalty card. (Knowledge of this card is unauthorised for his partner. Even though Partner can see the card lying on the table, he must act as though he does not know it is in his partner's hand. This means he cannot take advantage of this knowledge in any way via his play.)

5. You can allow the lead from the correct hand to be in any suit.

Defender in this case must not be influenced by the card his partner has shown as it is considered to be 'unauthorised information' for Defenders. The Defender on lead must make a lead based solely on the merits of his/her hand and info from bidding. The incorrect lead remains on the table as a penalty card and must be played at the first legal opportunity. Not only this, but as long as this penalty card remains on the table, Declarer has the lead-determining rights mentioned in 3, 4 and 5 whenever the offender's partner is on lead.

Tip: You need to be sure you can keep or get back control (i.e. have winners in all the other suits) to allow this option.

Some other things to keep in mind

- Declarer alone makes these choices. Dummy isn't allowed a say.
- Declarer can't ask Defender to lead a specific suit unless it is option 3.
- Option 4: Once the opening lead has been lost and regained, this Defender can lead the forbidden suit.
- These choices were not invented by the Directors to make your life difficult. They come from the rule book. The best thing to do when faced with this situation is take it one step at a time: Will I accept the lead? Do I want to be Dummy or play the hand? Do I want the lead of that suit?

How to avoid this situation altogether

As defenders can see, they may be seriously penalised by making a hasty opening lead and giving Declarer all these extra rights. There is a rule that prevents this from happening: **Always put your opening lead face down on the table and check that it is your lead.**

2. ALERTING

This is where a player circles his partner's bid as soon as partner has written it to let the opposition know that the bid has a meaning different from that which they might expect.

- Any bid that means something other than what it says has to be alerted. (An exception to this is 2C, showing clubs, in response to a 1NT opening bid. This has to be alerted. This is because 2C is more commonly used as an artificial bid or convention to show a major.)
- There are some common bids that do not require alerts because they are so well-known. See Conventions (p11) for some examples.
- If in doubt, alert.
- **If a bid is alerted, it pays to ask what it means.**
- Ask only when it is your turn to bid, and **ask the partner of the player who made the bid.**
- The appropriate question to ask is "What is your agreement (about the meaning of that bid)?" not "What do you take that as?" If you have no agreement, say "Undiscussed". Do not provide a guess about what you think your partner means.
- When asked the meaning of the alerted bid, full disclosure is the rule (length and strength). Players are entitled to know the exact meaning of the opposition's bid in order for them to bid accurately themselves.
- **You are not allowed to volunteer an explanation of your alert.** It could be construed as giving info to your partner. If the opp wants to know, they must ask.
- There are penalties for not alerting when you should, so see your Programme Booklet or noticeboard for rules on Alerts.

ANNOUNCING 1C AND 1NT

As soon as your partner bids either 1C or 1NT, you must announce (i.e. say, not circle) your agreement regarding these bids. E.g. if you play 5-card majors and a 'short club', you would say: "2-plus clubs; we play 5-card majors." E.g. If you play 'better minor', you would say: "3-plus clubs" or "promising 3". If you play Precision, you would say: "16-plus points, not necessarily any clubs." This is to stop any information being passed by enquiries about the length of clubs or the strength of 1NT.

3. BIDDING

If you make an incorrect bid, don't try to correct it. Call the Director.

- You may be able to change a mistaken/ inadvertent bid if you call the Director immediately.
- If you aren't sure about the meaning of an opponent's bid (alerted or not) you are allowed to ask. However:
 1. You have to wait until it is your turn to bid
 2. Ask before you bid, "What is your agreement about this bid?"
 3. Address question to the partner of the player who made the bid.
- Explanations of bids must state suit lengths and point counts. (Full disclosure is the rule.) It is not sufficient to say, "We play Precision" or "It's a negative double". If necessary, ask opponents to explain further.
- If a bid has not been discussed in the partnership, say "Undiscussed". You are not required to guess what your partner means, and you may be giving false information if you do so.
- If you make a wrong bid but your partner explains your bid according to your agreement about that bid, there is no need to notify the Director as there has been no actual infraction of the rules. (If in doubt, excuse yourself from table without fuss and speak to Director.)

Wrong Explanation of a Bid

- If your partner has explained your bid incorrectly, don't call Director. You are not allowed to take notice of his/her mistaken explanation to change your bidding. You must continue to bid according to your system/ agreements.
- If your partner realises his/her explanation was mistaken during the auction, s/he must immediately call Director and correct the explanation.
- If your side becomes Declarer, call Director and tell the opp about the mistaken explanation before they lead.
- If your side becomes Defenders, notify Director at end of game.

Doubles

- Your opening bid cannot be a double. (You must double an opposition's bid – even if your double is just showing points.)
- You cannot double your partner.
- You don't have to alert any double.

c) OPENING LEAD OUT OF TURN

When a defender makes an opening lead out of turn, the declarer has so many choices to make (5 altogether) that it can often be very confusing. Here is an explanation of the choices and some tips for making the most advantageous decision in each case.

1. **Declarer can accept the lead and become Dummy.** His/her hand goes down on the table and partner plays. OR
2. **Declarer can accept the lead and remain Declarer.** Dummy goes down on the table and Declarer can look at it before playing a card from his/her hand.

Tip: The decision about whether to accept the opening lead is based on 2 things: (1) Can I win that trick or at least regain control in the second round? And (2) Do I want the weak or the strong hand on the table? Usually you want the strong hand OFF the table so any weaknesses in it remain hidden from the opposition.

If the opening lead is in your weak suit (i.e. you have only losers in it), you would choose not to accept it. In this case, the lead must come from the correct hand and you have 3 further choices.

3. **You can require the lead to be in the same suit as the incorrect lead.** In this case, the incorrect lead is picked up and does not have to be played as long as Defender follows suit.

Tip: This would be a strategic decision if you have a broken suit in your hand that you want the opposition to lead into. **Not recommended** unless you know what you are doing.

4. **You can forbid a lead in the same suit as the incorrect lead.** (Once again, the incorrect lead is picked up.) Defender cannot lead from the forbidden suit as long as s/he retains the lead.

Tip: This is your best bet if you've got losers in this suit that you hope you will be able to throw away (pitch) on one of your strong suits.

b) INSUFFICIENT BID

This is a bid that is lower than the one just made by the opposition. Don't try to correct it and don't let the opposition tell you to "Make it good". Call the Director and let him/her explain the options available to both sides, according to the rules.

- 1 An insufficient bid **can be accepted** by the opponent next in rotation. Sometimes this option is advisable if you want to get in a bid at a lower level. Not advisable if you are not going to bid and you are giving the opposition a chance to exchange more information at a lower level and reach a better contract.
- 2 If the insufficient bid is not accepted there are two ways it can be corrected without penalty.
 - **It can be corrected by the lowest sufficient bid in the same denomination** – provided neither the insufficient bid nor its correction is artificial.
E.g. 3D – 3C can be changed to 4C provided 4C is not artificial (i.e. not ace-asking)
 - **It can be corrected by a legal call that has the same or more precise meaning** than the insufficient bid.
E.g. If 3C above was showing club cover and looking for game, a 3NT bid would be acceptable and not bar partner from bidding.
3. An accidental insufficient response to ace-asking or a transfer can be replaced with a response at the correct level without penalty (i.e. without barring partner from auction) if it is not accepted.
4. If the insufficient bid is replaced by a bid that is a different suit or by a pass, partner must pass for the rest of the auction. Lead restrictions may apply to your partner if your side become the defenders.

The director's ruling aims for a 'normal' bridge result, i.e. one that is equitable with the rest of the room. Players who think they have been disadvantaged by the correction of an insufficient bid (in that their opp reached a more favourable contract than they would have done without the infraction) can call the Director at end of play and apply for an adjustment. This option not available if insufficient bid was accepted.

4. BIDDING PADS

- Write the board number in the middle of the bidding pad. This ensures boards are played in order and makes it a lot easier to sort out scoring errors further down the track.
- DO NOT mark vulnerability or dealer on the pad.
- Turn the bidding pad over after everyone has played to the first trick.

PSYCHING

This is where one partner bids something completely different from his/her agreed system.

- Not illegal, but not a good idea at junior level (as you are lying to your partner as well as the opposition).
- Not alertable – as partner doesn't know you are lying about your hand.
- A player who psyches must notify the director, who records their name in the Psych Book (as repeated psyching can become a partnership understanding and subject to penalties if not disclosed).

BOARDS

- **Players sitting N-S are responsible for making sure boards are played in the right order and orientation.**
- **Boards must always be kept in N-S orientation**, no matter where they are. (This prevents hands being put in the wrong pockets. At tournaments, boards are sometimes kept in the middle of the table for this reason. However, at the club, we may put them to the side of the table.)
- Vulnerability (as written on board) must remain visible throughout the game. Don't cover it with your bidding pad or bridge pad.
- West passes the boards back to the previous table. If play has been held up, then one of the pair waiting can pass the completed board back. (No person from the table waiting to play the board is allowed to get it in case they see the cards or a contract being written down.)

BRIDGEPADS – see back page

5. CARDS AND PLAY

- **Always count your cards before you look at them.**
- Always make your opening lead face down (in case the wrong person leads).
- Any card that touches the table is considered 'tabled', i.e. a played card, and it cannot be picked up again unless the Director rules.
- A lead from the wrong hand can be accepted, but Director must be called. You cannot just pick it up again. (The lead is considered accepted as soon as the opposition plays a card.)
- **Declarer should call for a card to be played from Dummy's hand rather than touch the cards.** There are 2 reasons for this:
 1. A mistaken call or designation can be changed (if you call the Director immediately), but a touched card is a played card.
 2. When you lean forward to play from Dummy, you lose sight of your hand. You can lose track of what you intended to play.
- **Dummy may not play any card – including singletons – without being directed to by Declarer.** In fact, apart from preventing Declarer from committing an infraction, (e.g. asking "Having none" if Declarer fails to follow suit), Dummy basically isn't allowed to say or do anything during play.
- Declarer should not play a card from Dummy until their left-hand opponent has played. Call Director if Declarer makes a habit of this.
- Think ahead: as soon as you have played a card, you should be thinking about your next move or possible moves. However...
- Players should not detach a card from their hand before it is their turn to lead or play.
- Don't turn your card over until all players have played to the trick.
- The player who wins the trick should be first to turn their card over.
- You can ask to inspect the last trick played only if you haven't turned your card over. No other quitted tricks can be inspected.

a) BID OUT OF TURN

There are a number of laws regarding bids or passes out of turn. Always call the Director.

- When a player bids at another player's turn, the opposition has the right to accept it if they think it would be to their advantage. (Play continues as normal and there are no penalties.)
- If not accepted, the bid reverts back to the correct player and the Director is called.

Penalties depend on 3 things:

1. Whether or not you have bid or passed
2. Whether it is the first bid of the hand or there have been previous bids
3. Whose turn you have actually stolen!

There is a bit more to it than this, but in a nutshell:

- After the correct player has bid, a perpetrator who has passed out of turn usually has to pass for one round.
- For a perpetrator who has bid out of turn, his partner gets the punishment and is usually not allowed to bid.

COMMON MISTAKES

- If you make any mistake, call the Director.
- Don't try to sort it out yourself – or allow the opposition to tell you what to do. That is the Director's job.
- There are 5 common mistakes (infractions of the law) :

Common Mistakes

- a) Bid out of turn
- b) Insufficient bid
- c) Opening lead out of turn
- d) Lead out of turn
- e) Revoke

- Don't collect up your cards until all players at the table have agreed to the number of tricks made.
- At the end of the game, shuffle your cards briefly before putting them back in the correct pocket.
- If there is any irregularity, the **perpetrator** should call the Director and explain what happened. Too many voices just confuse the Director and it takes longer to sort out.
- **No player is allowed to touch another player's cards.**
- **Slow players are expected to speed up their game if they are still playing after the round has been called.** There are no dispensations if you are held up by slow play. Slow players (and their opposition) are expected to catch up in the next round.
- One person from the partnership should keep an eye on the clock. If you know you aren't going to have enough time to play a board, call the Director. You may be allowed to play it later. Otherwise it is marked 'Not played' and the results are not included in your overall average.
- If you are running late, West moves on, leaving South and East to deal with the scoring. North picks up the new boards and, as soon as the next West sits down, they both count their cards. This means that when South and the new East pick up their hands, one person from each partnership has already sorted their (own) hand and worked out their bid. It keeps play moving.

If a board is not played

- If you have bid but not started playing when the end of the round is called, the Director may not allow you to play the board. It is marked 'Not played' and not included in your score at the end of the night.
- This means that your score is only averaged over the boards you have played. While you miss out on the enjoyment of playing the board, you are not disadvantaged scorewise. (The same is true if you are Phantom.)

6. CALLING THE DIRECTOR

The Director must be called if there is any irregularity at the table.

- Do not make your own rulings at the table. If anyone accidentally makes a wrong bid or plays a wrong card, they need to call the Director. If you make your own rulings, you may be denying the opposition, or even yourselves, rights which they (or you) are entitled to.
- It's a good way to learn the rules (laws) so don't consider it telling tales or bad sportsmanship. It is part of the game and you are actually breaking the rules if you don't.
- The Director's ruling is final.

Who calls the Director?

- As a matter of etiquette, it is the person who committed the infraction who calls the Director (never Dummy). If they don't, politely suggest that they need to do so, and if they still don't, politely call the Director yourself.
- For prompt attention, make sure you call loudly, "Director, please", and keep your hand up until you catch the Director's eye.
- Play stops immediately the Director is called.
- Sort out relevant info while the Director is making his/her way over – it saves time.
- Just one person, usually the perp, explains the situation. If a Director arrives at a table and 4 different voices are trying to tell him/her what happened, it's too confusing. If one person gives the facts in a logical order, then the Director can make a decision quickly and easily.

Rectification not penalties

- Directors' rulings are based on 'restoring equity', i.e. keeping contracts and play of the hands on a par with the rest of the room, rather than penalising people for wrongdoing.

17. UNAUTHORISED (Extraneous) INFORMATION

Information about the cards is 'unauthorised' and subject to penalty if it is from a source other than the bidding and play. Sources of unauthorised information are:

- **Table talk** – even innocent comments like "I don't know which ace to lead" give a player information about his/her partner's hand which they shouldn't have.
- **Body language** – e.g. sighs over your hand or the cards partner leads or plays, looking at partner to make sure they notice a bid or play, shrugging to imply that you have nothing much worth playing.
- **A change in bidding style**, e.g. an unnaturally long hesitation before bidding – implies you have something in your hand worth thinking about.
- Writing a bid or playing a card with **undue emphasis**. Try to bid and play at an even tempo and write all bids the same size. Do not use a full stop after a bid.
- **Overhearing talk** about the hands at a nearby table. Avoid discussing hands or contracts loudly at the end of the game.
- Not necessarily seeing, but **being in a position to see any of partner's cards** – e.g. when partner plays a card out of turn or drops a card or cards. This is why a player cannot just return an exposed card to their hand even if their partner hasn't seen it.
- **Being in a position to see the play or score of a board** that you haven't played – this is why a player who is waiting for boards cannot get up and get a board from the previous table. They might see cards being played or scores being entered. Boards must be handed on by people who have just played the board or by people who are waiting to sit down at the previous table.
- **Penalty cards** – you are not allowed to use the knowledge of your partner's penalty card on the table to affect your play.
- Using **partner's explanation of a bid** to affect your play.

16. TOURNAMENTS

These are competitions held regularly by clubs for fun, profit and so players can improve their play and ranking.

- Some tournaments are just for your club and some are OPEN to players from other clubs.
- **Club tournaments are a good way to introduce yourself to tournaments and see how more experienced players play.**
- The schedule of tournaments held by your club is in your Programme Booklet, as are guidelines for tournament play.
- Tournaments are where you are most likely to see System Cards in use. If you enter a tournament, both partners should have a copy of their System Card. (Info about your system must be available to the opp as well as yourselves, and to the Director if need be.)
- The opposition is allowed to look at your System Card before the start of bidding and during bidding and play, but only when it is their turn – and vice versa, of course.
- Lower level tournaments may not require players to present System Cards, but it is a good idea to always carry it with you.

Tournament grading

- There are 3 gradings for tournaments: junior, intermediate and open.
- They are based on the number of rating points you have earned during your club and competition play (and may be different from your club grade).
- Players with an Open rating cannot enter an Intermediate or Junior tournament. Likewise, those with an Intermediate rating cannot enter a Junior Tournament.
- See C Points p12.

DIRECTORS

Directors help make the play and movement of boards and players run smoothly. They are there to help players and are available to answer questions about the rules and other things affecting players' enjoyment and understanding of the game.

- Directors do not make the rules.
- Directors usually train for at least a year before they sit a 3-hour exam, in which they are required to achieve at least an 80% pass mark.
- As well as knowing the rules, Bridge protocol and having a delightful personality, Directors also have to make sure each section has the right number of boards in play, that additional feed-in/ relay boards are in the right places, and that phantom – if there is one – is in the right place so that no pair is phantom more than twice (optimally once). Late arrivals delay this process.
- **The Director's ruling is final.** (However, in tournaments and in the senior grades, you may appeal the ruling if you are very sure of your case. There is a penalty for an appeal 'without merit'.)

7. CLAIM

A claim is a statement that your side will win a certain number of tricks (without actually playing them out).

- **A claim should be accompanied by a clear statement of your ‘line of play’**, i.e. the order in which remaining cards will be played. (You can’t just say, “The rest are mine” even if it is obvious.)
- Play ceases immediately the claim is made. You cannot “play them out” unless the Director is present.
- If there is any doubt or the line of play is not stated, call Director.
- Any doubt about a claim is resolved in favour of the opposition.

Some recommendations

- Wait until all trumps have been played before claiming.
- Don’t claim until you have only 3 or 4 cards remaining in your hand.
- Lay your cards on the table one-by-one in the order that you intend to play them, stating what you are going to do.

CONCESSION

A concession is a statement that your side will lose a certain number of the tricks remaining to be played.

- If a Defender concedes and his partner objects, there is no concession, but Director must be called.
- Don’t concede unless you are sure.

OTHER SYSTEMS

- In NZ, many players play Acol as their basic system. This is distinguished by 4-card majors and a weak 1NT opening (12-14 pts). Some players play a modified Acol, with 5-card majors or 5-card S.
- Two other systems you might come across are Precision (1C opening shows 16+ pts) and Standard American (which features a strong 1NT opening: 15-17 points).
- Both of these systems have other features which are different from Acol and should be alerted. Make sure you ask about any alerts.

PRE-ALERTING

- Unusual conventions, or systems other than Acol, should be pre-alerted, i.e. mentioned to the opposition before the start of bidding, so that the opposition can ask about them and understand them before the game starts.

4. BASIC RESPONSES

Jump raises - minors 10-12 HCP Other:

Jump raises - Majors 10-12 HCP Other:

Jump shifts after minor opening

Jump shifts after Major opening

Responses to strong 2 suit open (2C) 2D=0-7; suit=8+5-card; 2NT=8+bal.

Responses to 2NT opening P=0-4 HCP; 3suit=5card; 4M=6card; 3NT=bal.

5. PLAY CONVENTIONS

Show priorities

	Versus Suit (or both)	Versus NoTrump (if different)
Leads Sequences:	Overlead All	Overlead All
Four or more with an honour	4th highest	4th highest
From 4 small	top	top
From 3 cards (no honour)	top	top
In partner's suit	Sxx Xxx Hx	Sxx Xxx Hx
Discards	high encouraging	high encouraging
Count	—	—
Signal on partner's lead:	high encouraging	high encouraging
Signal on declarer's lead:	high encouraging	high encouraging
Notes		

6. SLAM CONVENTIONS

4NT: Blackwood ☒ RKCB

4♣ Gerber ☒ when?

NT only

Slam Notes

Cue Bids ☐

Asking Bids ☐

7. OTHER CONVENTIONS

8. CONVENTIONS

A convention is an artificial bid that has an understood meaning.

- Common examples are:
 - Stayman (2C in response to a 1NT opening bid – promising a 4-card major and asking opener if **they** have a 4-card major)
 - Blackwood (4NT ace-asking) and Gerber (4C ace-asking). Ace-asking is asking partner how many aces they have if you are looking for slam. There are also other conventions for this.
- Most conventions need to be alerted, but very common ones (which are universally understood) don't. For example, the following DON'T need to be alerted:
 - Stayman (but transfers must be alerted. Also a genuine 2C bid in response to a 1NT opening bid must be alerted)
 - 2C opener promising 23+ points and 2D reply if it denies slam
 - 2H and 2S whether weak or strong (opp should ask)
 - Pre-empts (7 of a suit, 6-10 points)
 - Bids at 4 level and above, e.g. ace-asking
 - Doubles (opp should ask).
- The above are just a few conventions players can use. It is a good idea to start introducing them one at a time when you have mastered the basics. If you do decide to use one or more conventions, both players in the partnership must use them and be able to explain them if asked during the game.

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9. C POINTS / MASTERPOINTS

C Points are part of the NZ Bridge masterpoints scheme (detailed in your Match Programme Booklet) and are awarded to the top placings in a session.

- The number of C Points awarded depends on the number of pairs playing in a section.
- If the section is small, usually only the top two placings in each direction (NS/EW) will get C Points.
- If the section is large, C Points may be awarded down to 6th place.
- Top place will always receive 40 C Points.
- To get C Points, at least 20 boards must be played in a session.
- The point of C Points (!) is to give all players a national ranking should they want to enter tournaments.

Rating points and Masterpoints

- Rating points are based on the number of A, B and C points you have earned from the time you started to play. They are recalculated annually at 80% of your previous total + the no. earned in the current year, so they may go down if you have a year off.
- C points are earned from both club sessions and tournaments. 100 C points = 1 B point.
- B points can also be earned by competing in tournaments.
- A points (highest level) can only be earned from tournaments. (In the tournament programme in your Programme Booklet, you will see there are A and B tournaments, named for the level of points you can earn.)
- A, B and C points are referred to as 'masterpoints'. For a more detailed explanation, refer to your Programme Booklet or the NZ Bridge website: www.bridge.co.nz
- There is a system of national rankings based on how many A and B masterpoints you earn, starting at Junior Master with 5 B points. When you achieve a new ranking, you will get a slip from the club to let you know. (Rankings remain, even if you take time off bridge.)



New Zealand Bridge

Nos. / NAMES & SYSTEM

70210 / John Taylor
54321 / Mary Brown
ACOL

Basic System: ☐ Brown Sticker Classification: Green ☒ Blue ☐ Red ☐ Yellow ☐

1. OPENING BIDS

Describe strength, minimum length, or specific meaning Canape ☐

1♣ 4+ 11-19 1♦ 4+ 11-19 1NT 12-14 balanced	1♥ 4+ 11-19 1♠ 4+ 11-19 may contain 5 card Major ☐
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1NT Responses 2♣ Simple Stayman Other:

2♦ 0-10 5+ hearts 2♥ 0-10 5+ spades other	2♠ — 2NT 11-12 balanced
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2♣ 23+ HCP balanced or unbalanced
2♦ 20-22 HCP distributional hand
2♥ 6-10 HCP 6 hearts
2♠ 6-10 HCP 6 spades
2NT 20-22 balanced 3NT

2. PRE-ALERTS

3. COMPETITIVE BIDS / OVERCALLS

Negative doubles through 2-5	Jump overcalls 10-15 HCP 6+ card
Responsive doubles through 16-18 bal.	Unusual NT
1NT overcall - immediate 16-18 bal.	Immediate cue of minor
1NT overcall - re-opening 16-18 bal.	Immediate cue of Major
Over weak twos X takeout; 2NT 16-18	Over opening threes X = takeout
Over opponent's 1NT X = 16+ HCP ; suit = natural	

15. YOUR SYSTEM

This is all the agreements you and your partner have about bidding (e.g. what conventions you play), leading, discards and defence.

- To play well, you need a system.
- Both players in a partnership must play the same system (i.e. have the same agreements).
- If you are in a regular partnership and don't have any set agreements, you need to take the time to discuss them because both partners need to know what each other expects – and the opposition has a right to know also!
- There are System Cards available at the club to help you sort out your bidding system.
- If your partner bids something you haven't discussed, and the opposition ask what it means, DON'T tell them what you think it means, say "Undiscussed" (and sort it out before you next play).
- Apart from brief comments, **discussions between partners about their system should take place away from the table.**

System Cards

- There are System Cards available at the club to help you sort out your bidding system. If you are entering a tournament after Feb 2014, you must have the 2 outer pages completed.
- Aside from Beginners just out of classes, players are not allowed to look at their notes, their System Card or the score sheet during bidding and play. (No extraneous sources of info are allowed.) However, you are allowed to look at your System Card or notes between hands.
- The opposition is entitled to know your system and is allowed to look at your System Card before play and during bidding and play – but only at their turn to bid or play.
- If you need help to fill out your system card, ask a Director.

EXAMPLE OF A BASIC SYSTEM next page – Peter van Leeuwen,
Director in charge of beginners' lessons, Crockfords Bridge Club

10. DUMMY

- Dummy puts his/her hand on the table one card at a time in neat columns (top card in line with opposition's shoulders) in order of S,H,D,C if NT contract, or with trumps on Declarer's left in a suit contract.
- Dummy should not comment on the quality of his/her hand.
- Dummy is NOT allowed to speak during the game. However, s/he is allowed to prevent Declarer making a mistake, e.g. to say "Table" or "Hand" if declarer unsure; and to say "Having none" if declarer doesn't follow suit and you want to make sure s/he isn't revoking.

Note: Dummy may prevent play from the wrong hand, but not correct it; i.e. If Declarer has already touched a card or played from the wrong hand, it is too late for Dummy to correct him/her. The card is then considered played and cannot be changed or picked up. (Director must be called as Defenders have the right to accept it or not.)

- **Dummy is NOT allowed to play a card – even if it is a singleton or obvious – unless directed by Declarer.**
- Declarer should not play a card from hand and then a card from Dummy in the same action. The opposition must be allowed time to play their card in order. Otherwise, Director must be called as opposition has options.
- Dummy is not allowed to call the Director if they see an irregularity until the end of the hand.

11. HAND RECORDS

These are the handouts available at the end of the session showing the hands dealt for each board.

- They also give (in a box below the hands) the contracts to be made on that board for each side, i.e. the number of tricks that could be made depending on who is Declarer.
- They are made available to help partnerships improve the accuracy of their bidding.

PERSONAL RECORD SHEETS

These are for individual players to keep a record of the final contract, lead, etc, of each board so you can discuss it later with your partner in association with examination of the hand records.

- Usually found in a box near the Director's desk.
- Make sure writing them down does not delay your play and hold other people up.
- Only one person in the partnership needs to write them down.

TIME LIMITS

Each grade gets a certain amount of time to play a board in order to complete the required number of boards in a session.

Juniors

- Juniors get about 7.5 mins to play a board; that's 15 mins for one round of 2 boards. (Players just out of class are sometimes allowed a bit more.)
- This allows enough time for Juniors to play 20 boards in a session, which is the minimum number to qualify for master points. (These are the C points beside the scores and rankings of the night's top players. An explanation of them is given in your Match Programme booklet.)

Intermediates

- Intermediate players get 7 mins per board (14 mins/round) and play 24-26 boards/night.

Seniors

- Senior Reserve and Seniors get 6.5 mins/ board (13 mins/round) and play a minimum of 26 boards.

Keeping to time

- While some boards take longer to play than others, by playing 2 (or 3) boards per table, if one board takes a bit more time (or a bit less time) you can compensate with the other board. It does take a bit of practice to get it just right, but an important factor in an evening of Bridge is considering other players by keeping the boards moving.
- Two things that can help are:
 1. **working out your next move in advance**
 2. **keeping an eye on the clock.**
- If you are repeatedly held up by another pair, warn the Director so s/he can keep an eye on them and see what the hold-up is, and help them keep to time.

14. SLOW PLAY

This is when players take longer than their allotted time to play their board(s); i.e. a table is still playing after players have been told to move on.

There is a correct protocol for this to ensure that other players are held up for as short a time as possible.

1. Dummy or one of the waiting players passes the played board back to the next table.
2. **The whole table (especially Declarer) is expected to speed up their play.**
3. At the end of the round, South and East do the score. **West moves on promptly to the next table.** (It reduces delay if West moves on promptly because once 3 players are present at the next table, everyone can count their cards.)

Penalties

- There are no direct penalties in the lower grades for slow play. However, repeated slow play will result in the removal of a board to allow offenders to catch up, or possibly a 60% score for the non-offenders on a board not able to be played.
- There are no dispensations if you have been held up by slow play.
- While it happens to all of us now and again, repeated slow play is considered 'selfish play' as it is unfair for any players to take more time to play a board than the rest of the room. It also uses up other players' playing time.
- Whether you are the slow players or the people waiting on slow players, it is everyone's responsibility to catch up.
- **Some players expect the Director to hold up the rest of the room if they need to catch up after someone has taken too long. Due to time requirements and consideration for the rest of the room, this doesn't happen.**

12. LEADING

- **Always make the opening lead face down** – in case you have made a mistake. It also gives your partner an opportunity to ask about the bidding if they need to. (Any question(s) at the end of bidding must be made after the opening lead so that it doesn't influence partner's choice of lead (unauthorised info). Similarly, opening lead must be face down so that questioner isn't influenced by seeing the lead. Generally questions do not arise at junior level as bidding is much more straightforward than at senior levels.)
- A card on the table is considered 'tabled'. **Once a card has been placed on the table, even if it has been led out of turn, it cannot be picked up again** unless the Director says so.
- Return your partner's opening lead – unless you have a good reason not to!
- **Rule of thumb** – if you are unsure what to lead, lead through Dummy's strength and into Dummy's weakness. This means if Dummy is next to play, lead a suit in which Dummy has honours, but some are missing. Your partner might have them. If Dummy is last to play, lead a suit in which Dummy has only minor (small) cards on the table. This way, your partner knows what to beat when it is his/her turn to play.

OPENING LEADS

Against NT

- Lead low from your longest suit UNLESS the opp has bid it, then lead low from your longest unbid suit
- Lead partner's suit (low from an honour or 3-card suit, or top of a doubleton)
- With 2 suits of equal length, lead the strongest, i.e. the one with the most honours
- Lead top of a sequence, e.g. Q from QJ10 or QJ9

Against suit contracts

- Lead A from AK
- Lead a singleton
- Lead your partner's suit (low from a 3-card suit, top of a doubleton)
- Lead top of a sequence

- Do not lead unsupported aces (i.e. do not lead the ace if you haven't got the king) and do not lead away from aces (i.e. if you have an ace without the king, don't lead that suit at all)
- Do not lead from a doubleton
- Do not lead from split honours (e.g. KJxx, AQxx, where the honour sequence is split)
- It is not a good idea to lead trumps.

13. PENALTY CARDS

These are cards prematurely exposed by a Defender. When any card is prematurely exposed through dropping or playing out of turn, always call the Director. Don't make your own rulings.

- **A card played face-up on the table is 'tabled' or 'faced' and is considered to be in play. It cannot be picked up without calling the Director.**
- Declarer does not have penalty cards. If s/he accidentally exposes a card or plays a wrong card, it can be returned to hand.

There are 2 kinds of penalty cards:

1. Major Penalty Card

- Any exposed honour, or any card 'tabled' incorrectly.
- Must be played at the first legal opportunity.
- Declarer has 'lead rights', i.e. Declarer can require or prohibit the lead of that suit (or let opp lead whatever they want). If Declarer requires or prohibits the suit, the penalty card is picked up and doesn't have to be played. (Knowledge of this card is authorised to the Declarer only; i.e. partner must pretend s/he hasn't seen it and play as if s/he doesn't know where it is.)
- When a Defender has 2 or more penalty cards, Declarer can choose which one is to be played.

2. Minor Penalty Card

- A card below honour in rank (i.e. 9 or below) accidentally dropped or played with another card.
- Just has to be played at the first legal opportunity.
- Declarer has no lead rights.