

ORIGINS

Bridge is a trick taking card game that developed from Whist. Whist can be traced back to the early 16th century and Edmond Hoyle's book defining the rules of Whist appeared in the year 1742.

THE NAME

Surprisingly there is no definitive answer to how the game got its name. One theory is that British soldiers serving in the Crimean War 1853/6 may have invented the game, and named it after the Galata Bridge, (*which links the old and new parts of Istanbul*) that they crossed to play in coffee houses. More likely is that the name developed from 'Biritch' or 'Russian Whist' as described in an 1886 pamphlet in the British Museum.

THE MODERN GAME - CONTRACT BRIDGE

A number of trick taking games were being played across the world, such as 'Plafond' & Vint. and they came together at the beginning of the 20th Century as Auction Bridge. In 1925 Harold S. Vanderbilt, an American multi-millionaire, changed the course of auction bridge while cruising on board the steamship 'Finland' His revised rules and scoring turned auction bridge into modern contract bridge.

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/origins-and-history-of-bridge>

WELL KNOWN BRIDGE PLAYERS:

Winston Churchill
Dwight D Eisenhower
Gandhi
Margaret Thatcher
Buster Keaton
Bill Gates
Warren Buffet
Martina Navratilova
Chico Marx
Omar Sharif
Val McDermid
*Deng Xiaoping
Thom York (Radiohead)
Snoopy (by Charles Schultz)
James Bond (7C X in Moonraker)

BORING HANDS?

It has been calculated that the number of possible deals is 53 octillion, a 29-digit number! If a million computers were used, and each computer tested a million deals per second it would take well over a billion years to test every bridge deal - 1,701,063,475 years, to be exact.

THE FUTURE

Allegedly 200 million people across the world play bridge but the game is in decline from its heyday in the 1930s or even from the last quarter of the 20th C. Perhaps the game is too complicated, it is certainly too abstract, and impossible to follow as a spectator event by non-players. Bridge for many today, means 'Duplicate Bridge' but there are many more who play 'Rubber Bridge' or 'Chicago' at home. Mini Bridge is a great learning tool for beginners. I have just discovered that a simpler form of the game has been devised in the USA called 'Abridged'. *"Abridged has already been a huge hit in America, where, after an initial sell-out run, a further 50,000 games are about to hit the shops. Can it do the same in Britain?"*

Obviously not as this article was written in 2006

So who knows whether the game has a future? The following articles are worth reading if you are interested.

<http://www.eurobridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Bridge-in-the-21st-Century.pdf>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/how-bridge-became-cool-426099.html>

- AND ONE LESS WELL KNOWN

*A most precious seed for the future of bridge was planted in the 1920s when an unknown Chinese boy studied and worked in France where he learned and quickly appreciated bridge. Upon his return to China, Deng Xiaoping joined the Chinese Communist Party and rose to power under Chairman Mao Zedong. Largely thanks to Deng, bridge had a much better treatment in China, than in the Soviet Union where bridge was a forbidden bourgeois game. One of the charges he faced was that he preferred to play bridge, rather than taking care of the needs of the people. Deng survived the Cultural Revolution after Mao's death in 1976 & already in his 70s, he set out to modernize China.

TOP BRIDGE PLAYERS -

Sadly you probably haven't heard of many (or any) of the top Bridge players in the UK or the world, and unlike the Poker game 'Texas Holdem' you cannot win a fortune either. However there ARE bridge professionals who make a living from hiring themselves out as Bridge partners, usually in National events. If you want one, for your next club duplicate see the list at.

<http://www.pro-bridge.co.uk/bridge-professionals/>

YOU'VE GOT TO LAUGH

A perfect game for those who don't find Quantum Physics challenging enough.

**What is the difference between genius & stupidity at the bridge table?
Genius has its limits.**

The Elvis Presley coup? It's when your left hand opponent leads from A-Q around to your Kx: The King is no longer dead!

During a bridge class, a hand has just passed out, but 4th hand had 17 HCPs. "So why did you pass?" asked the teacher. "Because you told us after three passes the bidding is over, so I had to pass."

Stop the War!

In November 1942, the invasion of North Africa was ready. 800 allied ships were fogbound off the African coast. "What 'll we do now?" the other ranking officers asked. 'Let's have a game of bridge', Eisenhower replied. So they did. Eisenhower, General A. Gruenther, General M. Clark and Commander H. Butcher, played bridge until the fog lifted and the invasion could begin.

It's Murder

The Bennett Murder was a headline in 1929. John G. Bennett was shot by his wife Myrtle Adkins Bennett in Kansas City, during a domestic bridge game. She was found not guilty despite having shot four bullets at him. The ruling however was 'Accidental Discharge of a Firearm', not 'Justifiable Homicide' due to Mr. Bennets' bad play. (He had apparently opened on a 10 count and failed to make.) She later qualified for a \$30,000 life insurance payout. and continued to play bridge, but had some difficulty finding partners. In England, 2010 a bridge fanatic murdered his wife after constant rows about how bad she was at the game. He got 23 years!

A Very Ethical Game?!

In 1965 Terence Reese & Boris Shapiro are accused of signalling the number of hearts they held by the position of their fingers in the hand holding the cards.

In 1999, Tony Haworth, a Welsh international player, introduced prepared decks of cards into a duplicate bridge competition.

At the 1975 Bermuda Bowl, Facchini and Zucchelli were accused of communicating by means of foot tapping under the table

In 2002 a player was stripped of a World Championship silver medal in Montreal for refusing to take a drug test.

Prior to the 1976 Bermuda Bowl, it was, claimed that during a telephone conversation with Benito Bianchi, he had discussed illegal signalling methods, using placement of cigarettes in the ashtray or in the mouth.

In 2013, two German doctors cheated their way to the pinnacle of the World Championship with carefully timed coughs.

At the 1979 Grand National Finals in Atlanta, it was concluded that a pair were using pre-arranged signals to show their distribution, especially about short suits, by the way they placed their pencils on the table after scoring.

In September 2015, an Israeli pair positions the board in a specific way immediately after the bidding process. The player making the lead, would place the board to signal which suit was his strongest – diamonds in the middle, hearts up and to the right, clubs close to his own hand and spades on the far side of the screen.

The Monty Hall Problem

<http://www.mathwarehouse.com/monty-hall-simulation-online/>

On a game show you are told that there is a car in one of 3 boxes. In the other two, there is a goat.

You are invited to pick a box and you choose box A.

The game show host then OPENS box B to reveal a goat.

Before opening box A, he offers you the chance to switch to box C!

Would you switch, or stay with your original choice?

It looks like a 50/50 chance but is it? In Bridge the Law of Restricted Choice suggests that if a defender drops an honour card, it is likely to be a singleton.



It seems illogical, but you increase your chances of winning the car by SWITCHING. If you don't believe this use the link above to play the animated game. It is indisputable!

One finesse will succeed 50% percent of the time. Two finesses will both succeed only 25% of the time. At least one of two finesses will succeed 75% of the time.

♠ A109	
♥ 54	
♦ AQ654	
♣ J53	
♠ K654	♠ Q873
♥ QJ82	♥ K1063
♦ J8	♦ K109
♣ 1087	♣ 42
	♠ J2
	♥ A97
	♦ 732
	♣ AKQ96

West leads ♥2

Declarer has eight top tricks.

The lead suggests a 4-4 heart split so declarer can afford to give up the lead once.

The single diamond finesse is a 50% chance

but the double finesse in spades offers a 75% chance.

All you need is for west to have either spade honour.

The increased chance of the 2nd spade finesse depends on the prior knowledge that one honour was in the east hand.

To an observer who arrived late and did not see the first finesse the odds looked to be 50% chance.

Your ranking in Golf is described by your handicap. In Judo your rank is shown by the colour of your belt.

MASTERPOINTS - In bridge your rank was always determined by the number of MASTERPOINTS that you had acquired. In bridge clubs affiliated to the English Bridge Union you are awarded MPs whenever you come in the top third of the field. Over the years, as you accumulate these black or local MPs your 'Master' status increases. Your status only goes UP!

N.G.S With the development of computerised technology the EBU introduced an amazing new system that gives you a ranking based on recent performances. NGS has 13 levels based on your average % scores and your rating can go up or down.

Playing on line, 'Bridge Club Live' have a similar (but simpler) ranking system based on recent performances. You are either a Spade, Heart, Diamond or Club. - OR you can play in the social room where no ranking is awarded or recorded.

EBU Masterpoint Ranks

Rank	Black Master Points
Local Master	100
Club Master	200
Area Master	500
District Master	1,000
County Master	2,500
Master	5,000
Advanced Master	7,500
★ Master	10,000
★★ Master	15,000
★★★ Master	20,000
★★★★ Master	25,000
★★★★★ Master	30,000
Tournament Master	40,000
★ Tournament Master	50,000

In the olden days all Masterpoints were awarded on paper tickets that were kept in alphabetical order in a box at the club. Every few weeks you would search the box, collect them and add them to your collection at home. When you had a few thousand they would be posted to EBU in a big envelope. That fun has now gone as MPs are *automatically* added whenever you come in the top third at an affiliated club.

To rise above the ranks shown above you must play in 'Green Pointed' events. We used to travel the country in search of these National awards-delighted to get 1.25 greens after a weekend in London. Happy days! The NEBA Congress is green pointed. MP ranking is based on longevity rather than current form.

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/master-points/ranks>

National Grading Scheme

Ace:	61% & above
King:	59% - 61%
Queen:	57% - 59%
Jack:	55% - 57%
Ten:	53% - 55%
Nine:	51% - 53%
Eight:	49% - 51%
Seven:	47% - 49%
Six:	45% - 47%
Five:	43% - 45%
Four:	41% - 43%
Three:	39% - 41%
Two:	Below 39%

Everytime you play in an affiliated club your % score is recorded however good or bad it is. The result is added to your ranking average. The NGS programme even adjusts the result if you are playing against a higher ranked pair or playing with a lower ranked partner. An AMAZING record of current form.

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/ngs>

No Fear Bridge

If you are not yet a member of this web site, and wish to improve your game, I suggest that you explore this site as soon as you get back home. It really is an outstanding learning tool and an entertainment where you can learn, play or test yourself without embarrassment.

<https://www.nofearbridge.com>

Bridge Club Live

Symbol	PPI (Past Performance Indicator)
Spade	Over 55%
Heart	51% to 55%
Diamond	46% to 51%
Club	Below 46%

Like the NGS, your opposition is weighted, so a club ranked player, scoring 50% when playing against a spade will be awarded much more than 50%

Although full membership is £69 per year you can have unlimited games in the Social room for £40 or if you are unsure, go for a free trial period. It is a great learning tool, as you can replay how *you and everyone else* played the contract - card by card. **RECOMMENDED**

https://www.bridgeclublive.com/Login_Y.asp

NEBA Website

I know that you use this facility to check your Monday Duplicate scores because the hit counter register rises on Tuesdays - but the website has so much more than results. It gives you everything that you would want to know about duplicate bridge in the North East of England. Check it out!

<http://www.neba.co.uk>

YOUR LOCAL AFFILIATED BRIDGE CLUB

Playing in a bridge club has moved on so much in recent years.

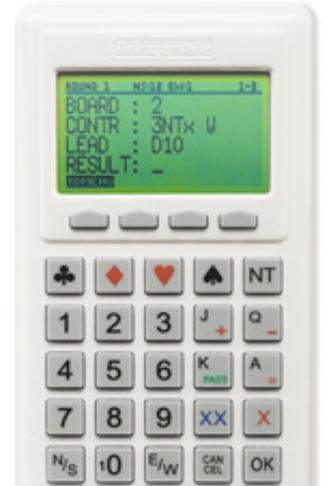
BIDDING BOXES - Despite an initial reluctance to accept them, could you really play bridge without them now? Even if, in those days **DOUBLE!!** was penalty and *double?* was for takeout. As well as the difficulty of remembering spoken bids, the bigger curse was 'Silent Bidders'. The first boxes were screwed onto the table and were constantly knocked off with your knee. Now £21 - £25 for 4. <https://www.ebu.co.uk/shop/bidding-accessories>



BIDDING BUDDY

SCOREBRIDGE - Both Inga and I remember scoring by hand - on paper. Club results weren't seen until the following week. There there were no niceties like displaying what other people had scored, or hand copies to remind you of your errors.

'BRIDGE SOLVER - An amazing programme that allows you to analyze, card by card, how every card played affects the result on the board. Well worth getting to know! Access it whilst looking at your club results. Click a board and then click 'PLAY IT AGAIN' - ANALYSE. <https://mirgo2.co.uk/bridgesolver/>



BRIDGEMATES

BRIDGEMATES - are now used in many clubs. These electronic marvels compute your scores as soon as you have played a hand. You see the hand result immediately and your final score is instantly available at the end of play. Battery driven, they cost £1,655 for a set of 10. but they do need to be pre programmed with the appropriate movements. <http://www.bridgemate.co.uk/product/>

'BRIDGE WEBS - a rather clunky and unattractive programme that allows non-nerds to produce comprehensive web sites that communicate all the information necessary to club members <http://www.bridgewebs.com>

'BAR CODED CARDS - were initially, but no longer, required for use in Duplimate machines

'DUPLIMATES - are now used used all over the world for the dealing and duplication of boards with ***hand records** that can show include optimum contracts. They deal a hand into a board in 10 seconds. Cost is £2200. All these electronic devices need to be compatible with 'Bridgewebs'. <http://www.duplimate.com/dupuk/Home.html>



DUPLIMATE

	N	S
N	1	1
S	3	3
H	5	5
D	4	4
C	1	1

- ♠ 2
- ♥ QJ1083
- ♦ 975
- ♣ 9854
- ♠ AQ10
- ♥ K962
- ♦ A643
- ♣ A2

1.

	E	W
N	10	10
S	9	9
H	8	8
D	8	7
C	12	12

- ♠ K7543
 - ♥ 754
 - ♦ KQ102
 - ♣ 6
- Opt res E/W 6♣ -920

***Duplimate, A4 hand records, are available to players as they leave OR players can get all the details on line when they get home.**

The numbers in the blue boxes relate to the number of tricks that are possible in each suit by each player. (Assuming best defence and best declarer play.)

As you can see, on hand 1 If you, as E/W, made game in 5♣ you may be disappointed to see that you should have made 12.

	N	S
N	7	6
S	10	8
H	8	8
D	4	4
C	9	8

- ♠ J1043
- ♥ J832
- ♦ K6
- ♣ QJ6
- ♠ 862
- ♥ A
- ♦ AQ1093
- ♣ A842

2.

	E	W
N	5	5
S	3	3
H	4	4
D	8	8
C	4	4

- ♠ 975
 - ♥ 9654
 - ♦ 8742
 - ♣ 93
 - ♠ AKQ
 - ♥ KQ107
 - ♦ J5
 - ♣ K1075
- Opt. res. E 4S +420

Although 4♠ is the only makeable game, most will play in 4♥ -2 (Note that north can make 10 tricks in spades, south can only make 8. Why?)

MOVEMENTS

Duplicate bridge requires pairs to move in such a way that they will play as many of the other pairs (and boards) as possible. Complex movements have been devised to accommodate different numbers of pairs playing as many of the boards that can be fitted in in the time available.

MITCHELL MOVEMENTS requires N/S to sit while E/W pairs move up one table and the boards to move down one table. This works perfectly when there is an odd number of tables. If there is an EVEN number of tables, the E/W pair must skip a table after half of the boards have been played. This is to avoid meeting previously played boards.

HOWELL MOVEMENTS are more complex and require all pairs to move and sometimes to play N/S as well as E/W. Clubs will have movement cards on each table to tell pairs where to go, *but spotting which pair you are following is easier.*

How does your game score on Board 1 (3NT +600) contribute to your final % score?

If there are 4 tables (8 pairs) your score is compared with the other 3 pairs playing in your direction.

On the example below N/S 3 scored +600. This was the best score for N/S on this board.

Their matchpoints on this board is a maximum 6. (2 for each pair they beat.) (and 1 for a shared score.)

Board 1	Pairs		Contract	By	Scores		Matchpoints	
	NS	EW			NS	EW	NS	EW
	1	2	3H	S	140		4	2
	3	7	3N	N	600		6	0
	4	6	5D-2	S		200	0	6
	8	5	3H-1	S		100	2	4

If 10 boards were played, the maximum Matchpoints would be 60 (10 x 6)

The overall winners on this example scored a total of 42 matchpoints over the 10 boards played.

This equates to an excellent winning score of 70%

Pos	Pair	Players	Matchpoints	Score %
1	2	Sheila & Ramsey White	42/ 60	70.00
2	7	Julia Bailey & Margaret Hoyle	35/ 60	58.33

CONVENTION CARDS

You are not allowed to have any secret bids but conventional bids are used by all bridge partnerships. If asked by opponents, you are obliged to give a full meaning of any bid that you have alerted. Although NEBA clubs do not insist that you carry a convention card on club nights, they are required, when playing in bridge competitions. You are advised to agree with your partner what conventions you use by filling in a convention card. Download blank or simple system cards here

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/system-cards>

We have produced simplified "What do you Play?" cards which are handy to offer any new partners you play with.

ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION (EBU)

This is the National body responsible for the development of Duplicate Bridge. It is affiliated to the European Bridge League and the World Bridge Federation. There are 39 constituent County Associations and EBU employs about 20 professional people at their headquarters in Aylesbury, as well as organising National competitions training sessions for directors and Teacher training etc. They organise Simultaneous Pairs competitions where the same hands are played across the country and players are scored locally and Nationally. There are also World Sims where you are scored against the rest of the world.

NEBA

This is OUR association which is affiliated to EBU. Unlike the National body, all of the NEBA Executive, Tournament Secretaries etc. are unpaid volunteers giving something back to the game they love. There are 21 affiliated clubs in our area, all run by volunteers. NEBA executive arrange direct entry competitions that are growing in popularity as they now include **wonderful tea time meals**. Other competitions require qualification from club heats. and there is a very popular 'Teams of 8' competition that involves most of our clubs competing on 5 Sundays over the year. More and more of our students are playing in clubs and we would love you to join them.