

EGCC Bridge Lessons

Notes from Week 1.

Tricks

Bridge is a Partnership Game. It is also a trick taking game (like whist).

Each trick consists of four cards, one from each player in turn (going clockwise).

The first player to play to trick is “leading” to the trick.

Players must follow suit: i.e. play a card of the suit led if they have one. If you do not have one, you “discard”: play any other card (usually one you don’t want).

The trick is won by whichever card in the suit led is highest (2 = low, A = high).

The Play

When playing the cards, one player is declarer. Declarer’s partner is known as dummy. The other two players are defenders.

The person who leads to the first trick is the player immediately on Declarer’s left. Once the very first lead is made, Dummy lays their cards on the table in suits, highest to lowest in each suit.

From then on Declarer is playing both their own and dummy’s cards. Dummy’s role is limited to playing the cards as instructed by Declarer.

When a trick is finished, the individual cards played to it are laid down in front of each player, with the longways direction pointing towards whichever side won the trick. They are NOT mixed together. Subsequent cards overlap the previous ones so the order in which they were played is preserved.

Whoever wins the trick leads to the next trick.

Once all thirteen tricks have been played, you count up how many tricks each side made, and return your own hand back to the slot in the board that it came from. Remember the score is for your side, not just your hand.

MiniBridge

What we played today is called MiniBridge. It is just the playing aspects of bridge. The other part (bidding) we will be looking at after Christmas.

First of all, all 4 players count their hand – work out how many High Card Points (HCPs) they have. HCPs are: Ace = 4, King = 3, Queen = 2, Jack = 1. There are 40 HCPs in a pack. Simply add up the values for each AKQ or J in your hand.

Whichever side has the most HCPs between them will be set a target of tricks to make. Whoever has the most points in that side will be declarer (if two have the same then whoever spoke first). If the points are 20-20 just deal the cards again.

The target for declarer is based on how many points the side has between them:

21 - 22 HCPs will produce 7 tricks. $23 - 24 = 8$ tricks. $25 - 26 = 9$, $27 - 28 = 10$, $29 - 32 = 11$, $33 - 36 = 12$, $37-40 = 13$.

Types of Tricks:

- Immediate tricks (Off the Top)
- Knocking out High Cards
- Establish a Long Suit

The goal of the defenders is exactly the same as that of Declarer: Make as many tricks as possible. You want to lead your longest suit so you can establish it, and a good lead is usually the 4th highest card in your longest suit.

Help Online

There are many on-line resources you can go to, but they take various different approaches so I advise caution. <https://www.ebu.co.uk/minibridge> is a good place to start.

If you want to play against your computer, this is an excellent free package:

<http://www.bluechipbridge.co.uk/minibridge.htm>. When running the program you need to choose Option 1: Practice your no-trump play.

Best of Luck!

Jeremy