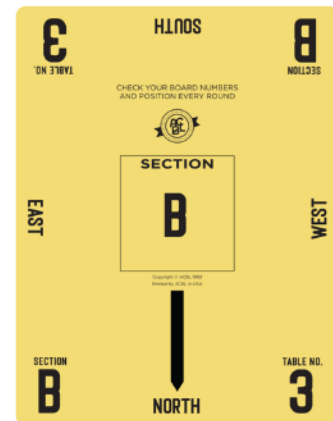# CLASS 1
UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS

OBJECTIVES

- Learn Mechanics of Playing a Hand
- Play Your First Hands
- Learn Bridge Vocabulary
- Understand the Goal of the Game

BRIDGE BASICS

- Bridge uses a 52-card deck (no jokers).
- It is played in 2-person teams.
- Your partner is the person sitting opposite you at the table...
  - North and South
  - East and West

The honor cards are: _____

The highest card in each suit is: _____

MAJORS
- Spades
- Hearts

MINORS
- Diamonds
- Clubs

STARTING A HAND OF BRIDGE

- **Shuffle** – **DEALER** shuffles the deck.

- **Deal** – **DEALER**, starting with the player on their left, places 1 card face down in front of each player, proceeding clockwise until all cards are dealt.

- **Verify** – Each player checks to make sure they have 13 cards.

- **Sort** – Each player sorts their hand.

HOW A TRICK IS PLAYED

Play is clockwise

WEST made the **OPENING LEAD**

Each player **MUST** follow suit if they can

Highest card in the suit led <u>wins</u> the trick

The North/South partnership won the trick. And since **SOUTH** played the winning card, **SOUTH** leads to the next trick.

HOW TO KEEP THE CARDS AFTER A TRICK IS PLAYED

After a trick is played, each player retrieves their card and places it face down in front of them – the orientation of the card indicates whether the partnership won or lost that trick.

TRICK WON

TRICK LOST
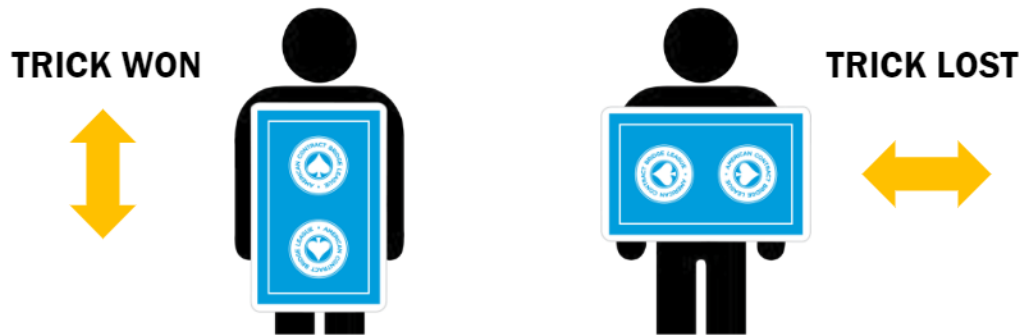
13 tricks after a hand of Bridge is played...

PLAYING THE HAND

DIRECTIONS

- Player to the left of **DEALER**, makes the **OPENING LEAD**.

- Whoever wins each trick leads to the next trick.

- Everyone follows the suit led for each trick and if they cannot follow suit, they play any other card (**DISCARD**).

- When all 13 tricks have been played, turn cards face up – *note what cards won tricks.*

How many tricks did your partnership take? _____

What cards won tricks? _____

What is this type of hand called? _____

UNDERSTANDING TRUMP

What is Trump? _____

_____

When playing with a Trump suit what should you remember?

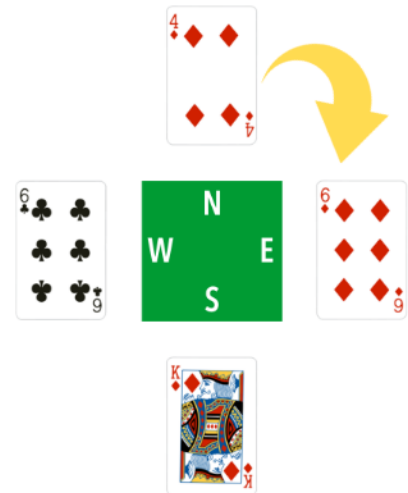_____

_____

_____

TRUMP HAND EXAMPLES

Clubs (♣) are Trump and **NORTH** leads ♦4.

Example 1

What card won the trick? _____

Who wins the trick? _____
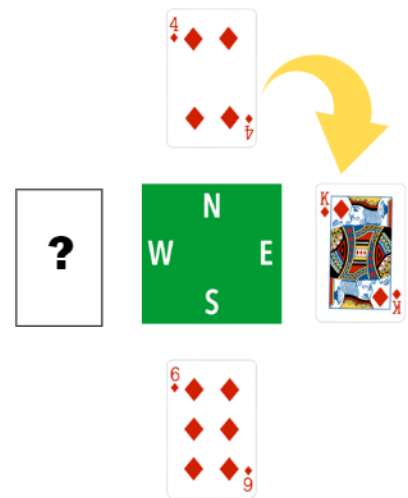
What do you know about the winner's hand?

_____

_____

Example 2

What should **WEST** play? _____

Who wins the trick? _____

Why shouldn't **WEST** trump?

_____

_____

PLAYING A TRUMP HAND

15

DIRECTIONS

- **EAST (DEALER)** shuffles and deals the cards, <u>clubs (♣) are trump.</u>

- **SOUTH** makes the opening lead.

- You must follow the suit led for each trick.

- Highest card in the suit led wins trick <u>or</u> if a trump card is played, the highest trump wins.

- Player who wins the trick, leads to the next trick.

- When all 13 tricks have been played, turn cards face up. *Note how many clubs each partnership held <u>and</u> how tricks were won.*

How many clubs did your partnership hold? _____

What cards won tricks? _____

What is a **FIT**? _____

HOW DID YOU WIN TRICKS?

Sometimes your **DISTRIBUTION** (the number of cards held in each suit) can make it easier to win tricks in a trump contract.

What is a Void? _____

What is a Singleton? _____

Is having a short suit helpful when you have a trump suit? _____

PLAY ANOTHER TRUMP HAND

15

DIRECTIONS

- **SOUTH (DEALER)** shuffles and deals the cards, clubs (♣) are trump.

- **WEST** makes the opening lead.

- Play proceeds as before (see directions above).

FLOW OF THE GAME

- Cards are shuffled, dealt, counted, and sorted.

- Bidding happens (AUCTION).

- One partnership (DECLARERS) commits to win a specific number of the 13 tricks. This is the CONTRACT.

- The player who first bid the suit (or notrump) which becomes the contract, is the DECLARER and plays out the hand.

- The opposing partnership (DEFENDERS) try to stop the Declarer from winning the number of tricks promised.

THE DUMMY
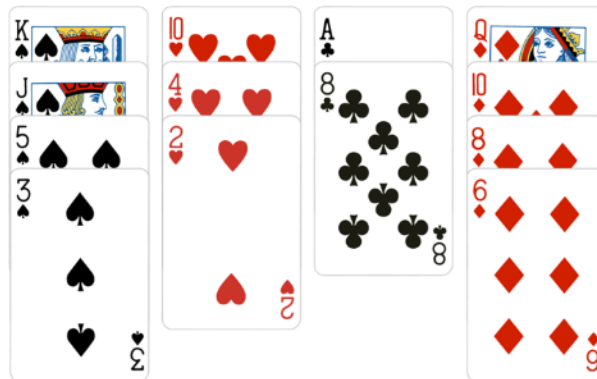
One unique aspect of bridge is one hand is always laid out, face-up on the table (after the OPENING LEAD). This is called the DUMMY.

- The DUMMY is the partner of DECLARER.

- The DECLARER plays the cards from both their hand and the DUMMY.

GOAL OF THE GAME

The primary goal in Bridge is for your partnership to win the largest number of points possible on every hand played!

- The Declarer's goal in a hand is to take, at a minimum, the number of tricks promised (CONTRACT).

- The Defenders' goal in a hand is to SET the Declarer by not allowing them to take the number of tricks promised.

HOW POINTS ARE EARNED

Declarer's Partnership can win 2 types of points:

- TRICK points for each trick won beyond the first 6 tricks (BOOK).
- BONUS points for taking the number of tricks promised (or more) (CONTRACT).

Defenders can only win one type of points called SET points for stopping Declarer from winning the number of tricks for which he committed.

HOW IS THE CONTRACT DECIDED?

BIDDING is a code used to communicate with partner in the AUCTION. It is used to tell partner 2 things, so your partnership can decide where to play.

- Length – your DISTRIBUTION (how many cards you hold in certain suits).
- Strength – how many underline honor cards you hold in your hand.

WHY RISK A HIGHER CONTRACT?

Bonus points are based on how many tricks a partnership commits to win, so...

- Small risk → Earns a small bonus
- Larger risks → Earn LARGER bonuses

> Note: More on the bidding, points and scoring later in the series.

PRIORITY OF CONTRACTS TO MAXIMIZE SCORE

MAJORS ♠ ♥

Why is the 'Priority of Contracts' important?

_____

_____

NOTRUMP no trump suit highest card wins

Why would the Declarers risk committing to try and win a large number of tricks?

_____

MINORS ♦ ♣

What are the 2 things we're trying to decide in every hand?

_____

_____

LET'S DECIDE WHERE TO PLAY

8

DIRECTIONS

- Review the hands below and discuss with your table where you would like to play – trump or notrump, and if trump then which suit.

- Note your answers in the space provided.

REMEMBER

- If playing with a **TRUMP** suit, you want to have a **FIT** (8+ cards in that suit between the two hands).

- If playing in **NOTRUMP**, you want to be **BALANCED** (no voids, no singletons and usually not more than 1 doubleton).

Hand #1

Would you like to play in:

☐ Notrump

☐ Trump suit _____

N — Robot (Dummy)
A 8 7 6 ♠ A 9 6 5 4 3 ♥ K 9 3 ♣ ♣

S — A1 Student (Table 1)
K J 9 2 ♠ 10 ♥ A Q J 10 8 ♣ A 4 2 ♦

Hand #2

Would you like to play in:

☐ Notrump

☐ Trump suit _____

N — Robot (Dummy)
6 4 ♠ A 10 7 2 ♥ A Q 9 5 ♣ J 9 4 ♦

S — A1 Student (Table 1)
8 7 3 ♠ K 5 ♥ K J 10 7 4 2 ♣ Q 7 ♦ ♦ ♦

Hand #3

Would you like to play in:

☐ Notrump

☐ Trump suit _____

N — Robot (Dummy)
K Q 9 ♠ Q 6 2 ♥ A J 7 4 2 ♣ 8 4 ♦

S — Student 1 (Table 1)
5 4 ♠ 8 5 4 ♥ K 6 ♣ K Q J 10 7 2 ♦ ♦