

Bridge Basics 2: Competitive Bidding – Teachers’ Manual

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Important Notes for Teaching This Course

Overview

Bridge Basics 2 introduces the modern style to competitive bidding. The material is designed to be used for players with a wide range of experience and skill. It has met with success with classes who have just completed Bridge Basics 1. It has been equally appealing to classes of experienced duplicate players. Many straightforward concepts included in the Teachers' Manual are as new to players being introduced to competitive bidding for the first time as they are to those with hundreds of masterpoints.

Students have raved about the competitive bidding course for many reasons. The material is outstanding and was developed with the co-operation of the best players and teachers in the world and with the talent of David Lindop who constructed the 32 practice deals. The teaching methods are unique and effective. The teachers who effectively present this material will have worked hard to develop the necessary skills.

The Cards-on-the-Table Method

The **CARDS-ON-THE-TABLE METHOD** is used to develop concepts in bidding, play and defense. It is the practical way to implement a highly evolved educational theory which offers the students an excellent way to learn the game. Using the cards has the following advantages:

Clarifies the Presentation

- Students can see a hand face-up on the table better than one written on a flip chart
- Bidding Boxes work better to complete the picture than the traditional blackboard

Provides for a Student-Focused Class

- Players face each other, rather than the teacher

Increases Class Energy

- Participants are moving the cards and moving the bids from the Bidding Box
- The position of having four people facing each other promotes conversation among the players

Encourages an Activity Based Approach

- Playing the pedals is an active way to experience the game
- Playing carefully constructed hands handles individual differences and allows the material to be presented to players with a wide range of experience and skill

Cards Enable a Play-Focused Lesson Series

- Bridge is a trick taking game; focusing on play is important
- Playing the cards develops sound card play techniques

A Frequently Used Layout – 13 Cards Face Up on the Table

This pattern is used to discuss bidding concepts. In place of using a flip chart, players construct a hand, dummy style, in front of one direction. After talking about the hand, moving the cards makes a few changes, and another hand is discussed.

1. Getting the Cards into Suits.

From the full deck, each player takes one suit. There are several methods of dividing a deck into four suits. One effective way is for the instructor to have the deck already sorted into suits and put in a duplicate board, or in front of each player. The players take the cards out of the pocket in front of them, or pick up the cards on the table, and are ready to construct the hand.

The instructions have to be clear. For example, if we're using the model of having the cards suited ahead of time, instructions could be:

Each player is going to have one suit. There are thirteen cards in one suit in the pocket of the duplicate board (or on the table) in front of you. Take these thirteen cards out of the pocket (pick up the cards). One player will now have all the spades; one player all the hearts; one player all the diamonds; and one player all the clubs.

Although this much detail might seem unnecessary, experience has shown that the students are appreciative of the time saved in class when specific instructions are given on the front end.

Another way to have the cards divided into suits is to start by having one player deal the cards. The instructions would then be as follows:

North, deal the cards so that each player has thirteen cards. Turn the cards face up on the table, in columns, dummy style. There will be 52 cards face up on the table. North, keep your hand intact. East, South, and West, put your spades on top of North's spades, your hearts on top of North's hearts, your diamonds on top of North's diamonds, and your clubs on top of North's clubs.

East, South, and West now take one suit from the North hand. North, pick up the remaining cards. You should each now be holding thirteen cards in one suit. One player is going to have all of the spades, one player all of the hearts, one player all of the diamonds, and one player all of the clubs.

2. Constructing a hand on the table.

Once each player has a suit, the age old maxim of “tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and tell them what you’ve told them” is very useful when directing four people at a table to construct a hand with thirteen cards, face up, in front of one direction. The following three tips can make it better for the presenter and the players.

a) Tell Them What You’re Going to Tell Them

Give instructions that set the objective.

We’re going to construct a hand in front of North, face up, and dummy style with the cards in columns. The high cards will be at the edge of the table, just as if this hand is the dummy. There will be 13 cards face up on the table. All other cards will be face down, and no one at the table will need to hold any cards. We’re going to look at interesting bidding ideas, and we’ll be able to see the cards more easily if they’re right in front of us on the table rather than on a flip chart.

b) Tell Them

There are several ways we could ask the player with spades to put the ♠A-7-6 face up on the table. We could simply say, “Put the Ace, 7, and 6 of spades on the table.” A statement like this is likely to lead to confusion. First of all, everyone has to listen to the numbers before the suit is given. This spends class energy in an unproductive manner. There is no information where or how the cards are to be placed. Better instructions would be:

The person with the spade suit will be first to put cards face up on the table. There are going to be three spades in the hand. The spades are the Ace and two low spades. Put them in a column, face up, in front of North. Turn the remaining ten spades face down on the table. Only three cards are on the table, the ♠A and two low spades. Are there any questions so far?

The instructions continue in a similar manner:

The player with hearts will go next. You’ll put four hearts in front of North, face up, beside the spades. There are two high cards and two low cards. Put the ♥K, ♥Q and two low hearts in front of North. There should now be seven cards face up on the table in front of North: three spades and four hearts. Are there any questions?

Although this might seem far too tedious and time consuming, experience has shown that the opposite is true; it saves time. If we give the instructions only once, the hands are unlikely to be accurately constructed at many tables and there will be questions! “What were the spades?” “We only have twelve cards, could you read the hand again?” “How many diamonds were there?” “Could you come over here and tell us the hand again.”

c) Tell Them What You’ve Told Them

Once the hand has been constructed, review it with the entire class. The instructions could be:

There should now be thirteen cards face up on the table. In spades there are three cards, the ♠A and two low spades. In hearts there are four cards, the ♥K, ♥Q and two low hearts. In diamonds there are four low cards. Finally, there should be two low clubs.

Now there are unlikely to be any questions. If we’re not working with an assistant, however, we should have a hand made up ahead of time, in a board in the North pocket with the other directions sorted into suits. We can take away the deck of cards that the students were using and replace them with the board.

Once we carefully give instructions for the first hand, there are few problems moving cards to get to another hand pattern. The participants are ready to be an active part of constructing a hand.

3. Team Work at the Table

Even with clear-cut instructions, there will be times when, for example, one player puts the ♠A-x-x face up on the table, and leaves the remaining ten spades also face up, creating table clutter! Or, a player could throw the suit carelessly on the table. We can simply say:

If there are any cards face up on the table other than the 13 cards, or if any suit is not arranged so that it can be seen easily, could any player at the table adjust the cards.

Although this could sound intrusive because one player might handle another player’s cards, it is usually not seen as this. The alternative is to be at the mercy of any player who, for some reason, can’t hear instructions or can’t arrange the cards in a neat manner. In practice, the four players are being directed - almost being given permission - to work with each other ... to work as a team.

In the manual, such specific instructions for constructing each hand are not given. For example, here is the information for the first hand in Lesson One:

Take the cards and sort them into suits. Each player take one suit.

Construct the following hand in front of East.

EAST
♠ x x x
♥ A K
♦ A K x x
♣ A K x x

The teacher needs to know how to direct the students to put thirteen cards face up on the table. Although this seems like such an easy thing to do, it requires practice and skill.

13 Cards for developing a play Concept

Thirteen cards in a single suit can be used to illustrate a play point, such as how to take sure tricks or how to use promotion, length, or the finesse to develop the tricks needed to make the contract. Usually this pattern develops from having 27 cards face up on the table: the opening lead, the declarer, and the dummy. To move from 27 cards to a single suit face up, the following instructions could be given:

North and South turn your hearts, diamonds, and clubs face down. Leave the spades face up. East and West turn your spades face up; all other cards including the lead are face down. There should now be 13 cards only face up on the table, all of the spades. All other suits are turned face down.

Playing a Deal

There are thirty-two deals for the Bridge Basics 2 book. Four are at the end of each lesson. An additional sixteen deals are at the back of the book. There are **COLOR CODED CARDS** that accompany Bridge Basics 2: Competitive Bidding. The deals are used to show the bidding concepts in the context of an entire deal, along with some play concepts. To distribute a deal, give the students the following information:

We're going to play the first deal, Deal #1. The first step is to put the directional guide card (North/South/East/West) in the middle of the table. North is shaded red, East is blue, South is yellow, and West is green.

Now look at the back of one of the cards. The numbers are from 1 to 32. We're going to distribute Deal #1, in the top left corner. Deal #1 will be shaded one of four colors: red, blue, yellow, or green. If you have a card in which Deal #1 is shaded red, put it face down in front of North. If Deal #1 is shaded blue, put the card face down in front of East. If Deal #1 is shaded yellow, put the card face down in front of South. If Deal #1 is shaded green put the card face down in front of West.

After the cards are distributed, each player should have thirteen cards. If you're sitting North, all thirteen cards will be shaded red in Deal #1. East will have 13 cards in which Deal #1 is shaded blue; South will have Deal #1 shaded yellow; West will have Deal #1 shaded green.

Bid and play Deal #1. North is the dealer. You have 7½ minutes to play as many cards as you can.

If you finish before that time, turn all four hands face up, dummy style, and discuss the deal with the others at your table. You can consider the best contract for both sides and how the auction should go.

52 Cards Face Up on the Table

After the deal has been played all fifty-two cards are placed face up on the table. There is a caution to using the cards to illustrate bidding concepts when all the cards are face up. The cards have to be visible for all of the players: neatly arranged, in columns, dummy style. To achieve this, instructions have to be detailed. The same techniques are used. The teacher tells the class what will happen:

We're going to have 52 cards face up on the table so that we can talk about the bidding and play on this deal. So that all the players at the table can see the cards, we're going to place the hands in front of each player, dummy style: in columns with the high cards about three inches in from the edge of the table. Your hand will be "upside down" but you will be able to see the other three hands, which are "right side up"; it's a good trade.

Then we tell them:

Put your cards face up on the table, dummy style.

Finally, we tell them what we've told them:

There should be fifty-two cards neatly turned face up on the table. Each hand should be dummy style in columns. If you see a card that is face down on the table, even if it is in front of another player, you can turn it face up. If any hand is difficult to see, any player at the table can adjust it.

In the Manual, all this is covered with an instruction such as:

It's time to look at the deal so, even if you haven't completed the play, turn your hand face up and arrange it dummy style in front of you.

All 52 cards should be face up on the table, arranged neatly in columns, dummy style, in front of each player.

Discussing the Hand

When all fifty-two cards are face up on the table, the bidding and play are discussed. During the bidding conversation, the key is to focus the players' attention on the appropriate hand. In the Manual, directions to the class are in boxes:

Focus on the East hand.

The section on play instructs the students to have only the lead and two hands face up on the table, and to arrange the suits so that they face each other. Here's an example for Deal #1:

East and West, turn your hands face down.

North, keep the order of your suits intact. South, place your suits, dummy style, opposite North's suits: spades opposite spades; hearts opposite hearts; etc.

East, lead the \spadesuit K.

Only 27 cards are face up on the table ... the North and South hands and East's lead. Focus on the North-South hands.

NORTH (Declarer)	
\spadesuit K Q J 10 9 8 7	
\heartsuit 10 5	
\diamondsuit 6 3	
\clubsuit 8 6	
WEST	EAST
	\diamondsuit K
SOUTH (Dummy)	
\spadesuit 4	
\heartsuit Q J 8 4	
\diamondsuit A 9 7	
\clubsuit J 10 9 7 4	

Since the course is on competitive bidding, after the play in one direction is discussed, the play in the other direction might be discussed. For example:

North and South, turn your hands face down. East and West, turn your hands face up.

South, lead the \spadesuit 4.

Only 27 cards are face up on the table ... the East and West hands and South's lead. Focus on the East-West hands.

NORTH	
WEST	EAST
\spadesuit 6 3	\spadesuit A 5 2
\heartsuit A K 7 2	\heartsuit 9 6 3
\diamondsuit 8 5 4 2	\diamondsuit K Q J 10
\clubsuit A Q 2	\clubsuit K 5 3
SOUTH	
\spadesuit 4	

Card by Card

A unique feature of these lesson plans is a card-by-card description of how the hand is to be played. The students are very enthusiastic about “watching” a hand being played. This is a time for clear instructions. We want to let the students know what is going to happen.

We’re going to play the cards one at a time. Take the guide card and push it toward East, who will be the dummy on this hand. Who is on lead, if the declarer is West? (North)

The diagram for the card-by-card looks like this:

Trick					Notes
1	North ♠Q	East ♠3	South ♠2	West ♠A	We'll assume North leads the top of the solid sequence in spades.
2	West ♦4	North ♦2	East ♦9	South ♦K	Declarer wants to establish extra tricks in diamonds right away. It doesn't matter whether declarer plays the ♦Q, ♦J, ♦10, or ♦9 from dummy ... any of them is high enough to drive out the ♦A or ♦K.
3	South ♠7	West ♠4	North ♠8	East ♠K	South might now lead a heart. However, it's generally a good idea to return partner's suit unless there is clearly a better choice. The defenders want to work together when establishing tricks.
4	East ♦Q	South ♦A	West ♦5	North ♦3	Declarer continues with the plan of promoting winners in the diamond suit.
5	South ♥Q	West ♥K	North ♥2	East ♥4	North's spades are established as winners but South has no spade to lead. This is the problem with North's lead of the ♠Q. North can establish winners in the suit but has no entry - high card - with which to regain the lead. Let's assume South now leads a heart.
After winning this trick, declarer has seven more tricks to take ... another heart, three established diamond winners, and three clubs. Declarer takes ten tricks in total: two spades, two hearts, three diamonds, and three clubs. Declarer makes 3NT with an overtrick.					

The key is to say the direction first and then the card played. For example:

North, ♠Q. East, ♠3. South, ♠2. West, ♠A. Who won the first trick? (West). Turn the first trick face down ...

STEAM: The Teachers' Checklist for Success

The goal of the **STEAM** checklist is to keep focused on aspects of teaching that make sure our players are satisfied customers – pleased they have decided to invest in bridge lessons. The letters are not in order of importance; the word could have been TEAMS or anything else. **STEAM** seemed like the best choice

Safety

It's critical to keep the participants comfortable. There are several important techniques to accomplish this:

- At the beginning of each class let them know that, unless they volunteer, they won't be asked a question
- Allow for different opinions and avoid the "right answer." For example, some players already know and prefer to play a 16–18 INT range. Bridge Basics introduces the more popular 15–17 point range. The responses are the same, so respect the students' opinions and move the class along.
- **Keep Away from the Table.** A play-focused approach gives the participants a chance to experience the play of the hand. Don't watch them while they're playing, or come over to suggest a bid. This tends to make other players at the table uncomfortable.
- **Give Clear Instructions.** Take the time to become skilled at giving students the best instructions for constructing hands on the table so that they won't feel they aren't doing the right thing.
- Avoid interfering with the learning process by praising a student for work well done. It's one of the illusions of teaching that this enhances the desire to learn. Alfa Kohn's book, *Punished by Rewards*, is an excellent resource if you still aren't convinced.

Timing

It's important to respect time.

- Start on time, have a short break after about an hour, and finish on time. It's that straightforward.
- Give the participants 7½ minutes to bid and then play as many cards as they can in a deal ... keep the class moving.
- End on time; it's just as important as starting on time. Giving extra value doesn't apply when we go beyond the advertised time.
- Balance the class with time for the students to listen, talk about concepts, read information, and play deals.

Energy

Energy is important. Keep the atmosphere upbeat.

- Provide an opportunity for the students to talk to each other. In the first lesson, there is an icon placed in several spots to give the general idea. After that, the teacher has to be aware to regularly ask the students to talk among themselves.
- Play at least four deals in every two-hour lesson; avoid too much attention to bidding in isolation.
- Use a microphone.

Attitude

Play the odds for customer service. Small, seemingly unimportant habits can make a difference.

- Most classes prefer the teacher to be professionally dressed.
- Avoid questionable jokes and remarks.
- Be prepared. No matter how many times we have given the lesson, review the plans before the class.
- Have the material ready.
- Do your best, even though conditions will change from moment to moment.
- Continue to learn.
- Be aware of how the class is being received by the students: does your attendance increase, stay the same, or decrease – and why.

Material

Use the best bridge material and teaching philosophy available

- Offer several methods for learning. Some students prefer to read and will read ahead and reread material presented in the lesson; others use the textbook sporadically.
- Some are note-takers, writing down reactions and the material presented by the lecturer, even though the information is in the text. They write in the text, underline key points, record notes in the margin. Others don't have notebooks and would never write in a text. Some students have highly developed listening skills; others find it difficult to hear.
- Some find talking a powerful tool for absorbing information; others don't like to share thoughts with others.

Additional Deals

There are sixteen extra deals which can be used for practice play sessions after the first four lessons. They are carefully arranged with concepts from all the lessons.

The teacher could also choose to use these deals during some of the lessons to illustrate additional concepts. It's suggested that the deals only be used after the lessons as shown below to avoid bidding concepts that the students have not yet encountered. Here is a summary of the play and bidding concepts:

USE AFTER	DEAL #	DECLARER	NOTES
Lesson 2	26	E	1NT Overcall; Finesse
	27	S	Weak Jump Overcall (Two Level); Promotion
	28	W	Weak Jump Overcall (Three Level)
	30	E	Preemptive Opening; Overcall; Advancing an Overcall; Length
Lesson 3	17	N	Preemptive Opening; Takeout Double; Advancing a Takeout Double; Trumping Losers in Dummy
	21	N	Takeout Double; Takeout Doubler's Rebid; Promotion; Trumping Losers in Dummy
	25	N	Takeout Double to Show a Strong Hand; Trumping Losers (High) in Dummy
	29	N	Weak Two-Bid; Takeout Double; Advancing a Takeout Double; Length
	32	W	Takeout Double; Advancing a Takeout Double
Lesson 4	18	E	Overcall; Negative Double; Length; High Card from Short Side
	19	S	Takeout Double; Responder's Preemptive Raise; Trumping Losers in Dummy
	20	W	Overcall; Responder's Cuebid; Length
	22	E	Two-Level Overcall; Responder's Preemptive Raise; Trumping Losers in Dummy
	23	S	Takeout Double; Impact of Redouble; Finesse
	24	W	Takeout Double; Redouble; Penalty Double
	31	S	Takeout Double; Responder's Preemptive Raise; Cuebid by Advancer

Course Schedule

Although the Teachers' Manual is broken into four lessons, the material can be adapted in a number of ways. The challenge in writing a manual is to have just the right amount of material to fit into a two-hour lesson, or two one-hour segments. However, there is no such thing as an ideal class and the teacher will need to be flexible in adjusting the lessons to meet the needs of the class.

The Four-Week Course

Each lesson is 2 hours long. The four deals are played in the two hours, with the focus on the bidding and the play of the hand. The text can be used to look again at the four deals in the lesson and the students are introduced to "reading" a bridge hand, putting the bidding and play together.

The Six-Week Course

There are sixteen extra deals in the text that are ideally suited for two lessons of supervised play. The deals can be played, turned up dummy style, and discussed. The students look at all fifty-two cards, and discuss the bidding and play. The declarer's ABC's for planning the play can be reviewed and applied to each hand. Or, the students can "bid" the hand first and then turn it face up, ready for discussion.

The Eight-Week Course

After the first four weeks, introduce four weeks of supervised play. First, replay the sixteen deals from the four chapters, with the complete auction and play. Then bid and play the extra deals. Practice using Declarer's Plan on each deal.

Length of Individual Lessons

The lessons are designed for a two-hour class. They can also be used for two one-hour classes.

It's not advisable to have classes of more than two hours in length, although it may seem as if the players are appreciative of the extra time we spend. More important is to present what was advertised. If the class is advertised as two hours, it's important to deliver the material in that time.

The Bridge Basics Series

Overview

The Bridge Basics Series introduces students to up-to-date methods that represent the way the game is played today. The material has been well tested and has met with rave reviews. We look forward to your comments. The series is for beginning players and those who wish to brush up on fundamentals of the game. There will be five textbooks/courses, each with four chapters/lessons and sixteen additional practice deals.

1. An Introduction

- The Basics
- Notrump Opening Bids and Responses
- Major Suit Opening Bids and Responses
- Minor Suit Opening Bids and Responses
- Additional Practice Deals

2. Competitive Bidding

- Preemptive Opening Bids
- Overcalls and Advances
- Takeout Doubles and Advances
- The Competitive Auction
- Additional Practice Deals

3. Popular Conventions

- The Stayman Convention
- Transfer Bids
- Blackwood and Gerber
- Strong Two-Bids
- Additional Practice Deals

4. Declarer Play

- Sure Tricks, Promotion, and Length
- The Finesse
- Trumping and Discarding Losers
- Planning and Strategy
- Additional Practice Deals

5. Defense

- Opening Leads
- Second and Third Hand Play
- Signals
- Planning and Strategy
- Additional Practice Deals

The Student Text

Each student textbook is designed with the reader in mind. There are several special features.

The Binding

The binding is referred to as autobound and has an air pocket in the spine. It can be bent so that the back cover meets the front cover – something we don't generally want to do because it causes the pages to fall out. With autobinding, however, the pages stay in place and the book can now lie flat on a surface. This makes it easy to complete exercises and to read the bridge deals.

Two Colors

Two-color printing makes the text more attractive: the suits are easier to read and the key points can be highlighted.

Footnotes

There are footnotes throughout the books which describe other ways of doing things. The first one on page 2 of Bridge Basics I, for example, references the opening lead, giving the information that in some forms of the game the opening lead is made face down.

Exercises

There are plenty of exercises. They are on facing pages to make it straight-forward for the students to check the answers after completing each exercise.

Practice Deals

There are four practice deals at the end of each chapter. They highlight the concepts introduced during the chapter and include a discussion of the suggested bidding, play, and defense. In each set of four hands, every player is declarer once.

Additional Deals

Sixteen additional deals are included in each book. They're carefully constructed so that:

- Each group of four hands has a different declarer.
- They include a variety of contracts.
- They provide a variety of card play techniques.

The deals could be used for two supervised play classes following the regular set of classes.

Appendices

Additional information is included in appendices. In Bridge Basics 2, for example, a detailed discussion of scoring is in the Appendix.

Glossaries

The glossary at the end of each book includes a reference to the first page on which each term is introduced.

The Courses

Each course includes the following:

Teachers' Manual

For each textbook there is an accompanying Teachers' Manual which provides detailed lesson plans for each chapter/lesson. Although the lesson plans are based on two-hour lessons, they can be easily adapted into one hour (or forty/forty-five minute) lessons. The additional practice deals can be used for supervised play.


The Lessons in the Teachers' Manual are formatted to make them easy to follow during the presentation:

The italics are notes to the teacher.

- Information in point form is the bridge theory the teacher presents to the class.

The boxes contain instructions given to the class.

Textbook references are shaded.

 This graphic indicates a **key point**.

Color-Coded Cards

COLOR-CODED CARDS are available for each book covering the thirty-two practice deals.

Lesson Plans

