

BRIDGE BASICS 1
AN INTRODUCTION
TEACHERS'
MANUAL



by
Audrey Grant

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247 Wanless Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M4N 1W5
Canada

WE'D LIKE TO KEEP IN TOUCH

Phone: (416) 322-2123 or (888) 266-4447

Fax: (416) 322-6601

Email: BetterBridge@BetterBridge.com

Website: www.BetterBridge.com or www.AudreyGrant.com

Contents

Important Notes for Teaching This Course

- The Cards-on-the-Table Method iii
- Using the Teaching Aids vii
- Using the Additional Deals xi
- Scheduling a Course xii
- The Teachers' Checklist for Success xiii

Overview of the Bridge Basics Series

- About the Textbooks xvi
- About the Courses xviii
- The Bridge Basics Philosophy on Play xix
- The Bridge Basics Philosophy on Bidding xxi
- The Better Bridge Partnership with the Teacher xxiii

Lesson Plans

- **Lesson One:** The Basics 1
- **Lesson Two:** Notrump Opening Bids and Responses 51
- **Lesson Three:** Major Suit Opening Bids and Responses 123
- **Lesson Four:** Minor Suit Opening Bids and Responses 193

Appendices

- Additional Exercises A-1
- Teacher's Guide Card A-7
- Teacher's Deal Records A-11
- Contract Card A-29
- Cue Cards A-33
- Bidding Ladder Bookmark A-37
- Award Certificate A-41

Important Notes for Teaching This Course

The Cards-on-the-Table Method

Most students learn more quickly and effectively by being introduced to play of the hand before the bidding. They also understand the bidding when it is seen in the context of the play of the hand, rather than in isolation.

To implement a play-focused method, requires a change in the way we think of bridge lessons, and a willingness to work to develop new skills. The lesson plans detail the instructions, but an overview is important.

Each lesson focuses on the play of the hand during the first hour of the lesson. The bidding is introduced in the second half. Lesson One, because it is the introduction to the game, has a slightly different format from Lessons Two, Three, and Four, but the philosophy and the methods are the same.

To be good at using the play-focused method, it's important to know how to implement cards on the table. We need to know the different types of layout, the use of each layout, and how we are going to smoothly move our students from one layout to the next. The following is a list of the various layouts, when they are used, and how to direct the students to set the cards up correctly on the table.

52 Cards Face Up on the Table

A frequently used layout is to have the players turn all 52 cards face up on the table, dummy style. This pattern is used when the players are counting the points in each hand and deciding which side has greater combined strength. They can use the Contract Card (see Appendix) to record the result.

In later lessons, they may be able to count the points in each hand, add up the partnership assets, and decide which partnership has more values without the help of writing down each step. For the first sixteen hands, however, filling out the Contract Card is helpful. Also, the Contract Card serves as a reminder of the contract.

There are three steps to arranging 52 cards face up on the table:

1. The tendency of new players is to place the cards facing themselves, with the lower-ranking cards at the edge of the table and the higher-ranking cards toward the center. This makes sense because they can read the hand more easily. The first instruction, then, is to direct them to put the cards in columns with the high cards at the edge of the table. Explain that only one hand is “upside down” and the other three can be read more easily - it's a good trade.

2. Next, have the cards arranged so that they are easy for everyone to see. Some players place the cards randomly, making this a challenge. The other players are uneasy dealing with a person who doesn't want to arrange the cards in order, so the instruction needs to come from the teacher. Ask them, in a light manner, to arrange the cards neatly in rows. I usually follow this by saying, "Feet on the floor, straight backs" - and they laugh.
3. Finally, the guidecards with the directions North, South, East, and West have to be visible. Have the players make sure that the cards don't cover the directions. Have them remove the board, or place it under the guidecard, if it is getting in the way.

26 Cards Face Up on the Table

This layout is used so that the players - guided by the instructor at first and then in their groups - can count the sure tricks between the two partnership hands and look for potential tricks through promotion, length, the finesse, and trumping in dummy.

To move from 52 cards face up to 26 cards face up, requires clear instructions:

1. Tell the players what to expect: "We're going to turn 26 cards face down and leave 26 cards face up. Then we're going to pick the contract."
2. State clearly the direction of the player being asked to follow an instruction to alert the player to be ready: "East, turn your cards face down; West, turn your cards face down."
3. If you feel it would be helpful, have the players with the face up hands put the spades opposite the spades, the hearts opposite the hearts, and so on. To do this, start with one direction: "West, put your suits in order so that your spades are opposite East's spades, your hearts are opposite East's hearts, etc."

13 Cards Face Up on the Table – Single Hand

This layout is used to look at a single hand, usually to select an opening lead or discuss a bidding concept. Typically, the students will be starting with the declaring side's hands face up and both of the defenders' hands face down.

To move from 26 cards face up to 13 cards face up go through the following steps:

1. Have the two hands face up turned face down. Again, give the direction of the players who are expected to follow the instructions: "North and South turn your cards face down." Now, all cards are face down.
2. Then direct the player who will be making the opening lead to turn the hand face up: "East, turn all your cards face up on the table."

This much detail might seem too repetitive, but it doesn't sound repetitive to the students and it's needed to keep the class organized.

14 Cards Face Up on the Table

This layout is used to begin the play of the hand, getting the opening lead and the dummy on the table. Typically, the students will be starting from the position of having the opening leader's hand face up.

To move from 13 cards face up to 14 cards face up, use the following instructions:

1. Leave the opening lead face up on the table. Again the instructions have to be concise: "East leave the ♣A face up on the table. Pick up the rest of your cards and hold them in your hand."
2. Turn the dummy hand face up: "South, turn your 13 cards face up. Make sure they are arranged in neat columns. Your hand is the dummy." If appropriate, you might want to tell them at this point to put the trump suit to the right.
3. Have the other players pick up their hands: "North and West, pick up your cards and hold them in your hand."
4. State the contract and declarer and have them begin play: "North is declarer in a contract of 4♠. East has made an opening lead of the ♣A and South has put down the dummy. North, try to take at least ten tricks with spades as the trump suit. East and West, try to prevent North from taking ten tricks."

13 (or Fewer) Cards Face Up on the Table – Single Suit

This layout is used to look at a single suit. It is typically used to illustrate a play point, such as playing the high card from the short side first or taking tricks through length. Usually, the students will be starting with the declaring side's hands face up and both of the defenders' hands face down.

To move from 26 cards face up to a single suit face up, go through the following steps:

1. Have the face up cards in the other suits turned face down. The instructions have to be concise: "North and South, turn your hearts, diamonds, and clubs face down. Leave the spades face up."
2. If appropriate, have the rest of the suit turned face up: "East and West, turn your spades face up. Leave the remaining cards face down."
3. Clarify the position: "There should be only 13 cards face up on the table, all the spades."

Sometimes, there will be additional instructions, such as moving a card from one hand to another. Make sure any changes are undone before continuing with the complete deal.

13 Cards Face Up on the Table – Constructed Hand

This layout is used when discussing the bidding. The players construct a hand in front of one of the players. After discussing the hand, one or more cards are changed.

To construct a hand, use the following instructions:

1. If necessary, have the players sort the deck into suits. It's usually a good idea to be quite specific until the players become familiar with the process: "Divide the deck into the four suits. One player take all the spades; one player take all the hearts; one player take all the diamonds; and the last player take all the clubs."
2. Explain what will be done: "We're going to construct a hand with 13 cards in four columns in front of North."
3. Lay out the hand, one suit at a time: "The player with the spades, put the spade ace, spade jack, and a low spade in a column in front of North, dummy style. The high cards should be closest to the edge of the table. The player with the hearts put the heart king and two low hearts in a column in front of North. The player with the diamonds put four low diamonds in a column in front of North. The player with the clubs put the club ace, club queen, and a low club in a column in front of North."
4. Verify that the hand is correct: "There should be 13 cards arranged dummy style in front of North: the spade ace, jack, and a low spade; the heart king and two low hearts; four low diamonds; the club ace, queen, and a low club."
5. Tell the students to put all the remaining cards face down on the table in front of them. Otherwise, they tend to become confused.

As you go through the transitions, give specific instructions:

6. Always name the suit before the card(s): "The player with the spades, take away the spade ace; the player with the diamonds, add the diamond king."
7. Verify that the new hand is correct: "There should only be two spades in front of North, the jack and a low spade. There should be five diamonds, headed by the diamond king."

As you become more familiar with getting the students to manipulate the cards correctly on the table, the more comfortable the students will become and the more smoothly your class will go.

The cards on the table become your "blackboard" or "whiteboard" as you explain each concept.

Using the Teaching Aids

For teachers/presenters using the Bridge Basics student texts, Better Bridge has developed teaching aids which can be reproduced as needed. You can download color versions from the Internet.

The Contract Card

Contract Card					
Hand #				Declarer (Circle)	
Valuation Points				N S E W	
N	S	W	E	Contract	
Total N-S		Total E-W		Score	
				N-S	E-W
Declaring Side (Circle)					
N-S		E-W			

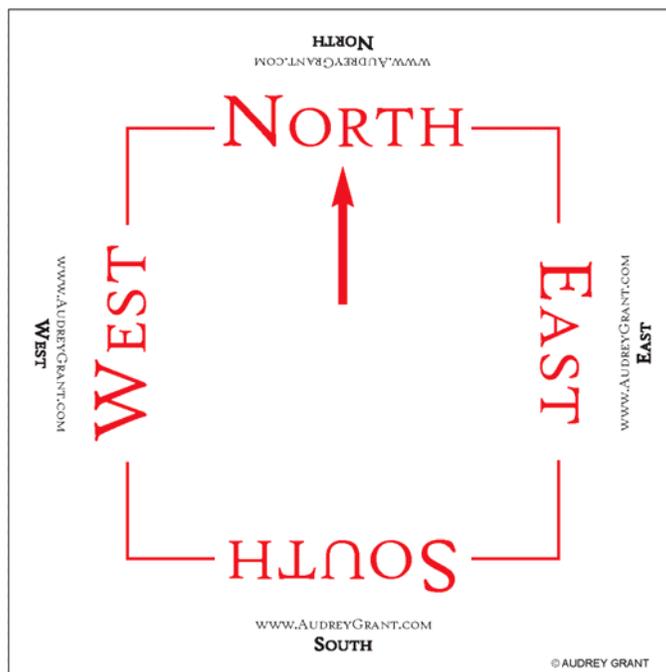
The Contract Card gives the students a structured approach to looking at the deal when there are fifty-two cards face up on the table and then are picking the contract. Copy the page from the Appendix and run off as many copies as needed for each class. There are six Contract Cards on each page. They can be separated and you could have them put in a pad.

To use the Contract Card, the students first count the number of points in the North hand and record the result; then the points in the South hand are counted. A total number of points for North-South are recorded. The same is done for East West.

The side with more combined points is circled and identified as the declaring side. Note the exception for Deal 9 – the side with fewer combined points is made the declaring side. Then the contract is chosen and written on the Contract Card. The declarer is selected and the students are ready to play the hand.

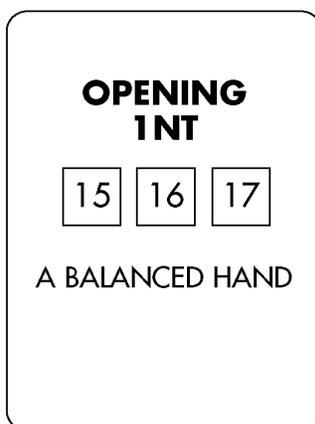
If the class seems ready, a simplified version of the scoring can be introduced (see Appendix) and the score can be recorded at the end of the play. Or, this can wait. You can judge the level of your class.

The Guide Card



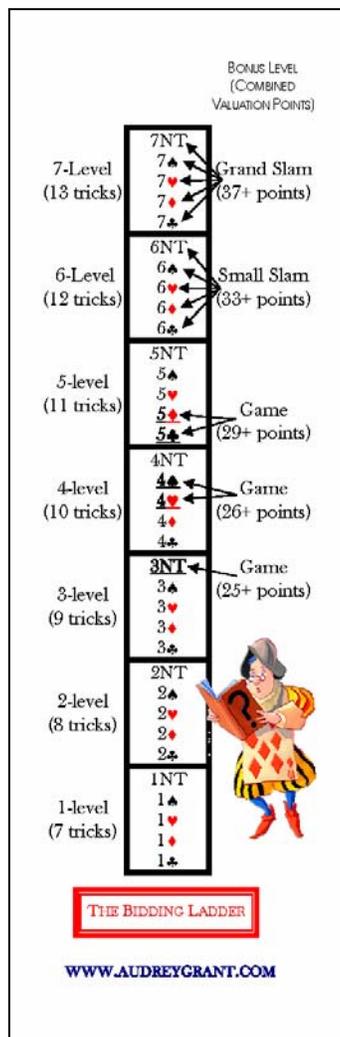
A direction card is important for the cards-on-the-table approach. A square version can be more flexible in a lesson environment. It gives each player an equal amount of room on the table. There is a template in the Appendix from which you can get bright colored copies made ... and laminated if you want. If you're using the square guide cards with duplicate boards, have the board placed beneath the guide card after the hands have been removed from the board.

The Cue Cards



Cue cards help new players review what previous bids have shown so that they are in a better position to understand a new concept. They match the guides in the student text. For example, if the topic is Responses to 1NT, a cue card reminds the students that the 1NT opening bid shows 15, 16, or 17 points and a balanced hand. Copies of the Cue Cards in the Appendix can be reproduced and laminated.

The Bookmark - Better Bridge Bidding Ladder



A FIRST LOOK AT DUPLICATE SCORING

Each hand is scored separately.

TRICK SCORE

(for the number in the bid)

- 20 points per trick bid and made in clubs or diamonds.
- 30 points per trick bid and made in hearts or spades.
- 40 points for the first trick and 30 points for each subsequent trick in notrump.

OVERTRICKS

Each trick that is made above what is required by the bid is awarded the trick score as above.

GAME BONUS

A bonus of 300 points is awarded for bidding and making a game.

PARTSCORE

A bonus of 50 points is awarded for bidding and making a partscore.

PENALTY POINTS

If declarer doesn't make the number of tricks bid by the partnership for the contract, the opponents get 50 points per undertrick ... each trick short of the contract.

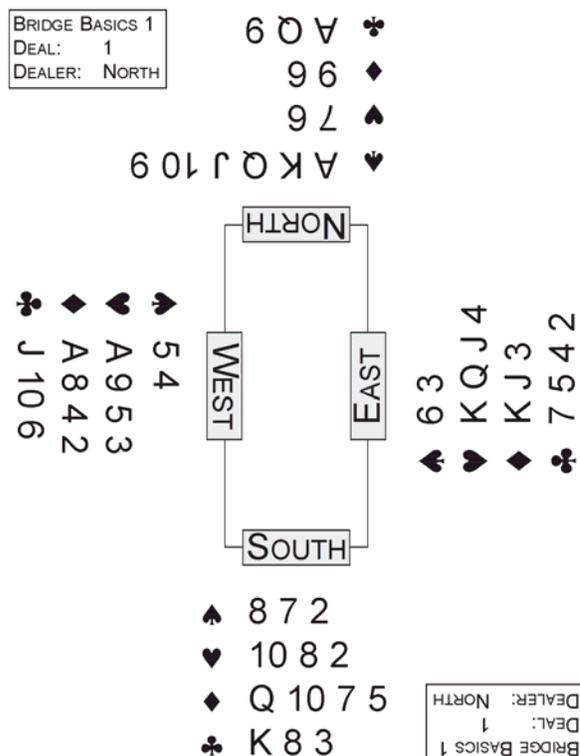
Vulnerability, a part of scoring, is not included in this first look at duplicate scoring.

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In the Appendix is a handy version of the Bidding Ladder in bookmark form. There are three per page, double sided. Run off as many copies as needed on heavy paper, separate them, and give one to each student.

The bookmark reminds the students how to select the contract. It shows the number of tricks required for each contract, the bonus levels, and the combined number of points needed for each level. On the back is a scoring summary. It also serves as a handy bookmark!

Teacher's Deal Records



In the Appendix are records for each deal. These can be used to have the students construct each deal when coded cards or pre-dealt deals are not available. Place the Deal Record on the table, have the students sort the deck into suits, and have each student take one suit. Have the students give themselves the cards in the suit they hold. Then have everyone pass the suit to their left and repeat the process until all the cards have been distributed. Have the students pick up their hands and turn the Deal Record face down.

Bidding Boxes

Absolute beginners are usually comfortable using bidding boxes, if they are available. They find them useful as a reminder of what the Bidding Ladder looks like and in keeping track of the auction.

Using the 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 the lessons. In that case, it's suggested that the deals be used avoid play concepts that the students have not yet encountered. Here is a summary of the play and bidding concepts:

USE AFTER	DEAL #	DECLARER	NOTES
Lesson 1	17	N	Need to direct contract to 3NT; Take the tricks and run
Lesson 2	21	S	Notrump opening; Length
	29	W	Notrump opening; Promotion and Length
Lesson 3	26	E	Major opening; Length
	23	N	Major opening; Promotion
	19	S	Major opening; Trumping in dummy
	28	W	Major opening; Trumping in dummy
	30	E	Major opening; Trumping in dummy
Lesson 4	31	N	Minor opening; Promotion
	27	S	Minor opening; Finesse
	22	W	Minor opening; Promotion and Length
	18	E	Minor opening; Length versus Promotion
	25	N	Minor opening; Promotion
	32	S	Minor opening; Trumping in dummy
	20	W	Notrump opening: Finesse
	24	E	Notrump opening; Finesse

Scheduling a Course

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 first hour, with the focus on play of the hand. In the second hour, the bidding concepts are introduced. The students don't need to play the deals a second time. The text is 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, using the style of the first four weeks with the Contract Card. The students look at all fifty-two cards, and choose the contract. 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. In the first four lessons, they have played each hand without having an auction beforehand. 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 Teachers' Checklist for Success

The goal of this checklist is to keep focused on aspects of teaching that make sure our players are satisfied customers – pleased they decided to invest their time and money attending a course.

A. Before the Class

- **Be Prepared.** No matter how many times we have given the lesson, it's critical to review the Teachers' Manual before each session.
- **Have the Material Ready.** Tables are prepared with teaching guidecards, cards sorted into suits, boards with pre-dealt deals, pencils, and student texts (for the first lesson). Starting with the second lesson, have additional classroom texts available for those who have forgotten to bring their textbook.

B. Timing

- **Respect Time.** Start on time, have a short break after an hour, finish on time. It's that straightforward.

C. Keep the Clients Comfortable.

- **Tell Them What to Expect.** Let the students know at the beginning of the first lesson that, unless they volunteer, they won't be asked a question. Then they can relax – and not be afraid to look at us. It's uncomfortable while learning something to feel that the instructor could, at any time, call our name and ask us to respond to a question.
- **Keep the Atmosphere Upbeat.** Emphasize the magic of the game and focus on the potential of bridge as a way to spend wonderful time with old friends and meet new friends. The game can promote friendly competition and mental fitness. Share motivational quotes and the occasional joke if it fits into the positive category. From experience, many students would rather not have jokes but do appreciate enthusiastic “star bursts” of energy from the presenter ... singing the Bidding Song, for example.
- **Allow for Different Opinions.** For example, some students will already know and prefer to play a 16–18 notrump range. Bridge Basics introduces the more popular 15–17 point range. The responses are the same, so respect the opinion and move the class along.
- **Play the Odds for Customer Service.** Small, seemingly unimportant, habits can make a difference. Play the odds for customer service. There are many examples:
 - They prefer that the teacher be professionally dressed, even in a vacation setting on board a ship or at a bridge festival.
 - They prefer the teacher avoid questionable jokes and remarks.
 - They prefer the use of a microphone over a loud voice.
 - Most students prefer the teacher drinks coffee during the break rather than during the class.
 - The majority of clients prefer not to see a teacher smoking.

D. **Respect Different Learning Styles**

- **Offer Several Methods for Learning.** There are different ways to get information on a new topic:
 - Some students prefer to read. They like to read ahead and reread the 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, underlining key points, recording 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 students find talking a powerful tool for absorbing information; others don't like to share thoughts with others.

Keep your presentation skills balanced, allowing the students to focus on the learning style that they prefer.

- **Give Clear Instructions and Keep Away from the Table.** In the first exercise of Lesson One, for example, the goal is to give the participants a chance to experience the mechanics of trick-taking. The instructions are: deal the cards; sort them into suits; have the player to the left of the dealer put a card face up on the table; have each player follow suit; have the highest card in the suit lead win the trick; have that player lead to the next trick. The instructions are to play as many cards as possible in about five minutes and not to worry about tactics or strategies. This is a warm-up exercise. Keep away from the tables and avoid giving additional instructions on play and defense.

E. **Keep Professional**

- **Always Do Your Best.** In the bestseller, *The Four Agreements*, Don Miguel Ruiz includes doing your best as one of the agreements. He puts it this way, "Your best is going to change from moment to moment. Under any circumstance, simply do your best." Good advice.
- **Continue to Learn.** Take courses, listen to tapes, talk to colleagues, read books that directly or indirectly apply to our trade, and watch your colleagues.

F. **Plan, Act, Check**

- **Make a PAC.** Plan the class; Act on the plan; Check to see how it went. Be aware of how the class is being received by the students. If the attendance decreases, try to find out why. The latest trend is irrelevant if half the class drops out during the first six weeks of the course. Use an evaluation form, filled in anonymously, after each course. Listen to the client.

Overview of the Bridge Basics Series

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.

I. An Introduction

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

II. More Bidding

- Preemptive Opening Bids
- Strong Opening 2♣ Bid
- Overcalls and Responses
- Takeout Doubles and Responses
- Additional Practice Deals

III. Popular Conventions

- The Stayman Convention
- Transfer Bids
- Blackwood and Gerber
- Negative Doubles
- Additional Practice Deals

IV. Declarer Play

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

V. Defense

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

About the Textbooks

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.

Prompt Boxes

Prompt boxes give the reader the opportunity to more quickly absorb a new concept. On page 77 of Bridge Basics I, for example, the requirements for an opening bid of 1♠ are reviewed in the prompt box. Now the student can focus on the response.

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

There are 16 additional deals 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 I*, for example, discussions on the mechanics of rubber and duplicate bridge and on scoring are in the Appendix. There have been many requests for *The Bidding Song* and it is included 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.

About 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/fifty-five minute) lessons. The additional practice deals can be used for supervised play.

Clear Instructions

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**.

Teaching Aids

In the appendix of the Teachers' Manual are templates that can be copied and used by the teacher to help with the presentation of the lesson. In this manual, for example, there is the Contract Card which can be given to the students to record their discussion on each deal.

Coded Cards

Coded Cards are planned for each book covering the thirty-two practice deals.

The Bridge Basics Philosophy on Play

Play-Focused Approach

The Bridge Basics Series is strongly play focused. Bridge Basics I has the students playing immediately through the history of the game. In the first hour, they're getting used to the mechanics of the game by playing whist and auction bridge. In the second hour, they play four pre-dealt hands.

In the next three lessons, before the bidding is introduced, the participants focus on looking at trick-taking potential of the partnership hands using the carefully constructed pre-dealt deals. Through guided discussion, they become familiar with play concepts. Then they play the hand being discussed.

Players are provided with the ABC guidelines of Declarer's Plan to help organize their thought process. During the four lessons, they talk about:

- how to take sure tricks;
- considerations for trick-taking with unevenly divided suits;
- trump management;
- developing tricks through promotion, length, and the finesse;
- trumping in the dummy;
- how to organize the order in which the cards are played to get the most out of a deal.

There are sixteen additional deals provided for two supervised play courses. Each set of four hands gives every player an opportunity to be declarer.

Pre-dealt Practice Deals

Through the pre-dealt deals, the students are introduced in a sequential order to play and bidding concepts. This can provide a good base to develop sound card play techniques. There are four deals at the end of each lesson.

In Bridge Basics I, these deals are often used twice. The first time, the contract is picked by the group by counting tricks in the partnership hands. The declarer is decided through a discussion with the teacher and each student gets a chance to play one deal. In the second part of the lesson, the bidding concept is introduced through hand transitions and then the same deals are looked at again, in the textbook, from the perspective of bidding to the best contract. The players are shown how to read a bridge deal.

The first sixteen deals could also be part of the supervised play classes following the first four lessons.

There are different schools of thought about choosing deals for the students to play. One is through random deals. Using this approach, students become familiar with the mechanics of the game. It's an easy approach for the presenter since there is no preparation. The downside is that the students are not prepared for many situations they encounter.

The first lesson of Bridge Basics I introduces the concept of planning the play as declarer. By learning to plan the play in the pre-dealt deals, participants can become more independent when playing random deals. Each session has four deals, giving every player the chance to declare, make the opening lead, and defend.

The Bridge Basics Philosophy on Bidding

The game changes. The needs of the students change. The Bridge Basics Series is organized to give the students a good foundation while providing for straightforward additions and modifications to the bidding methods. Here, for example, is how the bidding is dealt with in Bridge Basics I.

Organization

Bridge Basics I addresses auctions that begin at the one level in three separate categories:

- Notrump opening bids and responses.
- Major suit opening bids and responses.
- Minor suit opening bids and responses.

Notrump Auctions

Notrump auctions are distinct from suit openings. Because of the limited range and shape described by the opening bid, responder is usually able to decide HOW HIGH and WHERE right away. A two-level response can be made on zero high-card as a signoff bid. This is quite different from responses to a suit opening, where there is no signoff bid. In the future, conventions such as Stayman and Jacoby Transfer Bids can be added to the notrump structure.

Major Suit Openings and Responses

Auctions beginning with a major suit are distinct from those beginning with a minor suit. A major suit fit is often found right away, making the auction much simpler. In the future, conventions which are specific to major suit openings – such as Jacoby 2NT, Drury, and Forcing 1NT – can be added to this structure.

The Bridge Basics Series attempts to avoid locking the students into a single method when it is likely that they may encounter other popular bidding styles in the future. For example, the 2NT response to a major suit opening isn't discussed as a natural response. It is now readily available to be used as Jacoby 2NT if and when they get to that point. On the other hand, the 2NT response to a minor suit is discussed (see below), because that is likely to remain a natural bid for the foreseeable future.

The series also avoids giving examples that are not in line with modern bidding theory. To keep things simple at this stage, the text suggests that a limit raise is made with support and 11-12 points. "Support" is initially defined as three or more cards, although there is a footnote saying that most players prefer to have four-card support for a limit raise. There are no actual examples or sample hands that have a limit raise made with three-card support.

Similarly, the textbook allows that a 1NT response to a major shows 6-10 points and a two-over-one response shows 11 or more. However, there are footnotes to alert the student that other methods exist. Also, none of the examples shows a two-over-one response with fewer than 13 points, making the methods compatible with the growing trend toward the Two-Over-One game forcing approach.

Minor Suit Openings and Responses

Auctions beginning with a minor suit are treated separately from those beginning with a major suit. A minor suit opening could be made on a three-card suit; a major suit opening requires five or more. After a minor suit opening, responder's priority is to bid a major suit, or even consider notrump, ahead of supporting opener's suit. In the future, the students will encounter additional methods that only apply after a minor suit opening – a (typical) reverse, new minor forcing, inverted minor raises, checkback Stayman.

There are some areas where decisions on theory can't be sidestepped too easily. The range for natural notrump responses to a minor suit is one such case. The text suggests 1NT showing 6-10, 2NT showing 11-12, and 3NT showing 13-15. This is a popular, but not universally agreed, approach. Bridge World Standard, for example, has recently updated the response of 1NT to 1♣ as showing 6-10 points rather than its older standard of 8-10 points. Bridge World Standard also uses the 2NT response as 11-12, non-forcing. This is in line with most Two-Over-One systems. However, Bridge World Standard retains the old 16-17 point range for a response of 3NT – with responder bidding a new suit with a balanced 13-15 points. ACBL Standard American Yellow Card uses a 2NT response as 13-15 and a 3NT response as 16-17. The book has settled on the approach that is closest to standard practice today – and is probably easiest for beginners to understand –, with a footnote that there are other possibilities.

The Better Bridge Partnership with the Teacher

Marketing

Better Bridge is developing a program to help teachers market their courses when using the Bridge Basics Series. A brochure is available for each course. If you E-mail Jude Goodwin (jude@betterbridge.com), sending her the details about the class - where it is being held, when the classes will start, the cost, the teacher - she'll fill in the details and send you a brochure which you can then get run off.

Graduation Certificates

For teachers using the Bridge Basic Series, permission is given to copy the course certificate in the Appendix and give it to the students at the end of the course. A color version can be downloaded from the Better Bridge website. Contact Jude Goodwin for details.

Lesson Plans

