



## MiniBridge

This idea for starting bridge lessons with a focus on the play was first developed in France and the Netherlands as an introduction to bridge for school children and soon was acknowledged as an excellent game in its own right.

MiniBridge is used as a precursor to learning bridge for all ages and is found to be both effective and enjoyable. The English have adapted the program to simplify the progression from MiniBridge to the full game. The principles of MiniBridge have been incorporated into the lesson plans written by Kitty Cooper and recommended by the ACBL for use in grades 4 through 8.

The English Bridge Union MiniBridge packet containing the teacher manual, computer practice disk and instructions on playing the game is available through the EBU web site at [www.ebu.co.uk/education/minibrIDGE/minibrIDGEpack.htm](http://www.ebu.co.uk/education/minibrIDGE/minibrIDGEpack.htm).

Here is a reprint from the teacher manual to show you how MiniBridge works:

### THE RULES

#### BIDDING

The cards are dealt as in regular bridge, with 13 cards per player and the North and South players are partners and the East and West players are partners.

MiniBridge is distinguished from whist (and other similar games) by the existence of a declarer who decides the contract—that is, the choice of trump suit and a target number of tricks to be won by the partnership.

The contract must always be for at least 7 of the 13 tricks available, but a higher target, a game, can be set.

Every player counts his points (A=4, K=3, Q=2 and J=1) and in turn moving clockwise and starting with the dealer, mentions his pointcount.

The pair that together holds the most points will play (in case both pairs hold 20 points, cards should be redealt).

Declarer becomes the player with the most points of the two. If the partners each have the same number of points, the one announcing points first is declarer.

Declarer's partner becomes dummy and displays his cards. The declarer calculates how many tricks might be won in the combined hands and,

- a. Whether to play a notrump or trump contract and
- b. Whether to be in game or part-score.

In a notrump game, declarer has to win 9 tricks,

In a suit contract where spades or hearts are trumps, it means 10 tricks,

In a suit contract where diamonds or clubs are trumps, it means 11 tricks,

In part-score, declarer must win at least 7 tricks.

In no-trump, declarer must win 9 tricks or more,

## PLAY

The player to the left of the declarer starts by playing the first card (the opening lead), after which the procedure is the same as in regular bridge.

## SCORING

Whatever the contract, the first six tricks won do not count towards the score. The seventh trick is the first scoring trick, and for each scoring trick, points are won depending on the contract chosen, as follows:

|                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Notrump contracts</b>         | <b>40 for the first scoring trick</b> |
|                                  | <b>30 for each subsequent trick</b>   |
| <b>Spade or Heart contracts</b>  | <b>30 for each scoring trick</b>      |
| <b>Diamond or Club contracts</b> | <b>20 for each scoring trick</b>      |

**Examples:** With Clubs as trumps, the trick score for 8 tricks is 40 points.  
With Spades as trumps, the trick score for 10 tricks is 120 points.  
In notrump, the trick score for 9 tricks is 100 points.

### Game Contracts -

Game contracts are those where the trick score totals 100 or more.

**Game in notrump** requires 9 tricks, i.e.  $40 + (2 \times 30) = 100$  points.

A game bonus of 300 is then added, so the total points earned are 400.

If more than 9 tricks are won, each overtrick scores an extra 30.

(When calculating the score for a notrump contract, it is often easier to multiply each trick won by 30, then add 10 points at the end.)

**Game in spades or hearts** requires 10 tricks, i.e.  $30 \times 4 = 120$  points.

A game bonus of 300 is then added, so the total points earned are 400.

If more than 11 tricks are won, each overtrick scores an extra 30.

**Game in diamonds or clubs** requires 11 tricks, i.e.  $20 \times 5 = 100$  points.

A game bonus of 300 is then added, so the total points earned are 400.

If more than 11 tricks are won, each overtrick scores an extra 20.

**Examples:** A part score contract in hearts, 9 tricks are made:

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Score 30 for the scoring trick in hearts        | = 30  |
| Plus 60 for the two overtricks @ 30 points each | = 90  |
| Plus the bonus of 50                            | = 140 |

### Unsuccessful Contracts -

If declarer doesn't win the number of tricks required to make the contract, the declaring side gets no score and the defending side earns 50 points for every undertrick. For example, if the contract was game in spades and declarer made only 8 tricks, the defending side would score 100 points.

**Examples:** A part score in notrump makes 5 tricks; the defenders get 100 points.  
A game contract in hearts makes nine tricks. The defenders get 50 points.