



Ethics of bridge

WCBC promotes and expects high standards of bridge etiquette amongst its members. The Club's approach to bridge etiquette is consistent with The Laws of Contract Bridge (Law 74 – Conduct and Etiquette) as set out by the World Bridge Federation.

The following summarises the main areas of etiquette that players are expected to observe at the bridge table.

Courtesy

- Always be courteous at the bridge table - to partner, the opponents and the Director
- Carefully avoid any remark or action that might cause embarrassment to any other player which might interfere with their enjoyment of the game
- Greet your new opponents at the table
- At the end of a round thank your opponents before moving on to the next table
- The Director should always be called to the table in a courteous manner - the word 'please' and the 'tone' used assists in this courtesy

Conversation at the table

- Once the bidding has commenced general conversation is not encouraged at the table

Table manners before and during play

The following represents good practice at the bridge table:

- Cards should not be taken out of the board until a least one player from each side is at the table
- Before you look at your cards count your hand and ensure that you have exactly thirteen cards
- The board should be left on the table during the bidding and play of the hand so everyone can see the vulnerability
- During play and at the end of a hand ensure that you do not mix up your cards until the result is agreed
- Once the result is agreed shuffle your cards and return them to the board
- During play you are not allowed to touch or handle your opponents' cards
- Declarer may play dummy's cards
- When you are making the initial lead place the card face down. A card placed face down cannot be picked up because of a change of mind and can occur only on the instruction of the director
- Before facing the card ask partner if they have any questions

- When you are making the initial lead i.e. playing to the first trick, play your card before updating your personal scoresheet or entering details into Bridgemate
- During play avoid communicating with partner by facial gestures or other mannerisms
- Try to play 'smoothly' and in tempo
- Avoid 'snapping' the card or playing with undue emphasis as it may reveal special interest to either partner or opponent
- Do not ask for information unless it is your turn to call or play
- Do not ask for information for the benefit of your partner
- Dummy or any player may draw attention to a card pointed incorrectly; the right expires when a lead is made to the following trick
- Any player has the right to inspect a quitted trick (trick turned face over) until either they or their partner has played to a subsequent trick (i.e. turned over their card)
- North player is responsible for recording the results in Bridgemate

Systems cards and full disclosure

- At the start of a round explain the main features of your system (e.g. we play Acol with Benjamin twos) and any pre-alerts
- Players should each have a completed systems card at the table - this ensures that your conventions and system agreements are accessible to your opponents who are entitled to know every system agreement you and your partner have
- Partners should have identical system cards
- Your opponents may refer to your system card at any time
- A player may not refer to their own system's card during the auction or play

Bidding

- Dealer makes the initial call then the next player to the left
- Information other than that provided through using the bidding cards in the bidding box must not be communicated between partners by facial gestures or other mannerisms
- Decide what your bid is going to be before reaching for or touching cards in the bidding box
- Conventional bids should be alerted promptly
- Try to bid at a steady pace – slow passes or sign offs may imply you have more, fast passes or sign offs may imply a minimum hand
- A long hesitation followed by a pass, places an extra burden on partner to justify continuing with the bidding as this may have communicated additional information
- If your partner takes an unreasonable time to bid and then passes, you should pass too unless that action would be totally illogical considering your hand
- Leave your bidding cards on the table until the opening lead is made. This enables the defenders to review the auction and to ask any questions prior to the commencement of play

Asking for explanations and not bidding

- Do not ask what a bid means unless you are intending to bid. Asking for explanation without an intention to bid could be construed as passing unauthorised information to one's partner

- Do not ask a question for the sole benefit of your partner
- Defenders can ask for a review of the bidding at the end of the auction

Dummy Play

The following represents good practice when one is the dummy:

- After the opening lead is faced, dummy should lay out the cards before writing down details or entering the contract in the Bridgemate to ensure the other players at the table are not kept waiting
- Dummy may not ask for a review of the auction
- The trump suit should be laid out on dummy's right and cards in each suit should be laid out in sequence from high to low
- Dummy plays the cards on behalf of the declarer
- Dummy should not touch a card before receiving instructions from the declarer
- Dummy may not draw declarer's attention to anything except that they are about to lead from the wrong hand or ask if they are out of a suit played
- Dummy cannot call the director or draw attention to an irregularity during play, only after the hand is played out
- Dummy may call the director during play, but only after attention has been drawn to an irregularity by another player
- Dummy may try to prevent an irregularity

Slow Play

- Bridge is a timed game – hands should be played within the allocated time
- Slow play is inconsiderate to other players, delays moving on to the next table and may give you an advantage over other players

Post-Mortems

- Wait until the game is over for post-mortems – post-mortems can be uncomfortable for all players and may also communicate information to players who have not played the hand at other tables
- Never try to teach or criticise a player at the table unless guidance is requested

Mobile Phones

- Mobile phones should be turned off during play
- If it is vital that you have it on, leave it on 'vibrate'
- If you must take a phone call, please let the director know before the start of play

Adapted from WA Bridge Club document *Bridge Etiquette*.