

RULES OF BRIDGE

These instructions are primarily for those who have never played the card game of bridge, though experienced players may find some helpful reminders here. The game of bridge is played by 2 teams of 2 players each. BridgePal replaces 3 of the players, letting you play bridge by yourself. A hand of Bridge consists of 4 different activities:

- Shuffling and dealing
- Bidding
- Playing the hand
- Scoring

SHUFFLING AND DEALING

Bridge is played with a 52-card deck composed of 4 suits of 13 cards each. Cards are ranked from Ace (highest), King, Queen, Jack, and 10 to 2 (lowest). All cards are dealt to the 4 players, so each player has 13 cards in his "hand". BridgePal will shuffle and deal the cards automatically.

BIDDING

Bidding is the way you describe your hand to your partner, and make a guess about the strength of your combined hands. The highest bid becomes the "contract," or goal of the offensive team. If you can fulfill your contract, your team scores points. If you fail to make the contract, your opponents will score.

You may bid a suit or "No-trump." If the highest bid is a suit, that suit becomes the "trump" suit. Cards in the trump suit are something like "wild cards," as you will see in the next part of the game. If "No-trump" is the final bid, then there are no "wild cards."

Suits are ranked from lowest to highest: clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades, and No-trump. So a bid of "1 diamond" is higher than a bid of "1 club." The bidding begins with the dealer and continues clockwise until 3 players in a row say "pass" (pass means "no bid"). The lowest possible bid is "1 club," and the highest is "7 No-trump." Each bid must be higher than the previous one: for example, 1 club, 1 heart, 1 No-trump, 2 diamonds, etc. Each bid is supposed to give your partner more information about the strength of your hand.