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Brief Summary of the Rules

   Bridge is played by 4 players.   All cards are dealt so each player has 13 cards that are kept hidden from the other players.   Bridge is played with 2 teams.   NORTH and SOUTH form one team, while EAST and WEST form the other.   In *MVP Bridge for Windows*, you will always play SOUTH.

   A hand of bridge is divided into 2 parts: bidding and play.   During bidding you try to describe your hand to your partner and make a claim to the number of tricks you can take.   During play you try to make the contract that you bid.

Evaluation of the Hand

To decide how strong your hand is, we assign points to certain cards.   These are called high card points or 'HCP'.   We rate an Ace (A) at 4 points, a King (K) at 3, a Queen (Q) at 2, and a Jack (J) at 1.

Some examples:
Kx   3 points
AKx   7 points
AQx   6 points
KJXX   4 points

In addition, add points for length when bidding a long suit.
1 point for the 5th card in a suit
1 additional point for 6th in a suit
2 additional points for 7th card in a suit.

When raising partner's suit with 4 card support, add:

5 points for a void
3 points for a singleton
1 point for a doubleton

With 3 card trump support, add:

3 points for a void
2 points for a singleton
1 point for a doubleton

Hand value = high card points + distribution points

When opening the bid add HCP and length points. For deciding whether your partnership has enough points for game, you can use total points as follows:

Points required for game:
3NT or major suit   26
minor suit   29
small slam   33
grand slam   37

Bidding Primer

   Bidding start with the dealer and proceeds clockwise around the table.   The suits are arranged in the following order: CLUBS, DIAMONDS, HEARTS, SPADES.   Thus 1S can be bid over 1H, but over 1S, you must bid 2H.   Bidding a suit usually says that you wish to use that suit as trump.   Bidding normally starts at the lowest level possible, but there are also times when the bidder jumps the bidding (For example, an opening bid of 2H or 3H shows a very different hand from 1H.)

Bidding continues until everyone has had a chance to bid and there are 3 passes in a row.   The person who first bids the suit that becomes the final bid becomes the declarer.   The person to the left of the declarer leads to the first trick.   The declarer's partner is dummy -- their cards are faced for everyone to see, after the opening lead if made.

Your goal in rubber bridge is to bid and make 2 game contracts. A game is 100 points. This can be the result of bidding and making one or more contracts.   Scores vary by suit.   CLUBS & DIAMONDS the minor suits, and are worth 20 points each.   HEARTS & SPADES, the major suits, are worth 30 points each.   Thus a contract of 4 H bid and made gives you 120 points, enough for one game; a contract of 4 D gives you only 80 points, leaving you 20 points short of game.

   No trump is a special case.   The first NT level is worth 40 points, and successive levels are worth 30 each.   Thus 2NT is worth 70 points, and 3NT is 100, a game.   If your contract does not give you a game, it remains a partial score until one side makes game.   If a contract is set, the defenders gain points.

   The following sections offer some simple advice for bidding.

Opening Bids
Responses to partners opening bid
Partner bid 1NT
Opener's rebids
     Opener started with 1NT
     Opener started with a suit bid

Bidding continues, with opener and responder describing their hands.   If there is no competition, you should look for a game contract with about 25+ points between the 2 hands.

Opening Bids

You have HCP	Distribution of hand	Bid
12-20	5+ card suit	1 of the suit
16-18	flat (no singleton or void)	1 NT
20-21	flat (no singleton or void)	2 NT
13+	flat, but good 4 card major	1 of a major
13+	no previous bid possible	1 of better minor
5-9	7 card suit	3 of the long suit
5-9	8 card suit	4 of the long suit

In actual practise, the tendency is not to bid 4 card majors, unless the suit is strong (eg, AKJx) and there is no alternative.   This allows partner to assume that the opener has 5 in the major and to support with only 3. If the suit is good, a 4-3 fit is acceptable.

Response to partner's opening bid
Partner bid one of a suit

You have HCP	Distribution of hand	Bid:
< 6		Pass
6-9	support for partner's suit*	2 of partner's suit
10-12	support for partner's suit*	3 of partner's suit
13-15	strong major suit trump support	Bid a new suit, then game in partner's suit
13-15	balanced	2 NT
16-18	balanced	3 NT
6-18	4 card suit	suit at 1 level
18+	5 card suit	Jump shift one level in long suit
10+	5 card suit	suit at 1 or 2 level
6-9	flat hand, no 1 level bid available	1 NT

 * Support is 3 cards for partner's major or 4 cards for partner's minor

 ** Jump shift: a bid that skips a level of bidding.   Eg, 1H -- 2S   is a jump shift because you could have bid 1S.

Partner bid 1NT

You have

HCP	Distribution of hand	Bid:
8-9	Balanced	2 NT
10-14	Balanced	3 NT
< 8	5 or 6 card suit	2 of the suit
< 8		Pass
10+	5 of a major, 5 or 6 of a minor	3 of the suit (forcing)
7+	6 card major	4 of the major
10+	no 5 card major	3 NT

Note: Most players use the Stayman convention which allows the partnership to find a 4-4 major suit fit.

Opener started with 1NT

Partner Bid	Opener's hand	Bid
2NT	17-18	3NT
3 of major	3+ cards in partner's suit	4 of partner's suit
3 of major	2 cards in partner's suit	3NT

Opener started with a suit bid

Partner Bid	Opener's hand	Bid
New suit: 1 level	12-15, no support for partner	1NT
	6 cards in original suit	rebid original suit
	second suit of at least 4	show new suit
	12-15, 4 card support	raise partner
	15-17, 6+ card suit	jump original suit
	16-18, 3+ support	jump raise partner
	19-20, 4 card support	4 partner's major
	19-20	2NT
New suit: 2 level	15-18	2NT (forcing)
	12-15, usually 6 card suit	rebid original
	<16, support for partner	single raise
	17+	reverse
17+		jump rebid of opener's
	17+, 6 card suit	jump to game in opener's
	17+, 3+ support for partner	jump raise in responder's
	18+, second suit	jump shift (forcing)
	19-20	3NT

A reverse is the bidding of 2 suits in opposite order from that expected.   That is, usually you would bid Spades, then Hearts, to keep the bidding at a low level.   If you bid Hearts first, then show Spades, this is a 'reverse' and shows a stronger hand. (Since partner must bid Hearts at the next level to show a preference).

Conventions

A convention is an artificial bid that does necessarily promise anything in the suit that has been bid. For example, when responding to 1NT, a response of 2C, Stayman, asks partner for a four card major and is a completely artificial bid. Responder may have a singleton club! Conventions are decided upon between the partner BEFORE play begins. All such agreements must be announced to the opponents. NO SECRETS.

The following are brief desciptions of the conventions available in *MVP Bridge for Windows*.

THE TAKEOUT DOUBLE
The most common usage of this bid is by second hand after the bidding has been opened. The bid "double" announces opening bid values, with support for the unbid suits. The range in HCP for a takeout double is 11+.

STAYMAN
A 2C response to an opening bid of 1NT or a 3C response to an opening bid of 2NT asking opener for a four card major.

BLACKWOOD
After the partner has agreed upon a suit, a bid of 4NT by either player asks the other for the number of aces she has. The responses to Blackwood are:

5C   0 or 4 aces
5D   1 ace
5H   2 aces
5S   3 aces

After aces have been shown, a rebid of 5NT by the 4NT bidder asks for kings. Responses are the same only one level higher.   Note: As a practical matter the responder to Blackwood is not going to have 4 aces because the stronger hand usually does the asking.

GERBER
A jump to 4C after partner has bid 1NT or 2NT asks partner for aces. Responses to a Gerber 4C leap are:

4D   0 or 4 aces
4H   1 aces
4S   2 aces
4NT   3 aces

After aces have been shown, a rebid of 5C by the 4C bidder asks for kings. Responses to a 5C king ask are:
5D   0 or 4 kings
5H   1 king
5S   2 kings

5NT   3 kings

WEAK 2 Bid
     An opening bid of 2D, 2H or 2S which describes a hand with a reasonable six card suit and 7-9 HCP. It is a preemptive or weak opening bid mean to obstruct the opponents. When playing Weak Two Bids, an opening bid of 2 is reserved for all very strong hands.

A 2NT response asks partner to describe her hand.
     3 of original suit shows minimum weak 2
     3NT shows suit headed by AKQ or AKJ
     3 of new suit shows a feature (A, K)

STRONG 2 Bid
     An opening bid of 2C,2D,2H or 2S describes a hand with 21+ points and is forcing to game.

     NEGDBL
     When a partner's opening bid is overcalled, a double by responder is similar to a takeout double.   It shows at least 4 cards in the unbid major(s).   Minimum 7 hcp.

Card Play

The person who first bid the suit that becomes the final bid becomes the declarer.   To make a contract, you must take 6 tricks, plus the number you bid.   Thus a 3H contract requires you to take 9 of 13 tricks.   The person to the declarer's left is the leader.

The leader selects a card and places it so that everyone can see it.   At this point, the partner of the declarer lays down his cards for everyone to see.   Partner is now the 'dummy' and his cards are played by the declarer.   In *MVP Bridge for Windows*, when North is declarer, you get to play as declarer, and your original hand becomes the dummy.

Play proceeds in a clockwise fashion.   You must follow suit.   If you are void (have none of that suit), you can play any card.   In a trump contract, the highest trump played on the trick wins.   The winner of the trick leads to the following trick.

Rubber Scoring

A rubber is played until one side has scored 2 games.   Each game requires 100 pts below the line.   If a side has won a game, they are then 'vulnerable'.   (This increases the penalties if they are later set in a contract).

If a slam is bid and make, additional bonuses are awarded as follows.

	Not Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Small slam (12 tricks)	500	750
Grand slam (13 tricks)	1000	1500

You must win 2 games to end rubber.   Additional bonus points are then scored: 700 additional points if your opponents won no games, otherwise 500.

Undertrick Penalty

For each trick by which the declarer fails to make the contract, opponents score the following points (above the line):

	Not Vulnerable		
	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
First undertrick	50	100	200
For each additional	50	200	400

	Vulnerable		
	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
First undertrick	100	200	400
For each additional	100	300	600

If declarer makes a doubled contract, he receives an extra 50 points "for the insult".

Honors Scoring

TRUMP BID
   (Honors are A, K, Q, J, and 10)
   Hold 4 of 5 trump honors   +100 points
   Hold all 5 trump honors   +150 points

NT BID
   All 4 aces in one hand   +150 points

EXIT (FILE MENU)

MVP Bridge for Windows will exit.

RUBBER (PLAY MENU)

Begins a new game of bridge using Rubber scoring.   For more information, see <u>Rubber Scoring</u>.

Verbose

Verbose adds additional information (display with message boxes) to describe conventions being used.   It's a good way to learn unfamiliar conventions but does slow down the game some.   The menu item display a check mark next to it if verbose mode is on.   Simply choose the menu item to toggle verbose on and off.

Card Backs

MVP Bridge for Windows provides many card backs to select from.   Simply click on the card back that you would like used during play.

Kibitz

Choose which hands to reveal.   Note that this destroys basic elements of the game, so should only be used for learning or practice.   To toggle kibitzing, click on the card next to the side you wish to change.   The card back will be displayed if the hand is not to be revealed, and the Ace of Spades will be displayed if that side is to always be revealed.

Background Music

The music played in the background can be disabled.   Background music is the music you hear while bidding and playing a hand.   To disable the background music, choose the Background Music menu item.   A check mark appears next to the menu item when background music is enabled.

Event Music

The music played when a hand is completed can be disabled.   To disable the event music, choose the Event Music menu item.   A check mark appears next to the menu item when event music is enabled.

Quit Game

Quits the current game. This will return you back to the *MVP Bridge for Windows* title screen.

Explain Hand

Explain the current hand from the view of the current player.   You are given bidding information, and the estimated HCP and distribution for each player.

Hint

If you are bidding, it gives you the suggested bid that you should make.   If you are playing, it gives you a suggested card to play.   It also places the cursor over the suggested card for you.

You can also obtain a hint by pressing the right mouse button.

Video Troubleshooting

Great care has been taken for *MVP Bridge for Windows* to display properly on all video configurations.   Some video systems have difficulty redrawing bitmaps.   You will know if your system is experiencing this problem if during the first few tricks South's hand is incorrectly redrawn.   To alleviate this problem, choose **Video** from the **Options** menu, and set "Repaint after each trick" to YES.   Do not do this unless you are experiencing the problem, as the screen will be unnecessarily repainted, causing a slight flicker.

Audio Troubleshooting

If you have a sound card, and the music for MVP Bridge for Windows does not play, your MIDI configuration may not be set up correctly.   Follow the directions below to set it up.

From the Main group, double click on the MIDI Mapper icon.   You may have to click on Control Panel to find the MIDI Mapper.   Check the information in the section "name."   It should say something to the effect of Extended FM, or EXT FM, etc.   If it does not, click on the down arrow and look for something to that effect.   Select the appropriate Name, and click on the edit button.   Channels 1-9 should be enabled with the Port set as OPL-3 driver, Voyetra OPL-3, or SuperSapi drivers.

IMPORTANT: Channel 10 must be configured as follows:
SrcChannel: 10
DestChannel: 16
Port: Same as the other channels

If this is not done, the DRUMS will not play correctly.   Click on the OK button (if it asks if you wish to save, say Yes), and close the MIDI Mapper. The music should play correctly now.