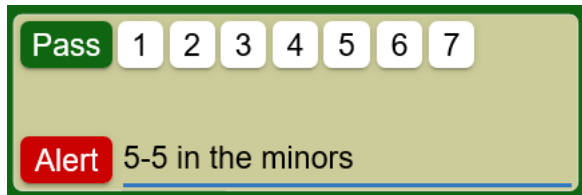


Alerting on Bridge Base Online

1. Alerting

On BBO you self-alert. That is, you alert any artificial call **before** you make your call. (Don't try to alert your partner's calls. You alert only your own calls).



Suppose you want to bid 2NT to show 5-5 in the minors. Click "Alert" and type in the explanation of the call. You must do that **before** you make the call. Next you click 2 and NT to make the bid of 2NT. Both opponents see an explanation of the bid. You partner does **not** see the explanation. (A nice feature is that if you type !c in your explanation it will appear as ♣, similarly for the other suits.)

2. Video

You can watch a good video which shows you how to alert by clicking this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5d7dBV1pmk&t=29s>

3. Is the explanation necessary?

Ideally you should provide a brief explanation (unless you are very short of time or very slow at typing). Giving an explanation allows the session to progress smoothly.

4. What to alert

You should alert any call that would be alerted or announced (by partner). So that includes NT opening ranges, transfers, Stayman and opening two-bids, as well as more obviously conventional calls. One difference from bidding at the table is that bids above 3NT should be alerted if artificial or unexpected. For example, 4-level splinter bids, Blackwood and the responses to it need to be alerted. (These high-level bids are not alerted when playing face-to-face because this can give unauthorised information to your partner). Remember that, on BBO, when the call is made the explanation will be visible only to the opponents, not your partner, so there is no harm in alerting too much. Here are two example bidding sequences showing which calls need to be alerted with a suggested explanation (which obviously depends on your system) that should be given.

5. Example 1

1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3NT	All pass

Call	Explanation	Comment
1NT	12-14 bal	You can make obvious abbreviations, such as bal for balanced
2♥	Spades	Assuming you are playing transfers

6. Example 2

2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4NT	
5♣	Pass	6♠	All pass

Call	Explanation	Comment
2NT	20-22 bal	
3♣	5-card Stayman	
4NT	RKCB	The standard abbreviation for Roman Key-card Blackwood
5♣	0 or 3 key cards	

7. Asking about a call

W	N	E	S
	2NT	Dbl	

If you need an explanation of a call (whether alerted or not), then simply click on it. In this example the red box around 2NT and the coloured background mean that it has been alerted and explained. The red box around Dbl (without the shaded background) means that East has alerted the double, but hasn't provided an explanation of what it means. If you want to know what the double means, simply click on Dbl. The person who made the call is then asked for an explanation. So simply wait for their reply. Their partner won't see the reply. You can ask about any calls, whether or not they have been alerted, by clicking on that call. Please note that it is incorrect to ask for explanations by chatting to the table. Remember that during the auction you should only ask about a call if it affects your bidding. If it doesn't then wait until the auction is over.

8. Replying to a request asking about a call

Less experienced players in particular are encouraged to ask if uncertain as to the meaning of a call. Try to give as helpful a reply as possible. Don't just give the name of a convention as other players might have a different understanding from you. Avoid saying "minimum" or "maximum". Give the point range instead.

9. Forgetting to alert

If you forget to alert, then click your bid and you will be able to explain what the bid means.

10. Can explanations be omitted?

Ideally you should explain every alert. If you are new to BBO or very inexperienced, don't worry - we don't want to put you off. If you alert but don't give an explanation your opponents will tend to assume the following:

1NT	12-14
2♣ response to 1NT	Stayman
2♦ response to 1NT	Transfer to hearts
2♥ response to 1NT	Transfer to spades
4NT	Ace asking (e.g. Blackwood or Roman Key-Card Blackwood)

You do of course still need to alert these bids, even if you don't give an explanation.

11. Review of the bidding

If you need a review of the bidding then click the contract and a review of the bidding will appear. Click the box again to make it disappear.