

During the game

Q: How do I call the director?

A: To call the director, click on the blue box with the 3 white lines. Convention cards are available there, too.

Q: How do I see my opponents' convention card?

A: Click on the blue box with the 3 white lines.

Q: What does "self-alert mean?"

A: One aspect of playing online that is very different from playing live is the Self-alert. When you make an alertable or announcable bid , you alert/announce it YOURSELF when you make your bid in the bid box. Click on "alert" > write your explanation > then make your bid. Your partner will not see your alert or explanation, only your opponents will. Do not alert/explain your bid or partner's in the chat box to the table.

Q: How do I ask the meaning of my opponent's bid?

A: You may always ask the opponent the meaning of her bid. Simply click on the bid that you want explained, and a box will pop up on your opponent's screen saying "please explain bid". You and your partner will see the explanation, but the bidder's partner will not. In addition, the opponent whose bid you questioned will not be allowed to bid again until she has provided an explanation.

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Q: I'm having trouble reading my screen - everything is too small.

A: There are a lot of different ways you can control the display to make it easier to see. They all start with the "account" tab. Find the account tab and click on it. Then, in the top line under "account" choose "settings".

The first choice you will see is "split screen". The standard, default option here is "on" (slider is to the right and green.) If this is how yours is set, you will see a bigger portion of the screen on the left where you find our game listing, register, and play the game. The smaller, right-hand screen is now showing "account", but could also show messages, people or history.

The first thing to know is that you can change the relative sizes of the 2 displays by sliding the divider between them. If you're familiar with Microsoft Windows, you will have seen this before; place your cursor right on that dividing line and it will turn into a line with arrows pointing left and right. Now drag it one way or the other. Dragging it to the left will make it easier to read whatever is in the right-hand box; probably not necessary for these settings, but helpful later if this is where you look at your history.

My personal choice is to leave the split screen "on"; I track my history there while I'm playing. This may not always be desirable as it adds a distraction - and also reduces the size of the "table" display.

If you don't want to look at anything else while you play, try sliding that split screen tab to "off". Now the box that was on the left takes up your whole screen. The tabs that were on the right - messages, people, history and account - are now across the bottom. If you click on one of those, that choice now fills your whole screen - a much more satisfactory size to look at your history. There is also a tab on the bottom on the left that says "play"; that's the one you use to get back to the display that was originally on the left side of the split screen.

So that's 2 ways to change how things look while you are playing. What about the results after the game? When the game ends, a small-ish box pops up with the game results: your score, your friends, honor list and full listing. If this is hard to read, look in the top margin of that box for an icon of a small arrow pointing upwards into a box. Click on that, and it will open a new tab in your browser with these results taking the full page.

Of course, clicking on "show hands" opens yet another browser tab and gives you access to all the detail of what everybody did on every hand, bid-by-bid and card-by-card.

Q: I have trouble reading the chat.

A: While we're talking about making things easier to read, let's address "chat". There are 2 ways to make this more comfortable for you. First: you can move the dividing line between the chat box and the "business" box using the same method described above. You can also click your mouse somewhere in an empty part of the chat box and a box will pop up offering you "smaller chat font" or "bigger chat font".

Q: I'm sure I've seen the clock move backwards?

A: The director has the power to add time to the clock if there are tables still in play at the end of a round. We don't like to do this too often, and don't want to encourage slow play, but we do it occasionally, most often to help players who have had connection problems catch up.

Q: My internet connection has let me down.

A: Everybody deals with disconnect issues from time to time. **Don't panic.** If you are dropped, simply reconnect and log back into BBO. You will be automatically resealed as soon as possible. Usually that means instantly,

but if you have been off too long, we may have replaced you, so as to not get too far behind. In this case, you will be reseated at the end of the board.

Q: How did somebody from [Bulgaria/India/ name your country] get into OUR game?

A: If we need to fill the seat of a player who has been disconnected too long, we put in a request to a pool of players from all over the world who have offered themselves as substitutes for games such as ours. We get the first one who steps up in response to the request. In this case, they will play only long enough for the registered player to sort out their problem and return.

If we have a half table when the game begins, we try to fill the seats with subs to avoid having a sitout. While we prefer to have local players on hand to fill in, we sometimes use the same pool of unknown subs.

Q: My clumsy fingers just made a wrong bid. Can I take it back?

A: No, we don't allow "undo"s. However, if you find you do this often, there is a setting in BBO that can help you by making you confirm each bid you choose. I don't recommend it for everybody, because it can slow the game down, but if you need it, go to account ->settings, and slide the slider to activate.