

Best behaviour at the bridge table

Welcome opponents.

Give credit to opponents when they get a deserved good score.

Try not to criticise partner.

Don't touch the bidding boxes before you have decided what your next bid is, as it gives unauthorised information to partner and opponents.

New rules

If you open an artificial bid for your strong 2 of a suit you must have either a) at least 16 points or b) 12-15 points with at least 5 controls i.e. 2 aces and a king or one ace and 3 kings. If b) then this must also be disclosed on your convention card.

Comparable calls.

Currently, directors cancel a call made, such as an opening bid out of turn, or an insufficient bid. Now you can make a call without penalty, if done correctly. This would be a call with a similar or same meaning as the original call, or the same purpose as the original call.

E.g. W N E

2NT P 2C

20-22 STAYMAN

This is an insufficient bid, but 3 clubs would be allowed as it has the same purpose as the relay bid.

West is the dealer, but East opens mistakenly with a pass. Now if West opens 1NT then if North passes, East can only make a bid which is unequivocally less than 12 points. So he is not allowed to bid Stayman, as that could be unlimited. He is not allowed to bid 2D or 2H transfers for the same reason. If partnership is not playing transfers then 2D, 2H, and 2S are allowed as weakness take-outs. A bid of 2S to show 11 points would be allowable.

These comparable bids are likely to cause directors some concern, as they cannot tell players what to bid, and may result in players having to lead the table to ask directors if bids are acceptable.

Announcing and alerting

Opening bids

1 no trumps – announce range.

2 no trumps – announce range.

2 diamonds – if weak with diamonds, say weak.

If strong with diamonds say strong forcing or strong non-forcing.

2 hearts/spades – If weak with hearts/spades announce weak.

If strong with hearts/spades announce strong forcing or strong non-forcing

Responses to 1NT or 2NT openings.

2 clubs or 3 clubs announce Stayman – anything else you alert.

2 diamonds or 3 diamonds respectively announce hearts.

2 hearts or 3 hearts respectively announce spades.

Alerting

2 clubs when strong Acol or Benji Acol. Don't explain bids unless asked

2 diamonds – when strong not necessarily with diamonds.

doubles of suit that are not for take-out.

Any bids over 3NT on the first round of bidding that are conventional. After that they are not alertable.

Remember it is the partner of the person making the bid who does the alerting. You shouldn't explain the bid unless opponents ask, as this is unauthorised information for your partner.

Unauthorised information

This is usually unintentional but creates ethical problems. e.g.

- 1) When hesitating during the bidding and then passing.
- 2) Hesitating during the play.
- 3) Asking questions during the bidding and then passing.
- 4) Asking questions during or at the end of bidding about one specific bid.
- 5) Making faces or gestures.
- 6) Making inappropriate comments or noises.

Hesitations

If you hesitate during the bidding and then pass, your partner knows you have some values and thus has unauthorised information which he cannot use.

E.g.

N	E	S	W
1S	2H	2S	3H
P	P		

If North hesitated over West's 3H and then passed South cannot use that unauthorised information. South must choose an action that 3 out of 4 good players would have chosen without the hesitation. So if he had a flat 7 points he should pass, and if he did bid the opposition should call the director who would award an adjusted score.

If you hesitate during the play this can mislead. Try to play at the same tempo. Don't hesitate with a singleton.

If you have no intention of entering the bidding don't ask questions.

E.g.

W	N	E	S
1H	P	3D	?

The 3D bid was alerted. South held AKJ1098 of diamonds and was curious, so asked what the bid meant. It showed a good raise to 3 hearts and nothing about diamonds whatsoever. If South doubles now and N/S go on to a heart contract North can lead a diamond, but what if South passes. Now North has the unauthorised information that South was interested in diamonds. If West calls the director he may ban a diamond lead if there was a good alternative.

If either defender or declarer or dummy has not alerted a bid and should have, this information should be given to the opposition before the opening lead. An incorrect explanation by declarer or dummy should be corrected before the opening lead and the person in the pass-out seat may then withdraw his final pass and re-open the auction . However an incorrect explanation by a defender cannot be corrected until the end of the hand as this could give unauthorised information to partner

Common mistakes made.

1. Strong bids being announced instead of alerted.
2. Forgetting to alert conventional bids.
3. Forgetting to announce bids.
4. Alerting or announcing jump overcalls. It is not necessary.
5. Announcing or explaining your own bids.
6. Forgetting to show stop card and not leaving it on the table with a suitable gap for next player to think.
7. Not bidding or playing in tempo.
8. Messing with the bidding boxes.
9. Not counting your cards before looking at them.

Enjoy your bridge but try to be as ethical as possible. Your reputation depends on it.