KINGSTON SEYMOUR BRIDGE CLUB

RealBridge Technical Considerations

Will my Device Work with RealBridge?

With all the clever technical things RealBridge does, it's not surprising that it won't run on devices which were probably out of date when Noah built the Ark! You don't need to know what 'video calling from a web browser' is, but your device and the browser software you use on it do need to support it. That's why, for example, most iPads built before 2015 and old browsers such as Internet Explorer aren't up to the job.

You can click **here** to see some guidance on the RealBridge website and you should run their excellent easy-to-use camera and microphone test (click **here**) to check that those parts of your equipment are up to the task as well.

Many modern smartphones do, by the way, support the technology and will pass the camera test BUT their screens are too small to show clearly everything you need to see and allow you to safely pick the card you want to play, even if you use a stylus pen rather than your finger. One or two people have tried but the end result is at best frustration for them and for other players at the table with repeated undo requests!

What about my Broadband Connection?

If you've ticked all those boxes and have played on RealBridge, but you still have problems from time to time, it's quite likely that they're not down to inherent limitations of your equipment. It's more likely that your device or your broadband connection will benefit from some simple housekeeping and the main recommendations are:

1. Experts advise that, if you're having problems with your internet connection, the first thing to do is to reboot your router. If you use repeaters/extenders to improve the wifi signal around your house, it's also worth disconnecting from the network and then reconnecting – preferably from wherever you plan to sit whilst you're playing. I'd recommend rebooting your router on a regular basis (perhaps weekly or at least monthly) even if you're not conscious of problems.

2. It's also worth rebooting your device if you haven't done that for a long time. That means totally powering it off and then powering it on again. Most of us are used to doing that with a laptop or desktop computer but we simply close the cover on a tablet and expect it to be fully awake next time we want to use it, and that inevitably means there's lots of clutter building up in its memory. Again worth doing weekly, perhaps shortly before we're due to play.

What Can I Do on the Night?

That's a good question and, if you are having connection problems on the night, even if you've done all the things already described, the recommended sequence is:

1. Try using the Redial button (it's at the far-right of the bar at the bottom of the screen with your name in it) to refresh your video and audio link from time to time. It really can help if your signal degrades, as the experts say it will over the length of a session.

2. If you're still connected but your signal is poor, try hiding the other players' videos to maximise the audio performance. Click **here** to go to RealBridge's player guide and particularly look at the section on audio and video controls if you're not sure what all the buttons can do to help you.

3. If you do lose connection, try simply clicking on the original link and logging in again. This works more often than not and RealBridge will automatically take you back to the right table at the point in play when you left it.

4. If that fails, and you haven't rebooted your device or your router for a while, you might need to do that – but that takes a lot longer and, if you can contact them, you should ask your partner at the table to call the director to let them know. Otherwise you might need to wait for the director to call you. You might have to have a board taken away (which does of course have implications on all the other players as well) but that's at least buying you time to get back in.

What Else Should I Know or Do?

It's important to emphasise that the majority of our users experience little or no difficulty most of the time, particularly if they follow the advice in this document. Sometimes however that can change for another reason. Read on!

Technology moves very quickly, and all the main-stream manufacturers regularly produce new models of their equipment and/or update the software which controls the devices we already have. Those new models or software updates don't always run perfectly when the unsuspecting public (sometimes known as guinea pigs!) first use them. RealBridge constantly monitor feedback they get from users, tweak their software if necessary and offer advice to those less technically expert than they are. One common recommendation (which applies much more widely than just for RealBridge) is to avoid being an early adopter of anything new if you don't have to have it now; let someone else find the problems first! Click **here** to see RealBridge's latest advice, which seems to be particularly important if you use an iPad or other tablet.

In Summary:

1. If you reboot your device and your router regularly, you're less likely to lose connection.

2. Using the Redial button every half-hour or so during play will probably improve your signal.

3. If you do lose connection, simply clicking the link and logging back in will get you back to the table quickly more often than not.

4. Keep an eye on the RealBridge website for their latest advice.

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