Bridge Base Online

Playing a friendly foursome

Sign on and set a username. Line up 3 others who have joined and collect their usernames.

Add them to your Friends list:

- When you log in, at the bottom of the first screen you will see People. Go to this screen.
- Near the bottom left of this screen you'll see Add Friend.
- Add each of the usernames of your group.

This will allow you see when you are all on line, this information is displayed on the People screen.

Setting up a game

One of you agrees to be the host. From the home screen:
- The host goes to game called **Casual**.
- Select the option 'Find your own game'
- At the top you'll see Privacy Options. Make sure that the top two (Allow Kibitzers) are not switched to yellow, or you won't be able to 'chat' to the others on your table.
- Below this, there is a box that has the 4 seating positions, as you select each one you get a text box for the name of the player.
- Input the usernames in the relevant positions for the partnerships.
- Press Start a table. There are two options, Start a relaxed game or start a competitive game. We are playing **Relaxed**.
- An invite to the others is sent automatically.

You can do this set up before the others are online, but make sure that before you press the press the button to send the invitation a) the usernames are in the right boxes and b) that everyone is online. You can see when people come online from the Members screen.

Everyone else:

Everyone logs in. Three wait in the home screen - what I am calling the screen that you are first taken to after logging in. An invitation box comes up, with the accept button at the bottom. I play on an iPad and sometimes have difficulty scrolling down this screen (sometimes it's fine but sometimes it seems frozen) if I turn the iPad to vertical, I get the full text box and it works. It may be different on a PC.

The host is automatically placed at a table and, until they accept, the other positions display username (reserved). As each person accepts their position becomes 'live'. When all are in place the cards are automatically dealt and off we go.

Peculiarities of the game
If you are familiar with BCL, this is both similar and different. There is an orange side bar that runs along the position whose turn it is to bid, play. On the left there is a square that shows the positions as red (V) or white (NV), this is also shown against the positions when the bidding is happening.

There is no bidding box. When it's your turn to bid, a dialogue box appears and you first see a row of numbers that represents the level at which you want to bid and when you have selected, it gives you the available suit options. E.g. you want to open 1H. You will see the numbers 1 through 7, press 1. It then gives you the symbols clubs, diamonds, hearts and spades and NT. There is also pass and alert.

In this system you can't alert your partner's bid. You have to **self alert**. That means that, say, I want to bid a transfer in response to partner's 1NT, *before I make the bid*, I press the alert tab and a text box appears. I type a brief explanation (e.g. here just 'Trsf' will do as we all know what we mean), **then** make the bid as above. Note: only the opposition see the alert and explanation

If one of the opposition make a bid that you want to ask about, if you press on the bid, the bidder is sent a dialogue bow asking for a brief description of the bid.

One thing you can do here is ask if you can undo a bid. The symbol to press is three vertical lines, which sits above the box showing the board number, top left hand corner. The drop down box gives this as one option. It asks the opposition if they accept or reject the request and, if they do, your last bid is removed.

Convention cards

You can tailor convention cards and link them to a specific partner.
After you log in, there is a row of tabs (on the iPad along the bottom of the screen, on a Mac down the side) one of which is **Account**. Go to your account. The main page enables you to give personal details if you wish, say what your standard is and where in the globe you are playing.

At the top of this screen (at least on tne iPad) are options, one of which is **Convention Card.** The top of this screen gives a list of 'standard' system cards, the lower ½ of the screen is for personalised cards, this is blank until you have edited one of the standard cards.

Assuming you choose Standard Acol, you get a display not unlike the cards we have at the club, pre-filled. You can edit it as appropriate.
Note: on my iPad this screen is very unstable. I have typed in a ton of stuff only to have it kick me off the page and I have had to start again. My advice is to save the document after each modification.
At the top lefthand corner is a space to input your partner's username. This modified card now appears in the personalised section, along with a copy in case you want to assign it to more than one partner. There is always a copy, so you always have one to modify if you play different conventions with different partners.

When you join a table, a box pops up saying that you have an agreed card with this partner. I am not sure if the opposition see this, I am sure they must be able to access it.

History – how to review played boards

Again, from the home screen menu you can select **History**. At the top of this page is a menu with an option to review **Recent Hands**. This takes you to the most recent boards that you have played (I think that all boards played are there with the most recent at the top). This functions exactly like the Scorecard function on Pianola, you can look to see what other tables have bid and played, and see how your outcome compares.