

# ST LEONARDS BRIDGE CLUB

## Custom and Etiquette

In Bridge we set high standards that many find difficult to achieve. The communication between partners must be impeccable and the interplay with opponents must be polite.

If you can achieve all of these, you will be a joy to play with:

- Always be courteous to all.
- Avoid remarks or actions that annoy.
- Follow uniform and correct procedure.
- Pay attention to the game.
- A card should not be detached from your hand, before it is your turn to play.
- Do not:
  - Make gratuitous comments.
  - Prolong play unnecessarily.
  - Indicate approval/disapproval or expectation of winning a trick.
  - Draw attention to significant occurrences.
  - Look intently at other players or their hands.
  - Show lack of interest.
  - Vary the tempo to disconcert others.
- Leave the table needlessly before the round is called.

**DO NOT TELL YOUR PARTNER HOW THEY SHOULD HAVE BID OR PLAYED A HAND**

**DO NOT DISCUSS THE HANDS JUST PLAYED - OTHERS CAN HEAR YOU!**

## Correct Procedure, Custom and Etiquette at the Bridge Table

**This is how it should go:**

### Arrival

- If N/S are resident at the table, they should stop talking about any hand they have played and welcome their visitors.
- The visiting pair should also not discuss any previous hands they have played during the session.
- North or South should check that they have the right boards and opponents.
- Both pairs should now briefly tell each other what system they are playing.

### Pre-Auction

- North places the first board correctly oriented in the centre of the table. Then vulnerability is obvious without players consulting their score card.
- The board will stay on the table until play of it is finished. This prevents hands from being put back into the wrong slots.
- All players remove their cards and count them face down.  
**This procedure is a legal requirement.**

### Auction

- The Dealer starts the auction and places a bid or pass on the table.
- The auction continues in a clockwise rotation until there are 3 successive passes.
- Players should avoid touching the cards in the bidding box until it is their turn to call, making sure they know what their intended call will be. They should avoid 'fiddling about' with the bidding box .
- The bidding cards are left in place until the opening lead is made face down..

## Play

- North is responsible for correctly entering the contract into the Bridgmate.
- The other players may record the contract as they wish.
- The player on lead places his card face down and asks, “any questions?”
- Partner of the player on lead can now ask questions (and has in no way influenced his partner’s choice of lead).
- The opening lead may not be changed.
- The lead is exposed, the bidding cards are returned to their boxes and dummy spreads his hand.
- During the play, the Declarer may require, at any time, that a card pointed the wrong way is corrected. Dummy and either defender may draw attention to a card pointing in the wrong direction but **only** after a lead is made to the next trick.
- Until his/her card has been placed face down, Declarer, or either Defender, may ask for all cards of a trick to be exposed (dummy may not).

## Dummy

- A perfect Dummy (the player not the cards) ‘does nothing and does it very well.’
- The play of a contract is a contest between two Defenders on one side and one declarer playing two hands on the other.
- Dummy places a card in the played position as instructed by the Declarer and keeps count of tricks won or lost.
- Dummy **must not** help declarer by indicating a card should be played or by playing a card from dummy until requested to do so by Declarer.
- Dummy may verbally prevent a lead from the wrong hand, but not after the card is named or revealed.

It is not easy being a good dummy. Dummy should follow the play and interpret declarer’s instruction without any guidance. Dummy should relax and let Declarer get on with their job.

## End of Play

- All players should ensure the result and score are agreed and entered in the Bridgmate correctly.
- After all four players have agreed the score, the cards are lightly shuffled and returned to the board in the correct pockets.

## Partnership Understanding

- You are entitled to know what your opponents have agreed, explicitly or implicitly; equally, they are entitled to know what you have agreed.
- Players with many agreements will have a systems card.
- If a player makes a “conventional” or unusual call their partner must warn the opposition either by **alerting** or in a few special cases by **announcing**.
- Be very careful how you ask questions.
- Their understandings will most likely not be the same as yours and might even appear absurd.
- If you seek further clarification, be careful not appear to be critical.
- Be particularly careful that you are not feeding ideas to your partner.

Within legal limits, players may bid or mis-bid as they wish providing any deviations are as much a surprise to their partners as to their opponents. The only safe way to communicate with partner is through legal calls and plays.

No one influences a partner or improperly misleads an opponent deliberately. Be careful of gratuitous remarks, comments, approval, disapproval, uncertainty, unexpected alerts, failure to alert, unmistakable hesitation, unwonted speed, special emphasis, tone, gesture, movement or mannerisms or any form of body language.

## **IF UNCERTAIN ASK THE DIRECTOR FOR HELP**

## **ALWAYS CALL THE DIRECTOR WHEN EVEN THE SMALLEST THING GOES WRONG**

## **DO NOT INVENT YOUR OWN RULES OR ASSUME YOU KNOW THE PROCEDURE - CALL THE DIRECTOR**

## **THE DIRECTOR ALONE HAS THE RIGHT TO ADJUDICATE**