

BBO Convention Cards

The St Pete Virtual Club Bridge games and all other BridgeBase Online (BBO) tournaments require that all pairs post a Convention Card (CC). If a pair fails to do so, they are required to play Standard American Yellow Card (SAYC) for the remainder of the tournament.

While on-line directors do not check to see if everyone has posted a CC, if an opponent complains or the director's attention is otherwise called to the lack of a convention card, *this rule will be enforced.*

Instructions below are for the web version of BBO. That is, you get to BBO via your browser (Edge, FireFox, Safari, Opera, Chrome, etc.). BBO apps exist for Apple and Android tablets and phones as well as older versions for Windows. If using an app, make sure it is the current one (version 3 for Android and Apple) because while you might be able to create a CC you will *not* be able to play in the Virtual Club tournaments. Forget about the old Windows app. If you have it, delete it.

BBO makes creating a card easy. The current BBO Convention Card looks just like the standard ACBL convention card. To get to it click on **Account**. Unless you moved it this will be on the far right of the BBO window. This will, unsurprisingly, open up a sub-window entitled Account. Click on **Convention Card** under Account.

You now have two or three ways to start editing your convention card. The first choice is to click on **New ACBL Convention Card**. I'll let you guess what now appears. Alternatively, you can choose one of the pre-made cards by clicking it. These are listed under *Stock Cards*. Unless you are playing some unusual system, you can save a lot of time and effort by using a Stock Card to get started. They are fully editable. The blank cards are only a good choice if you are playing a strong diamond, canape system and a forcing 1NT opening with modified Roman defense or other quite unusual methods. Thirdly, you might find existing convention cards under the *Personal Cards* heading. This is where completed CCs have been saved for future use.

You fill out the CC basically the same way as you normally would except you are using your computer's keyboard rather than a pencil or pen. There are a few additions and changes. To edit a CC, click on the card you want to use for your template. Then click Edit. The CC in all its glory now appears. The **Back** button takes you back to the previous window (where you selected a CC to edit). Save your work by clicking **Save changes** before clicking **Back**.

This step is important! Enter your partner's BBO name. If you are creating a CC to use with someone whose BBO name is guido type *guido* in the **Partner** field. BBO treats capitals and small letters the same. Guido, guido, and gUIdO are all the same to BBO. This step allows BBO to call up this CC when you are partnering whomever you inserted in the **Partner** field. **Title** your card. This is how your CC will appear in the windows where you choose a convention card.

Replace an existing title with a new one unless you want to overwrite (aka erase) and replace the template CC. No one sees this title except you.

Note: It is easier to title your cards with your partner's name. If playing with a person whose BBO name is *woeey*, title the CC **woeey** and enter **woeey** in the Partner field. If you use the same CC with multiple players, you should duplicate the CC for each one. Otherwise, BBO will either load no CC or load a SAYC one. To duplicate a card and assuming you have a competed card for playing with *guido* and want to use the same CC with *MarySue*, do the following: From the Convention Card menu, click on whatever you titled your CC for guido and then click on **Edit**. Change the **Title** to something new and **Partner** to *Marysue*. Click **Save changes** and then **Back**. All set.

If you create your masterpiece from an existing CC, you will likely see things such as “->3!c” and “1RF” here and there. To insert a spade symbol type “!s” or “!S” and it will print out and appear to the opponents as ♠. I leave it to you to figure out how to insert a heart, a diamond and a club. The “->” is used too mean “puppet to” or “transfer to” or “through.” “1RF” is one of many standard abbreviations (as blessed by the World Bridge Federation). This one means “One round force.” Most of these abbreviations are obvious. Common are “M” for major and “m” for minor. Put an “O” or “o” in front of either and you have “Other major” or “Other minor.” Also, “GF” for Game force,” “INV” for invitation and so forth.

Troubleshooting

The most common problem is the convention card not loading even though you entered the correct BBO name in the **Partner** field. This cause is most likely one of the following:

- 1) You mistyped your partner's name. You meant to enter *John34*, but entered *John43* or something similar.
- 2) You forgot to put your partner's BBO name in the **Partner** field.
- 3) There is a second way to assign a card to a partner. Sometimes this way works and sometimes it does not. (Which is why I'm not discussing it). The result will be the same as 2) above.

To fix all the above, simply select the CC, click on Edit and enter/change **Partner**. If you can multitask, cursing in Manx seems to help or, at least, not impair the fix. You do know how to curse in Manx, don't you?