

How to Get Onto BBO

First Steps

Do a search for: Bridge Base Online

Click on: Bridge Base Online - Play Bridge Online

Click on: Login/Register (top right)

Click on: Become a member

Complete the form and click: Register

(You will have to invent your BBO Username. You could start your Username with something to identify your club. For example, Sutton Coldfield could have Usernames beginning with SCBC. However this can't be a hard and fast rule. Some Sutton Coldfield members will already have BBO Usernames.)

You are now a member of BBO

Go back to the Login/Register screen, key in your BBO Username and password, and click: Log in

You are now on the site

Just explore the site. A few things are chargeable (eg. EBU Tournaments): if it asks you for "BBO \$", just click: Back

Maybe click on: People (tab on the right). Click on Stars. Choose one who is marked as Playing. Right-click on them and join their table (assuming they haven't blocked kibitzers).

You can now watch them play. Click on the History tab (on the right). It will list hands they have already played. Click on one of these to see what happened

Here's another way to find a table to watch. Go back to the Home page and click: Casual (under Play or Watch Bridge). Click on: Take me to an interesting table (under Help Me Find a Game - Watch).

Whilst watching, try clicking the 3-Line box (in blue, at the top). It gives you various options to try, eg. pictures of cards or hand diagrams; show or hide played cards; show double dummy analysis (last two only available after the bidding has finished)

Players "self-alert", ie, they type in a description of any artificial bid. Such bids are highlighted in the bidding record. You can click on them to see the explanation

Practising Play

From the home screen, click on: Practice. Then click on: Bridge Master

Click on a deal

It will show you the bidding and make a lead. Click on the card you want to play

At any stage you can click on the contract (bottom left) to see the auction again

Clicking on the tricks (bottom left) to see the last trick again

If you want to restart the deal, click the 3-line box at the top and click on Redeal

Practising Bidding (Agree with your partner when you'll meet on BBO)

Click the People tab (right of screen)

Click on Search (top)

Enter your partner's BBO Username (in search box, foot of screen) and click: Search

You will see a list of BBO Usernames, including your partner. If there is a green blob next to them, they are online. Right-click on your partner's Username and select: Private chat

You can now converse by typing in text

Click: Home (top of screen)

Click: Practice

Click: Start a Bidding Table

Type your partner's Username in North; and yours in South

Set the table to Invisible; and chose the "Controlled by host" option

Click Start Table

BBO will take your partner to your table

Click on East and West, choosing Robot

Click on the 3-line box (top) and select: redeal

You and your partner can now bid the hand against two bridge robots. Bidding only, no play

You will notice a space in the bidding box to describe any Alert. When playing properly, you will need to describe your bids here, eg. if you open 1NT, enter 12-14 (or whatever) in the Alert space before you click on 1NT. Your opponents will see this, but your partner will not.

You will notice that most of the robot's bids are highlighted. This means that you can click on the bid and see a description.

You can bid as many hands as you like. They will be listed in History (on the right), where you can click on any hand and see the full auction.

There are lots of options. Click the Account tab and go into Settings, where, for example, you can turn sound effects on or off

There's an easy way to find whether the people you regularly play with are online: define them as your BBO Friends. Select the People tab. You will see a place at the foot where you can add friends. In future, when you go into the People tab, it will list which of your friends are online. If you move the Show Offline switch to the right, it will list all your friends, whether they are online or not.

Playing on BBO

Playing

To play with other club members arrange for four players to be online. Find them (as explained in Practicing Bidding, in the first document) and make sure they are ready
From the Home screen, select Casual. Click: Start a table (under Find Your Own Game)

Under scoring, chose IMPs or Matchpoints

Make the table invisible

Type the four players' BBO Usernames in the Reserve Seats section

Click: Start Table - Relaxed Game

BBO will open a Table and bring the four of you to it

In the 3-Line box (above the table), select Redeal. Now you can bid and play

Make sure you describe your bids where necessary. You type the explanation in the Alert area before you actually make the bid. Your opponents will see this, but your partner will not. (If you forget or want to change the explanation, click where your bid appears in the auction.)

Click on opponents' bids to see their explanation

Practice sending messages to one opponent, to both opponents and to the table (which means that everyone sees it)

Practice Claiming. When you hit Claim, you can indicate how many more tricks you are claiming and, if appropriate, give a reason.

At the end of the play, you can see how other tables did.

The History tab will list all the boards you've played. Indeed, your History is kept: next time you log on, you can still see all your recent hands, as well as any recent tournament results.

(The very first time you try playing, maybe ask a Mentor or more experienced player to set it all up for you. They could watch the first few hands and help with any queries.)

Playing in a Tournament

Home Screen. Play or Watch Bridge. Competitive

Choose: Free Tournaments

In the Search box, type: WOL (this is our acronym for Warwickshire online)

It will list any WOL tournaments. The Start column shows how many minutes there are until the event will start. Click on the one you want

It will ask you who your partner will be

When the clock has ticked over to the start time, BBO will move you and your partner (as long as you're both online) to a table in the Tournament

Feedback To help future users of these notes, please report any problems you encountered and how you overcame them; and any other advice you'd like to give.