

U3a Beginner Bridge Course: FAQs

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What is included in the Course?

Watch this 9-minute video: [Beginner Course](#)

The course consists of a series of fifteen modules. Each module has a comprehensive set of self-study materials including a video lesson, downloadable lesson handout, and practice exercise. These are all accessible via the NG34Bridge website. On-line Practice lessons are held weekly, and consist of a short Zoom 'refresh' session followed by a fully supervised play session on RealBridge with specially prepared deals and supporting guide notes.

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Is this the first time that the Beginner Course has run?

No. We have just completed a 5-month pilot beginner Course, which has been very successful. All of our beginners are now playing on-line bridge several times a week.

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What is NG34Bridge?

NG34Bridge is a volunteer bridge teaching group formed in 2018 to provide beginner bridge classes. It received generous startup funding from the local council (North Kesteven).

The group has its own website which provides links to extensive course materials to support Beginner Lessons, Next Steps Lessons and Improver workshops.

NG34Bridge Beginner Bridge resources have been made available completely free to the national u3a in support of this project.

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What is the course fee?

The course fee is £30 for fifteen modules (£2 per module). This compares very favourably with commercial bridge courses which typically charge £100 for a ten-lesson course. We are able to keep the fee so low because all of our delivery team members are u3a volunteers. Our only expenses are for third party services (RealBridge, Zoom, web hosting).

We are awaiting clarification from the u3a as to how the fee is to be collected. It is possible that there may be a central u3a administration charge.

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How much time do I need to spend preparing for the supervised session each week?

In your own interest and that of your classmates, you will be expected to spend 1-2 hours prepping shortly before each practice session by working through the Study Pack (video, handout and exercises).

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How easy is it to join a Zoom session?

Very easy! A day or so before the session we will email you a link to the Zoom session. Just click the link to join some of your classmates at a bridge table. No need to download any apps or enter a password.

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How easy is it to join a RealBridge practice session?

As easy as joining Zoom! No password or downloads required. Just click the RealBridge link that we will have emailed to you. Three clicks later you will be sitting at a bridge table. Click here to find out more about [RealBridge](#)

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Which devices (PC/ Laptop/tablet etc.) are suitable?

You can use practically all modern devices that have a microphone and camera – such as a PC with webcam, laptop, iPad, android tablet or Apple Mac. Smartphones are not suitable due to their small screen size.

You will also need reasonable Broadband download speed

We recommend that you join one of the very short 'equipment testing' sessions that we will hold in the run up to the course start date.

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Does the group meet on-line at the same time every week?

There are two separate groups, one held on Tuesday mornings and the other on Thursday mornings, both starting at 10am with a short Zoom session followed by a RealBridge practice session.

Provisional start dates:

Class 1: Tuesday 31st October

Class 2: Thursday 2nd November

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Are there supervised sessions over Xmas / New Year?

There will be no supervised practice sessions **between the 18th December and the 8th January.** Our RealBridge lounge will remain open for course members to arrange relaxed foursomes.

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How long is each supervised practice session?

The Zoom refresher element of each session takes 15-30 minutes followed by 90+ minutes of supervised practice on RealBridge. Thereafter unsupervised play can carry on indefinitely so long as there are at least four players remaining who wish to continue. Players can revisit the practice session at any point in the following two days and carry on where they left off, or they can sit at a fresh table and start at Board 1 again. These follow-on sessions are unsupervised.

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Can I catch up if I miss a lesson?

All our self-study lesson resources can be found on our NG34Bridge website and are permanently accessible, so you can always catch up. You can join our practice sessions from anywhere in the world that has internet access. In our pilot course we have had members playing while on holiday in Spain and Iceland! You can always request that we set up a repeat of a RealBridge practice for a group of four or more players. They are free and you should have no trouble finding three or more classmates to join you.

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Can I practise playing in between between lessons?

Absolutely! We have our own RealBridge lounge. Just arrange a session with three or more class members and show up. RealBridge has a great 'watcher' facility where up to four guests can see, hear and chat to the players, and watch the play of the current deal. You can replay 'movies' of previous boards played by any foursome at any table. Players and watchers can swap seats at any point in time. You can pick up the play at the point where you left off in the supervised session. Alternatively, you can sit at a fresh table and start again at Board 1, and try to improve on your first attempt. Your previous result and the 'play movies' will still be viewable.

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How do I develop my bridge after the course ends?

You can continue your bridge development with regular live RealBridge play sessions with your classmates on the "[Live Play on No Fear](#)".

- weekly practice sessions on selected bidding / play topics
- drop-in social foursomes
- duplicate pairs events (gentle and improver level).

Participation in these events is **FREE** to No Fear Bridge subscribers!

Soon you should be ready to play gentle duplicate pairs events at your local bridge club, U3A club, or online bridge clubs and, in time, move up to improver level.

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How do I enrol for the u3a Beginner Course?

Email the membership secretary at jackiewood12a@gmail.com. If there is a space available you will be asked to complete the **free** two-part No Fear MiniBridge course. This is excellent preparation for the main Beginner Course.

In total there are twelve short interactive mini-lessons. Each mini-lesson can usually be completed in about ten minutes. You can complete the MiniBridge course in stages, saving your work as you go.

On completion of each of the two parts of the MiniBridge course you will receive a certificate of completion.

Forward both certificates of completion to the Membership Secretary, your place will then be confirmed.

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Do I need to subscribe to No Fear Bridge?

The No Fear website has two distinct areas, No Fear MiniBridge and No Fear Bridge. Make sure you understand the difference:

A: No Fear MiniBridge

You will need to register for MiniBridge in order to complete the No Fear 'Introduction to MiniBridge' course. Registering gives you **six weeks free access** (no credit card required). Do NOT register for MiniBridge until you are ready to complete the No Fear MiniBridge course! [No Fear MiniBridge sign-up](#)

B: No Fear Bridge

We make use No Fear interactive learning resources in all of our lessons. Access to the main No Fear Bridge website is by paid subscription. We have negotiated a special 3- month free trial arrangement (no credit card required). Just before our Beginner Course commences, we will provide you with a registration code.

No Fear will notify you when your free trial is about to lapse. You will be given the option of extending your subscription for a further 3 months (£18) or taking out a 12-month subscription for £42, which includes a specially negotiated discount of 30% on the standard £60 annual subscription. **Note! You do not have to take up a paid No Fear subscription when your 3-month free trial ends (though we are sure you will want to!)**

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