

## **Bridge Development for Improvers and Returners**

Some players learn Bridge by playing with friends, gradually absorbing the rules and best ways to bid and play. Nowadays, most learners take a beginner's course—either face-to-face or online—such as the one we offer. These courses typically last about 30 weeks, requiring 2-3 hours of study and 2-3 hours of practice each week. This is a significant commitment of time and energy.

The reality is that learning Bridge is a lifelong process. Most players who complete a beginner's course realize they still have much to learn and need to develop confidence. We aim to support this development with flexible opportunities that allow players to “dip in and out” as needed. We also provide guidance on the many online learning resources available today.

If you learned Bridge some time ago but have not played regularly in recent years, you might also find these supports useful. We refer to these players as “Returners.”

### **How We Support Improvers and Returners**

#### **1. No Fear Bridge (NFB)**

Many u3a members who complete our Beginner's programme will already be familiar with this website. In addition to beginner materials, NFB provides a structured Improvers Self-Study course, which members can access and complete at their own pace.

#### **2. Guidance and Signposting**

As a u3a group, we do not promote specific providers, but we do offer information on a variety of learning opportunities. We compile these resources based on recommendations from our volunteers and learners. Our Resources page ([LINK](#)) includes:

- Online providers of Bridge courses (mostly commercial)
- Books focusing on Acol and modern bidding
- Helpful Bridge videos on YouTube
- Providers of extensive online programmes and publications
- Online play platforms

#### **3. Opportunities to Play Bridge Online**

Many Returners prefer to play rather than study. We offer the following opportunities, which are also open to Improvers:

- **u3a Online Duplicate Bridge Group (ODBG):**
  - Weekly RealBridge sessions on Tuesdays at 10 am ([details here](#))
  - A formal club requiring membership and a small fee
  - New players are encouraged to read the RealBridge Player Quick Guide or take an 8-hand Taster Session before joining
- **Bridge Club Live Group (BCL):**
  - A three-month free package of 24/7 online playing sessions
  - Options for Social Bridge and Club Duplicate Bridge

- Interested members who can play regularly should fill in the application form
- **Other Online Opportunities:**
  - Additional games are available through RealBridge and No Fear Bridge
  - Details can be found on their respective websites

#### **4. Periodic Meetings for Improvers and Returners**

These meetings provide a space for:

- Reviewing and reflecting on learned concepts
- Sharing experiences from real-world Bridge play
- Focused practice on useful topics
- Advancing beyond the basics with strategy, planning, and tactics
- Introducing new ideas to enhance bidding and play

Each session includes pre-session self-study, a one-hour Zoom discussion, and a one-hour RealBridge practice session. Afterward, additional study pointers are provided. Sessions run every 4-6 weeks from September to June (10 meetings in total). This is a formal group requiring membership and a small fee for RealBridge access. Applications for September 2025 should be submitted to **XXXXXX**.

#### **5. Weekly Open Meetings for All u3a Bridge Players with Queries**

We hold informal ‘drop-in’ sessions on Wednesdays, where members can ask questions. To join, find the MS Teams link in our **CALENDAR** (on the left side of this website) and click the relevant Wednesday link.

We hope these opportunities will help you continue your Bridge journey with confidence and enjoyment!