

RULES OF BEHAVIOUR AT BRIDGE

Much of the wide popularity of contract bridge is attributed to the high standards of both ethics and etiquette observed by players. There are many points which are important to know and observe.

The 2017 Laws of Duplicate Bridge deal with proper behaviour at bridge under Law 72 General Principles, Law 73 Communication, Tempo and Deception, and Law 74 Conduct and Etiquette.

Ethics: relates to the rules of conduct aimed at avoiding all unfair practices which fall short of deliberate cheating. Unethical conduct is illegal (Laws 72, 73, 75).

Etiquette: relates to the requirements of good-mannered behaviour (Law 74).

Understandably, infringements of ethics or etiquette are not uncommon from inexperienced players either through inadvertence or insufficient knowledge.

ETHICS

- Always play in strict accordance with the Laws.
- If an irregularity (i.e. departure from correct procedure) occurs, the Director should be called immediately. Players should not attempt to correct the irregularity or determine rectification.
- The responsibility for rectifying irregularities and redressing damage rests solely upon the Director and the Laws, not upon the players themselves.
- Communication between partners during the auction and play should be effected only by means of proper calls and plays. Avoid communication by eye contact.
- Calls and play should be made without special emphasis, mannerism or inflection and without undue hesitation or haste. Bid and play as nearly as possible in an even tempo.
- Ask about alerted or self-alerting calls only on a 'need to know basis' when it is your turn to bid.
- In responding to an opponent's enquiry regarding the significance of a partner's call or play, a player should at all times provide full information of their understanding as related to partnership agreement or partnership experience.
- It is highly unethical to attempt to mislead an opponent by means of haste or hesitancy of a call or play (as in hesitating or fumbling before playing a singleton or a card from a worthless doubleton) or by the manner in which a call or play is made.
- Until the session ends, discuss scores and hands only with your partner and the opponents for the hands just played and in a way not audible to any other player.

ETIQUETTE

- Always be courteous to partner and opponents.
- Always be courteous to, and co-operative with, the Director.
- The following actions are considered breaches of good manners:-
 - a) Continuing conversation while sorting a hand or during the auction.
 - b) Using different designations for the same call.
 - c) Looking intently at another player during the auction or play.
 - d) Commenting or acting during the auction or play so as to call attention to a significant occurrence, or to the number of tricks still required for success.
 - e) Indicating that you expect to win or lose a trick before the trick is complete.
 - f) Volunteering information that should be given only in response to a question.
 - g) Asking for information when it is not your turn to call or play.
 - h) Indicating approval or disapproval of a call or play.
 - i) Varying the normal tempo of bidding or play for the purpose of disconcerting an opponent.
 - j) Looking at a player's hand for the purpose of seeing the cards or observing from where the card is drawn.
 - k) Detaching a card before it is your turn to play.
 - l) Tapping the table to signify 'alert'. The correct procedure is to say 'alert' and to circle the alerted call.
 - m) As dummy, touching a card in the open hand before receiving instruction from declarer.
 - n) Leaving the table needlessly before the round is called.
 - o) Showing an obvious lack of further interest in a deal (as by folding one's cards).
 - p) Criticism of an opponent's bidding or any implication of bad faith on the part of the opponents without having previously called the Director to the table.
 - q) Looking at another player's hand after it has been put back in the board.
 - r) Taking offence at inadvertent breaches of etiquette by other players, especially inexperienced ones.
 - s) Discussion between partners of a board just played when there is another board to play. Discussion should be postponed until the round or session has been completed.