

KNIGHTON BRIDGE CLUB

ETIQUETTE



This is a quick two-page reference guide to help you ensure your knowledge of current WBU Rules is up to date. It is not exhaustive but is intended to capture the bare minimum points you must be aware of when playing.

STOP CARD

The Stop card should be placed on the table just before making any jump bid and left there for about ten seconds. This alerts partner and the opposition and is to allow the next player time to reflect after an unexpected action without his/her hesitation or swift pass giving his/her partner an ethical issue over potential unauthorised information. The next player must not bid until the stop card is removed or, if it has been removed prematurely, he/she should pause for ten seconds as though the stop card had been used correctly.

HESITATION

Be aware that a hesitation before a Pass by a player who is not in the pass-out seat may give partner unauthorised information (i.e. I was almost able to, but not quite, bid partner). Your partner is then obliged not to make use of that information and so must now Pass unless he/she can clearly justify bidding again without the knowledge that you almost had a further bid.

ANNOUNCING

The following bids are the most common bids that are announceable by your partner at the table:

| Bid | Announce | Notes |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1NT or 2NT | "12-14", "20-22" | or your range as appropriate |
| 2♦ (not Benji or Multi) 2♥ or 2♠ | "Weak", "Strong and forcing" or "Strong, not forcing" | note <u>NOT</u> just "Strong" |
| Stayman 2/3♣ after 1NT/2NT | "Stayman" | only if asking for 4-card majors |
| After 1NT or 2NT, ♦ or ♥ as transfers to ♥ or ♠ | "Hearts" or "Spades" | note <u>NOT</u> "Transfer" |
| 5-card major 1♣ opening if it may contain less than 3 clubs | "May be X" | where X is 0, 1 or 2 as appropriate |

ALERTING

Certain other artificial bids made by your partner that may have a special meaning must be drawn to the attention of your opponents by using the Alert Card. You must display it prominently so that both opponents are aware of it. If you do not alert an artificial bid, the opponents are entitled to assume the bid was natural, which may have consequences for you in the event that the Director is called. Even if you have forgotten the meaning of partner's call, you should still alert it if you believe an alert is required. It is your responsibility to alert the bid immediately and before the next person makes a bid in normal tempo. If, before you bid, you subsequently realise you should have alerted partner's call, you must still do so straight away but the opposition may call the Director and be permitted to amend their last bid.

If you are declarer or dummy and, during the auction, your partner has failed to alert an artificial bid, you must tell the opponents before they lead and, if requested, provide an explanation. Your opponents may call the Director and "reserve their rights" in case they suffer damage. However, if you are defending, you should say so only at the end of the hand (to avoid giving partner unauthorised information by drawing attention to his/her mistake). Your opponents may then seek a Director ruling if they have suffered damage.

In simple terms, you should alert:

- any non-announceable bid up to (and including) 3NT that does not promise the suit bid;
- any bid below 3NT that has an unexpected meaning; and
- any artificial bid above 3NT which occurs on the first round of bidding.

| Common Alertable Bids | Exceptions Not Requiring an Alert |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong 2♣, Benji 2♣/♦ opening bids & negative responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of red-suit transfer bids over NTs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5-card Stayman over 1NT or 2NT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2/3♦ response to 4-card Stayman over 1/2NT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Splinter bids (on the first round of the auction); ● Michaels Cue Bids; ● Unusual 2NT; ● Gambling 3NT; ● Unassuming Cue Bids; and ● Forcing 2-level responses (e.g. inverted minors) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-emptive 3-level raises of partner's opening bid after opposition interference |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doubles of NT bids that are for take-out (i.e. not penalties) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Negative doubles |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doubles of suit bids below 3NT that are not for takeout (e.g. penalty doubles or any double that carries a specific or potentially unexpected meaning) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doubles of suits bid artificially by the opponents if they show the actual suit bid |

ASKING QUESTIONS

At your turn, you are entitled to ask questions about any opposition bids but do not ask a question during the auction unless you intend to bid and require clarification immediately. Be careful what questions you ask as your partner must not act on any unauthorised information imparted. For example, if your partner opens and the opposition make a jump overcall, do not ask for the strength of the bid unless you intend to bid if the answer is “weak”. If the answer is “intermediate” and you then Pass, partner must only bid on without using the inference that you could have bid if the answer had been weak and not otherwise.

All questions must be answered by the partner of the person making the bid in question and they must give a complete explanation (not one that is economical with the truth). If they are not sure what the bid means, they must not guess or say how they have or might be about to interpret it but should say that they have forgotten or that the partnership has not discussed it or has no agreement (as appropriate). Their partner must continue bidding as if partner had both alerted and provided the correct explanation under the partnership's system.

After the auction, the player on lead may ask questions before making a lead, which should be made face down on the table. Only at this point may his/her partner ask questions or say that he/she has “no questions”. The player on lead may not change the card to be lead as a result of partner's questions or any answers (unless the Director permits) and should only face the lead card once partner confirms he/she has no further questions.

CLAIMING

If as declarer you are certain you will win all remaining tricks, you should announce you are claiming the rest. You must then reveal all your cards to the opposition and explain your line of play if it could affect the outcome (for example, “drawing the remaining trumps and then”). You may also claim fewer tricks if you have unavoidable losers (normally just one) by announcing that you will claim but concede a particular trick.

Once you have claimed, play should stop immediately. If the defenders wish to dispute your claim or it is not valid, it is not an option to continue playing and the Director should be called to adjudicate. If there is a logical line of play that would lead to the defence winning any additional tricks, then they will be given the benefit of any doubt (for example, if declarer has not drawn trumps and claims without stating that he/she will first do so and the defenders could have ruffed one of declarers side suit winners has he/she not drawn them first).

CALLING THE DIRECTOR

It can be difficult to know when to call the Director as you may not want to disturb them unnecessarily and you want to keep a friendly atmosphere at the table. However, if you are unsure, it is better to call him/her sooner rather than later to avoid making matters worse. Do not be feel bullied into not calling the Director just because your opponents “tell you the rules”; they may well be wrong. The Director should be called if there has been any irregularity where immediate clarification is required, or any bad behaviour. Other examples of matters that are very likely best dealt with by the Director include where: there is an insufficient bid; there is a lead, play or call out of turn; there is a defender's exposed card; there is a dispute over a claim; or an opponent corrects his partner's explanation.