



INTRODUCTION TO THE SBU 20 LESSON SHORT COURSE

This document explains how the 20 lessons course and the resources provided in Dropbox were designed to be used.

Introduction

The key aim of this course is to develop novice bridge players willing to play in a club environment after 20 lessons! To learn to play bridge in 20 weeks, albeit as a novice, is still an ambitious undertaking. For that reason, the learning materials provided are designed to be comprehensive for the topics in the course and presented in a user friendly style. Students may not be able to attend all 20 lessons of the course so should this happen; the learning materials should allow the student to catch up.

As all teachers know, the transition from the class to regular club play is a difficult hurdle and will always to some extent rely on the existing club membership to encourage and mentor novice players exiting classes. This mentoring role is often overlooked yet it contributes enormously to the percentage of students who become and remain club players.

Finally, but most importantly, learning to play this great game must be enjoyable and fun!

The 20 lessons are in folders in Dropbox labelled L1 - L20

Note 1: The hand deal files for all 20 lessons are in a separate folder 'Hand Deal Files' to enable easy exporting of the full set of hands.

Note 2: The only paper handouts used in this course are the Bidding Crib Sheets, the Recommended Opening Leads Tables in NTs and Suits, and How to Score. These are in a third folder 'Handouts'

Each of the 20 Lessons folders contains pdf and word formatted documents. The latter enables customisation by individual teachers

The course can be taught over 20 consecutive weeks as has been done successfully at Perth Bridge Club for several years.

It can also be structured in blocks with extra revision, or more card play lessons, inserted if teachers feel this is needed with their class, as some other clubs have chosen to do.

Emphasis on Card Play

This course focuses specifically on 'card play', with 5 dedicated lessons though in reality, card play as a theme runs throughout the 20 lessons course.



Folders L1-L20 in Dropbox for each lesson topic contain

1. A set of animated PowerPoint slides for presentation of information

The slide presentation is designed to be used with breaks. This is to allow questions, discussion and opportunities for card play to embed learning and understanding.

Note 1: that while there are many slides provided for each topic, each teacher can choose to 'hide' slides within PowerPoint, if they wish to shorten their presentation.

Note 2: Teachers can choose to upload all learning resources including PowerPoint slides, password protected for student only access, onto the club website in Bridgewebs.

2. Comprehensive Student Notes for each topic

Apart for lesson 1, these are emailed to students in advance of each lesson

3. Comprehensive Commentaries of the Prepared Play Hands

For the first 10 lessons 8 play hands are provided per lesson. This rises to 12 hands per lesson for the remaining 10 lessons.

Note 1: All hands are available in the 'Hand Deal Files' Folder in the BOS and Lin format – the latter for uploading to Bridge Base Online

4. Quiz Questions

To test understanding and to revise the lesson topic to use at leisure

5. Quiz Answers

Self-assessment allows checking of answers and learning from explanations provided

6. Flash Card Question and Answer

These when printed have question and answers back-to-back. Teachers can choose to print and cut into cards for sets to be distributed to students at the end of each lesson.

Alternatively, Flash card documents can be emailed where students can be asked to print them double sided, then cut up into cards for their own use.

7. Teacher Notes

Outlines lesson outcomes, aspects to emphasis and teaching approach.



a suggested approach to teaching & learning using these resources

At Perth Bridge Club (PBC) where the course was developed 3 hours were allocated per lesson. PowerPoint slides are presented in two 15-20 minute periods followed by some card play. A short tea/coffee break to recharge batteries takes place halfway through each lesson. This means about 2 hours is available each lesson for card play – the part students enjoy the most!

Before every lesson, other than the first, students are emailed a copy of Student Notes typically 2-3 days before attending the class.

After each Lesson

Email is used to send each student the commentary on play hands, the Quiz Qs & As as well as the flash cards.

Teachers may choose to upload PowerPoint slides, password protected for student access only, onto their club website.

Teachers may also choose to upload the Lin deal files onto Bridge Base Online (BBO) for students to replay on their own or with teacher support these days using Zoom or something similar.

Teachers may choose to insert extra revision or card play sessions through the 20 lesson structure.

That completes the basic cycle for each lesson.

Note: The Quiz Q & A can be reviewed at the start of each lesson. This takes up class time so an alternative approach is for students to self-assess with email support from teachers for clarification where necessary. A decision for individual teachers.

Students can be encouraged to set up self-help groups by making use of social media such as WhatsApp to facilitate discussion and later arrange practice play sessions on Bridge Base Online (BBO).



Explanatory Notes

Customising these Learning Resources

It is recognised that individual teachers know their students best and may wish to modify all or some of these resources to suit their particular students' needs. This can be done.

The SBU course materials on Dropbox cannot be altered.

However, individual teachers can download the entire course onto to their own computer as a copy and from here full editing and customisation is possible 😊

Why Resources are provided pdf & docx format

Resources that are emailed to students are in PDF format to prevent corruption during transmission. Each lesson folder also has copies of all material in docx format which allows editing and customisation (and then saved as pdf format for emailing to students).

Use of Crib Sheets in preference to Mini bridge

For two years PBC used Mini Bridge for the early lessons.

The club then developed Crib Sheets to enable hand evaluation and bidding from the outset. We found students understood how to assess a hand in terms of shape and HCPs more easily judging whether it was balanced (and open 1NT) or unbalanced (and open 1 of a suit). The Responder crib sheet then outlines bid options according to HCPs held.

The hands provided in the early lessons allow for very simple bidding to game or part game. These provide a good foundation and reference point to hand evaluation as the course progresses.

The PowerPoint slides for the early lessons include copies of first a simple and then more detailed crib sheets for use as opener and responder.

Amber alert: Crib sheets are used in the early stages of the course. They could easily become a crutch. After week 4 their use is discouraged.

If teachers prefer to use 'Mini Bridge' instead of the Opener and Responder Crib Sheets the 20 lessons course material is compatible with this approach as the course was originally written with the use of Mini Bridge in mind.

Standard Opening Leads

Later in the course the Recommended Opening Lead Crib Sheet is issued to students for defence in both Suit and NT contracts. The key point is to develop good play practice as early as possible.

Scoring

This course encourages scoring without reference to bidding boxes but rather working out the score from first principles. These we like students to commit to memory. Students have found this to be one of the easiest aspect of the course to learn.

