

Bridge Terms

Attitude signal	As defender, playing a high card to say 'I like this suit' or a low one to discourage or deny values in the suit.
Auction	The first stage of the game in which all four players may speak, one at a time, competing for the final contract (the bidding).
Balanced hand	One with a relatively equal number of cards in each suit. No void or singleton, not more than one doubleton.
Bid	A call made during the auction in a suit or in no trumps.
Biddable suit	A suit with four or more cards in it.
Bidding box	A way of making bids without actually speaking.
Blackwood	An artificial bid of 4NT asking partner how many aces he holds.
Board	The container which holds a deal. Boards come in numbered sets and show who is dealer and vulnerable. For instance on board 1, North deals at Love All.
Bonus	Extra points for making a contract, like 50 for a part score.
Buy	In a competitive auction, the side playing the hand is said to buy the contract
Call	A bid, a pass, a double, is double made when it's your turn to speak.
Cash	To play a winning card or cards. Cash out is to take all your winning cards.
Chicago	A social form of bridge for four players, scoring very like duplicate. Each rubber consists of four deals with pre-determined vulnerability (see topic 1.9).
Claim	When the play is clear-cut, declarer shows his hand, claiming the tricks.
Clear a suit	To force out the high card held by the opponents and set up winners.
Competitive bidding	An auction in which both side stake part.
Contract	The final bid in the auction which determines the denomination (suit or no trumps) and the number of tricks to be won by declarer.
Convention	An artificial bid with an agreed meaning, e.g. an opening 2♣= big hand.
Count signal	Play by defender of a higher then lower ranking card to show an even number of cards (called a peter), or low then high to show an odd number of cards.
Covering honours	When an honour is led and the next player plays a higher honour, this is said to be 'covering an honour with an honour'.

Cross-ruff	Sequence of tricks in which a player and his partner score trumps separately by alternately ruffing side suits.
Deal	Fifty-two cards distributed so each player has thirteen cards.
Dealer	The player who makes the first call on a deal.
Declarer	The player on the side winning the contract who first bid the suit or no trumps and who thus has the right to play both his hand and dummy.
Defeat the contract	To win, in defiance, enough tricks so that declarer fails to make the contract. The score is 50 points for each non-vulnerable under trick and 100 if vulnerable.
Defence	The line of play adopted by the defenders.
Defenders	The two players in opposition to declarer. Often referred to as RHO (right-hand opponent) and LHO (left-hand opponent).
Defensive bidding	Bidding by the non-opening side.
Denomination	Clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades or no trump.
Discarding	When unable to play a card in the suit lead, playing another suit, preferably throwing a card that gives helpful information to partner.
Double	Originally, a bid to extract a larger penalty. But at low levels a request for partner to bid – a take-out double.
Double dummy	A play which could not be bettered even if declarer could see all four hands.
Doubleton	A holding of two cards in a suit, shown by either leading the higher or playing the higher one before the lower.
Drawing trumps	Continuing to lead trumps until opponents have none left, involves counting the cards played to make sure all opposition trumps have been drawn.
Ducking (hold-up)	Deliberately withholding a high card which could have won a trick.
Dummy	Declarer's partner whose hand is tabled after the opening lead.
Duplicate bridge	Where the score is determined by comparison with other scores on the same deal.
Duplication	Duplication of distribution is when both players in a partnership have the same length in each suit. Duplication of values is when strong holdings in one hand are facing strong values in the same suit in partner's hand, like AQ opposite KJ.
Eight-card fit	A combined holding of eight cards in a suit between the two partnership hands.
English Bridge Union	The governing body for the game of duplicate bridge in England.
Entry	A card that enables access to a particular hand.
Establishing	Setting up a specific card or cards as winners by forcing out high

	cards.
Etiquette and Ethics	Good manners and good behaviour at the bridge table,
Exit	Get off lead by playing a card you expect to be won by the other side – trying to do so without giving away trick.
Finesse	A technique of card play to try and win a trick with a card, when opponents hold a higher card in the same suit.
Fit	A fit is holding adequate supporting cards in a suit bid by partner.
Flat board	In duplicate, a hand where the same result was scored by all contestants. In teams both sides recorded the same score.
Flat hand	A balanced hand, particularly 4 33 3 pattern.
Following suit	Playing a card in the same suit.
Forcing bid	A bid which tells partner to bid again.
Forcing to game	Or Game forcing, is demanding that the partnership does not stop short of game.
Fourth highest	Lead in a suit of the fourth card from the top, e.g. K J 9 6 4 lead the 6.
Free bid	A bid made in a situation where there is no obligation to speak.
Game	Contract whose trick score is 100points or more, e.g. 3NT, 4♥,4♠,5♣,5♦.
Get a count	Discover the distribution of the unseen hands
Give count	Make a distributional signal.
Go down	Or Go Off. Make fewer tricks than you said you would.
Grand slam	A contract to make all thirteen tricks.
High card points	Values given to high cards to help decide what to bid (ace=4, king=3, queen=2, jack=1). There are 40 high card points (HCP) in the pack.
Honours	The five highest cards in a suit (ace, king, queen, jack, ten).
Intermediates	Middle-size cards like tens, nines and eights that might win tricks.
Intervention	A bid made after the opponents have opened the bidding, an overcall.
Invitational bid	Invites partner to continue bidding with a bit extra.
Jump bid	A bid at a higher level than required to name the denomination of the bid.
Jump overcall	A single jump bid made as an overcall.
Jump shift	A bid in a new suit higher than necessary to beat the previous bid.
Kibitzer	An onlooker at the card table, from the Yiddish for a kiebitz bird.
Laws	The <i>Laws of Duplicate Bridge</i> , 1997 version, describes the game you are playing.

Lay down	A contract that is so certain that declarer can claim at trick one
Lead	The first card played to a trick.
Limit bid	A bid that limits the strength and distribution of the hand within precise bounds.
Long suit	A suit of four or more cards in the same hand.
Major suits	Spades and Hearts whose tricks score 30 points each.
Match-point scoring	The way the results are usually determined in a pair's competition.
Mini Bridge	A bridge-like game, where the contract is chosen by the side with the most HCP.
Minor suits	Diamonds and Clubs whose tricks score 20 points each.
Non-forcing	A bid which does not require a response from partner.
No trumps	A contract played without trumps (the highest card in the suit led wins the trick).
Opening bid	The first call in the auction other than 'Pass'. Made by the 'Opener'.
Opening lead	The card led to the first trick before dummy is seen.
Overbid	A call for which the bidder has insufficient values.
Overcall	Bid made by the opponents after the bidding has been opened.
Overtrick	A trick made by declarer above the number required for the contract.
Pair	The partnership of two bridge players.
Part score	A contract below the level of game, the trick value is less than 100.
Pass	Or 'No bid' indicates the caller has nothing worth saying at this stage.
Pass out	All four players pass without anybody bidding, or three passes after a bid.
Passive lead	A lead which tries not to giveaway a trick to declarer.
Penalty	Points scored by defenders when declarer fails to make a contract.
Play	The part of the deal after the bidding, where declarer tries to make the contract.
Pre-emptive bid	Obstructive bid, made at a high level, usually a weak hand with a very long suit.
Protection	Re-opening the bidding in the pass out seat, because it is clear partner must have some values, e.g. after 1♠ pass pass.
Quit a trick	To complete the trick by turning over the cards after all players have played to it.
Raise	A responding bid in a denomination bid by partner.
Rebid	The second or subsequent bid made by a player. To rebid a suit

Redouble	already bid, promises extra length, five or more cards. An expression of confidence that a contract would make despite being doubled for penalties. Redouble increases the stakes. Sometimes used conventionally.
Responder	The partner of the player who started the partnership's bidding.
Reverse	The rebid in a new suit, after a one-level opening, higher than two of the first suit bid. Shows extra strength and distribution.