O M A R SHARIF'S™

-BRIDGE-

Omar Sharif's Bridge

Introduction

Welcome to Omar Sharif's Bridge. For those of you who have experienced the game of bridge, you will find that you have in your hands one of the smartest and easiest-to-use bridge programs in the world. For those of you new to the game, you will find an excellent tutorial on the disc as well as some rules and tips on playing and bidding within this manual. It is suggested that novice bridge players refer to these sections of the manual before attempting to play.

Brief history of Bridge

The game of bridge derives from a series of card games played in England at the time of Shakespeare. The first game to strongly resemble contract bridge was the game of whist, developed in the eighteenth century. Edmond Hoyle, who is commonly associated with most of the card games played today, set down the rules for whist. Whist is much like bridge but without the bidding aspect. The game of bridge first came into being in the late nineteenth century, but still did not have all the rules for bidding and for counting points towards games and such. The actual game of Contract Bridge as we know it today was invented by Harold S. Vanderbilt in 1925. Since then it has grown in popularity to become one of the most commonly played card games in the world.

Bridge is an ideal game for the entertainment of guests, especially when couples get together, because it is a partnership game and partners do not have to play against each other. Indeed the greater the intuitive understanding and communication between partners the better their play will be.

A fascinating feature of Bridge is that it's ease-of-play makes it the ideal game for the casual player who does not want to take any game too seriously whilst the games strategic depth and intricacies are ideal for the scientific player who wishes to study and master the game.

For those who wish to learn the game well, there are hundreds of books, and thousands of professional teachers who give lessons in

Bridge; but the best and quickest way to learn is to play in actual, or computer simulated, Bridge games as often as possible.

Bidding Systems

Uniquely in the world of computer bridge, Omar Sharif's Bridge is distributed with the two main bidding systems used in the world today, **Five Card Majors** and **ACOL**. You have the option to select whichever bidding system you would normally use. In general the ACOL system is used in Northern Europe and Australasia, while Five Card Majors is used in Southern Europe and the USA.

Loading and installation instructions

IBM PC's and Compatibles running MS-DOS

Omar Sharif's Bridge requires an IBM PC or compatible with 640K of RAM, a CGA, EGA or VGA graphics adaptor and DOS 3.0 or greater. The use of a Microsoft-compatible mouse is optional but recommended. Soundblaster, Soundblaster Pro, AdLib, Pro Audio Spectrum and Roland LAPC-1/MT-32 sound cards are currently supported.

Installation
Omar Sharif's Bridge **must** first be installed either to hard disc (recommended) or to floppies. To install on floppies you will need either two blank formatted 3.5 inch 720K floppies or three blank formatted 5.25 inch 360K floppies.
To install, insert the Startup disc into drive A, log on to drive A and type INSTALL <enter>. Then follow the on-screen instructions.

Loading
When finished installing, ensure you are logged onto the relevant drive and directory and type BRIDGE to run the program. Features specific to the PC version are shown with this icon:
PC:

Commodore Amiga
Omar Sharif's Bridge requires a Commodore Amiga with at least 512K of RAM and a mouse.

Installation

Installation to hard disc is optional but recommended. It requires at least 1.5M of hard disc space.

Firstly boot your machine from hard disc in the usual way, then insert the Startup disc in drive DF0:.

With Workbench running, double-click on the Install icon on the Startup disc and wait for installation. Follow the on-screen instructions. If you are in a CLI or Shell, type:

```
cd df0:
install
```

Loading

To load, switch on your machine and insert the Startup disc at the workbench prompt. It will then load.

The installed version may be run from Workbench by double-clicking on the Bridge icon, or, from the CLI, by typing

```
cd sys:omar
bridge
```

Features specific to the Amiga version are shown with this icon:
✓AMIGA

Atari ST

Installation

Installation to hard disc is optional. It requires at least 1.5M of hard disc space.
Double-click on INSTALL.PRG on the Startup disc. Wait for installation and follow the on-screen instructions.

Loading

Omar Sharif's Bridge requires an Atari ST, STE or TT with at least 512K of RAM and a mouse. From the Desktop, double-click on BRIDGE.PRG. The program requires either medium- or high-resolution mode to run. Features specific to the Atari version are shown with this icon: /I\ATARI

Main Menu

On the main title screen, a window will appear with the main game options. Before beginning to play, you must determine the 'Type of Deal' and the 'Players'.

Type of Deal

This can be set to 'randomly generated', 'manually entered' or 'loaded from disk'.
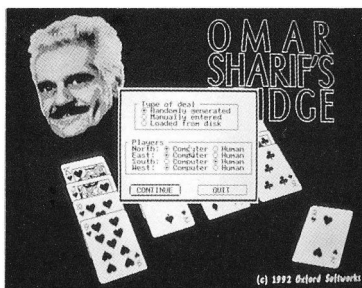
Randomly generated deals will distribute the cards to the players randomly, as if from a shuffled card deck.

Manually entered deals will require the user to assign cards to the players before each hand is played. The use of *manually entered* hands when testing and practising game strategies is recommended.

Loaded from disk will prompt you for which hand you wish to load. This can be any previously saved hand or alternatively one of the special hands, such as the Tutorial hands, provided in the HANDS directory.

Players

You must set up who will be in control of each of the four seatings for bridge: North, East, South and West. Each can be played by the computer or by a human player.

When all choices have been made and are acceptable, click on the *<Continue>* button at the bottom of the window. If you want to leave Omar Sharif's Bridge you can click on the *<Quit>* button.

A Note about the Graphical User Interface

Mouse

For most options, you can simply point to the option you wish to select with the arrow cursor and click with the left mouse button.

To play a card, for example, point to the card you wish to play and click using the left mouse button.

Keyboard ⌷PC⌷ only

You can move the arrow cursor around from the keyboard by use of the arrow keys or use the arrow keys on the numeric keypad for faster movement of the arrow cursor. When the arrow cursor is pointing at the option you wish to select, simply press the *<insert>* key. When playing cards, you can point to them with the arrow cursor and press *<insert>*.

In general, the *<insert>* key is the equivalent of the left mouse button and the *<delete>* key is the equivalent of the right mouse button. The *<enter>* key is used to accept highlighted menu options

Keyboard - All formats

As an alternative to using the mouse, cards may be entered via the keyboard using the following abbreviations: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, T, J, Q, K or A for the card value followed by

> S for Spades,
> H for Hearts,
> D for Diamonds,
> C for Clubs.

For example, if you wanted to play the ten of clubs you would type in "TC".

Additionally when bidding, 1 and N for No Trumps are also available.

Manually Entered Hands
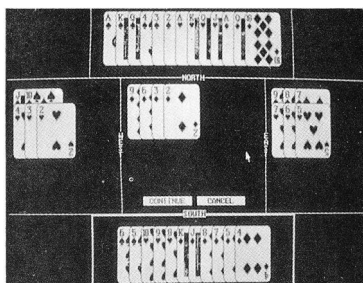
To manually distribute cards, select *"Manually entered"* from the **Main Menu**. This will bring up a empty table with all thirteen spades showing. Click in the area of the side you wish to distribute to first. For example, if you wish to give the Ten of Spades to East,

click in East's area (in the centre to the right) and then click on the Ten of Spades. When you click on an area, note that a thicker outline surrounds it. Whenever you click on any cards, they will go to the outlined area. The computer will not allow you to give more than thirteen cards to any one player.

Pull-down Menus

PC: **Mouse users**

To call up the pull down menus, move the cursor to the very top of the screen and click the right mouse button. The menu bar will appear at the top of the screen. Move the arrow cursor across the screen to the menu you wish to pull down. Move the arrow up and down through the menu until the option you wish to select is highlighted. Then click either mouse button to select the option. To exit the menu bar without selecting, move the arrow cursor outside of the menus and click using either mouse button.

PC: **Keyboard users**

To use the menus from the keyboard you must call up the menu bar by pressing the *<F1>* key. The cursor keys can then be used to move through the highlighted options, pressing *<enter>* will select the currently highlighted option. The *<ESC>* key exits the menu, without selecting any of the options.

PC: **Keyboard and mouse users**

Certain menu options can be accessed quickly by '*hot keys*'. These are accessed by pressing the ALT key in conjunction with another key. The options that have '*hot keys*' available are shown below.

/I\ ATARI

The normal GEM menu bar is made visible by clicking the right mouse button at the top of the screen.

✓AMIGA

Normal Intuition menus are available via the right-hand mouse button.
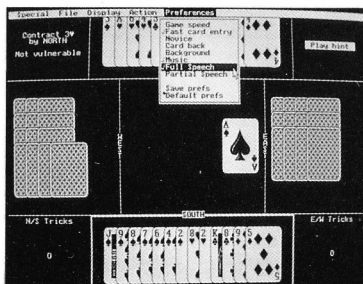
Special
About
This will call up a credits window for Omar Sharif's Bridge.

File
Save Hand
Selecting this option will call up a window asking you to give a name for your saved hand. You can save it to any directory by clicking on the name of the directory. Your hand will automatically be saved with the extension of .HAN. When finished giving your hand a name, press *<enter>* or click on the *<CANCEL>* button to exit the window without saving your hand.

Load Hand
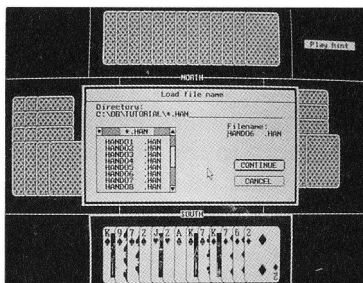
This option lets you load a hand that has previously been saved. You are allowed to set the full path of where the hand is located. Note that a **GAMES** directory and **TUTORIAL** directory have been added to your **OMAR** directory. If you click on these directories you will find hands already saved. The **GAMES** directory contains the following hands for you to practice:

NOTRUMP - A game where South should bid No Trump.
HGAME - A game where South should bid and make a contract of 4 Hearts.
CGAME - A game where South should bid and make a contract of 5 Clubs.
SLAM1 - A game where South should bid and make a slam.
SLAM2 - Same as above
GSLAM1 - A game where South should bid and make a grand slam.
GSLAM2 - Same as above
STAYMAN - A game where the Stayman convention is used in the bidding.

The tutorial directory also contains hands with the extension of .HAN. These are used to help teach the fundamentals of the game of bridge. Refer to the **Tutorial** section of this manual for an explanation of how these tutorial hands work.

Print (ALT-P)

This utility allows you to print your hand to the printer or to a text file. You can select to print any combination of: *Show hand, Bidding, Playing* or *Scoring*.

When ready you must then choose whether you wish to print to the printer port or to a text file. If you select a text file, you must first give it a name. When ready select *Print* or *Cancel* to exit without printing.

Erase Hand

This will call up the window showing the hands in the current directory. If you wish, move to the directory containing the hand you wish to erase and click on it or type in its name. Select *Continue* when ready.

Quit program (ALT-Q)

This will allow you to exit the program.

Display

Show North (ALT-N)

This will reveal all the cards that North has in his hand. If North's cards are already revealed, then this option will read *'Hide North'* and will turn over North's Cards so that they remain unseen.

Show East (ALT-E)

Reveals or hides all of East's cards.

Show South (ALT-S)

Reveals or hides all of South's cards.

Show West (ALT-W)

Reveals or hides all of West's cards.

Hide All
Hides all the cards in the game.

Show All
Reveals all the cards from all the hands.

Review Bidding
Brings up the initial bidding screen that shows how the bidding proceedings went.

Display Score
Shows the current score in the Rubber Match with Above and Below the line scores.

Explain Score
Explains the scoring from the last hand played. Gives explanations for points scored both *Above* and *Below the line.*

Action

Claim tricks
If you feel that you are able to take the rest of the tricks, select this option and the computer will either accept your claim or deny it. Note that the computer can also try to claim the remaining tricks.

Concede tricks
If you feel the situation is hopeless and that you are unlikely to win any more tricks, you can select this option and concede all remaining tricks to your opponent.

Hint (ALT-H)
This will reveal which card or bid the computer expects you to play. You can either ignore the suggestion or bid or play the card.

Forwards (ALT-F)
Following a *Take Back*, you can use this option to step through the tricks taken or bids made one by one.

To Last Play
This option is also used following a *Take Back* or series of *Take Backs* to quickly advance you through all *Take Backs* to the point where you started.

Take Back (ALT-B)

This will allow you to *Take Back* either bids or plays all the way back to the beginning of the bidding or playing.

Abort Hand

Allows you to exit the current game and continue on to the *Next Hand* or return to the *Main Menu*.

Switch Players

This option allows you to switch which players are controlled by humans and which are controlled by the computer at any time during play. Therefore, if you like the computer's hand better than your own, you can switch sides and play the hand from its perspective.

Preferences

Preferences are chosen by the user during the game and can be saved to disc using the *Save Preferences* option. Once preferences are saved, they will be loaded every time the game is loaded. A check mark against an item in this menu indicates that it is selected.

Game Speed

This option allows you to speed up or slow down the computer's thinking time. Select the speed from 1 to 100% of normal.

Fast Card Entry

When selected, you can play cards from the keyboard at a much faster rate. If you have only one card of its type (either rank or suit), that card will be automatically played.

Novice

If selected and you make an illegal play, the computer will explain why it was illegal.

Card Back

Select from one of the many types of card backs displayed.

Background

Click on the colour bars until a background colour satisfactory to you is reached.

Music (subject to suitable hardware being available)
This will enable or disable the music that accompanies the program.

Full Speech (subject to suitable hardware being available)
This will enable or disable all the speech that accompanies the program.

Partial Speech (subject to suitable hardware being available)
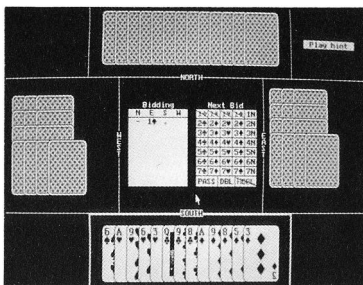This will enable or disable some of the speech that accompanies the program.

Save Prefs
Save the current preference settings to disc.

Default Prefs
Returns all preference setting to their standard values.

Bidding and Playing

Once all options have been selected and you are ready to play, the dealer is selected and begins bidding. You will see a bidding chart in the centre of the screen. As a bid is made, lower (and therefore illegal) bids are crossed off. For example, if East bids 1 Heart, then 1 Club and 1 Diamond are crossed off (*See How To Play Bridge*). To make a bid, move the arrow cursor to the square on the chart containing the bid you wish to make and click on the left mouse button (or, if playing from the keyboard, you may press the number followed by the suit). Once the contract has been established, the game moves on to the playing. If nobody bids, the hand passes out and a new hand is dealt.

If your partner is being played by the computer, and your

partner makes the contract, then you will be asked '*Should dummy play?*'. If your reply is '*Yes*' to this, then you will be in control of dummy's hand as well as your own, else the computer will play from both hands.

Play begins with the player to the left of the declarer. Each player follows in turn playing cards from his hand. You can tell whose turn it is to play by looking for the thicker outline surrounding one of the areas. If an illegal card is played, the computer will stop you. Pressing <*SPACE*> will play the lowest card in the suit that was led. The *Play Hint* button in the upper right section of the screen can be used to quickly play the card that the computer recommends. After a trick has been won or lost, the cards will remain in the centre of the screen for a while or until you click in the centre with the mouse (or press any key). When the hand is finished, then the score will appear in the centre of the screen. You are then asked if you would like to continue to the *Next Hand* or return to the *Main Menu*. If you return to the *Main Menu*, the current game scores (if any) will be lost.

Tutorial Hands

The tutorial hands included in the program are to help novice players to learn the game of bridge. Coupled with the documentation of how to play bridge, these tutorial hands should present the novice bridge player with an easy-to-use learning guide to the world of Contract Bridge.

The hands are designed to be played in order (from 1 to 10). Therefore the help is much more extensive on the earlier hands and the techniques easier to follow.

Hand 7 is a good demonstration of how proper bidding can sometimes cause you to miss a slam. Sometimes taking a risk is worthwhile (as it would have been for this hand).

Hand 8 shows the importance of communication during bidding. North and South have perfect hands for cross-ruffing.

Hand 9 is a good example of how pre-emptive bidding without enough points can sometimes win games.

To select one of these hands, select *Load Hand* from the **File**

menu and move into the *Tutorial* directory by clicking on it in the window. Select one of the ten hands listed for practice by clicking on it.

The game will then progress to the bidding stage as per normal with one major exception: you will no longer be free to input whatever bid you like. If you do not respond the way the tutorial wants you to, you will be asked to try again. If, after three tries, you are unable to select the correct choice, you will be shown the correct bid with an explanation of why it is the best choice.

When playing, you are also given three chances to select the best play and, if you fail, the best one will be selected. Please note that, in some hands, a player knows he will lose or win all the remaining tricks, so it really makes no difference as to the order of play. If the tutorial recommends another card at these points, ignore it.

Following along with Tutorial Hand Number 1

Select *HAND01.HAN* from the *Tutorial* directory. The hand displayed will be as follows:

	West	North	East	South
Spades	K,9,7,3,2	8,6	Q,J,4	A,T,5
Hearts	Q,T,4	7,5,2	A,J,8,3	K,9,6
Diamonds	J,3,2	A,T,8,4	9,7	K,Q,6,5
Clubs	T,8	A,7,4,3	J,9,6,2	K,Q,5

South is the dealer and needs to make the first bid. The correct bid at this point is *1 No Trump*. If you select any other bid, the computer will prompt you to try again. Bidding will proceed in this fashion until the contract of *3 No Trumps* is established. At this point, play will begin. Since South is Declarer, West begins play. When it is North's turn to play, you must select a card from his hand since North is the dummy and. Again you will have three chances to select the proper card. Play will proceed in this fashion until the contract has been made.

How to Play Bridge

There are countless books that teach the game of bridge. In fact, some people devote their entire lives to researching the game and

its endless possibilities. What follows here is a description of the game of bridge so that those who have never played bridge before will learn the fundamentals of the game. Please note that this is not a comprehensive guide to all the facets of the game.

The Deck
A deck of fifty two cards is shuffled and dealt around the table to the four positions which the game of bridge labels North, South, East and West. The game is played by partners who sit across the table from each other. Therefore North and South are partners playing against East and West. Each player will hold thirteen cards in his hand when the entire deck has been dealt. The deal for each hand rotates clockwise around the table.

There are two phases to the game of bridge: the bidding and the playing. The game begins with the bidding and progresses into the playing. Since an understanding of the playing is fundamental to the bidding I shall begin with that:

Playing

A 'hand' of bridge consists of thirteen rounds. During each round, each player will play one card, and one card only, from his hand. One player starts (or leads) by playing a card from his hand. Play continues in a clockwise direction until each player has played one card.

The goal of each round is to play the highest card in the suit that the first player leads. For example, if East leads the 4 of Clubs, then South would play a club to follow suit, West would play a high club to try and win the trick, and North would lastly play another club, a high club if he could win the trick, else he would discard a low club. Note that the Ace is the highest card in each suit.

There are certain rules which accompany this process:

1. All players must follow in the same suit as the one that is played first. For example if East leads the 5 of Diamonds, everyone else **must** play a diamond.

2. If the player is unable to follow in the same suit because he has no more cards in that suit then he must play from another suit, which will always lose, no matter what the card is. (**Exception**:

See Trumps).

Tricks

The four cards played during a round are collectively called a *'trick'*. Therefore, the goal is to collect the most tricks (or, more exactly, to collect the number of tricks bid for, but see 'bidding').

The partners North/South collect tricks won by either North or South, and the partners East/West collect tricks won by either East or West. Partners keep their tricks together. After a trick is won, the player who played the winning card leads for the next round. A hand is completed when all thirteen tricks have been played. The score in tricks may be something like: North/South - 5, East/West - 8.

Trumps

When playing, one of the suits may be declared the *'trump'* suit. (This happens during bidding which will be explained next). A card from a trump suit outranks a card from any other suit. Of course, cards still hold their own ranks within the trump suit. Trumps may be played only:
1. When a player leads them (as per normal).
2. When a player is out of cards from a suit that is lead. For example, say Spades are the trump suit. East leads with the Ace of Hearts, South follows with the 2 of Hearts and West follows with the 5 of Hearts. North would normally have to play a heart (and since the Ace has been played, would lose), but if North were out of hearts, then he could play the 2 of Spades and win the trick.

Bidding

A hand of bridge actually begins with the bidding. During bidding, players are bidding for the suit they wish to be trump suit. Obviously, a player with many, preferably high, cards in a given suit will be at an advantage if that suit is declared the trump suit. In practice, partners will be looking for a suit for which they, together, hold most of the cards. The dealer always starts the bidding.

A bid consists of a number from one to seven followed by the suit you want to be trumps. A *'book'* is six tricks. When you bid the

number, you are proposing that you can make that number of tricks above your book. In other words, if you bid 1 Club, that means you think you can make seven tricks with clubs being the trump suit.

The highest number biddable is seven, meaning you propose to make all thirteen tricks. This is called a *'Grand Slam'*. A *'Small Slam'* is regarded as a bid of 6 in any suit.

You are allowed to bid for any suit to be trump as well as 'No Trump'. No Trump means exactly that, no suit will be trump for that hand. Each suit has a rank as follows from lowest to highest:

Clubs
Diamonds
Hearts
Spades
No Trumps

During your turn you may Pass (which means you don't want to bid) or increase the standing bid. You can increase the bid by raising the number or moving to a higher ranking suit or both. You may not decrease the number or suit ranking.

Bidding proceeds in a clockwise fashion around the table until three consecutive players pass. At that point the last bid becomes the *'contract'* and the partner who first bid the contract suit becomes *'declarer'*. Play begins with the player to the left of the declarer.

If the team makes more tricks than their contract, the extra tricks won are said to be *'overtricks'*. If a contract fails it is penalised by the number of tricks it went down by (*undertricks*).

Dummy

The declarer's partner is called the *'dummy'* hand. When it is dummy's turn to play, all dummy's cards are turned face up and the declarer plays a card from dummy's hand. Declarer continues to play for his partner (dummy) whenever it is the dummy's turn, until the hand is complete.

Doubling

A player may double his opponent's contract during his turn to bid. If the contract stands then the opponents will receive double the points should they make the contract or suffer double the penalty if they fail (see scoring).

Redoubling

A player from the partnership that has been doubled may redouble when it is his turn to bid.

Scoring

The goal of bridge is to have amassed the most points at the end of a *'rubber'*. A rubber is completed when one team has won two out of three *'games'*. A game is won by scoring 100 points *'below the line'*.
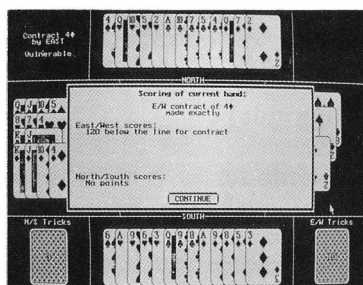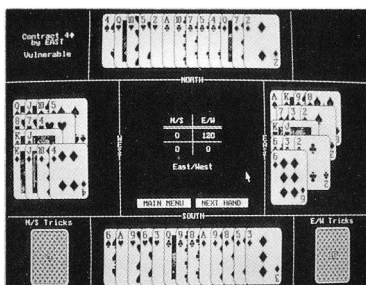
Below the line points can be scored only by completing a contract. Scores are as follows for below the line:

Clubs, Diamonds	20 points per level of contract
Hearts, Spades	30 points per level of contract
No Trumps	40 points for first trick, 30 points thereafter

The following example contracts would amass enough points for game:

5 Clubs	100 points below the line
4 Hearts	120 points below the line
3 No Trumps	100 points below the line
7 Spades	210 points below the line

Any contract which will not win a game by itself (i.e.. total less

than **100** points) is called a *'partial'*. For example 3 Spades would be a partial contract worth only 90 points. A further partial contract would then amass enough points for game. Note that you only score below the line for the actual contract. Overtricks are scored *'above the line'* (see below).

When a game has been won, all scores from both sides below the line go *'above the line'* and a new hand is dealt with both side's scores below the line reset to zero.

When a game has been won the winning side is said to be *'vulnerable'*. The penalties (see below) assessed to a vulnerable side are doubled.

'Above the line' points are also awarded as follows:

20 points for each club or diamond overtrick.

30 points for each heart, club or no trump overtrick.
Overtricks when doubled are worth 100 points (or 200 if vulnerable)

50 points for each of the opponent's undertricks. For example if **North/South** bid 4 Hearts and only made 7 tricks, then East/West would score **150** points above the line (50 points for each of the 3 tricks that the contract failed by).
This penalty can be doubled if North/South are vulnerable and doubled or redoubled from the bidding. Therefore a redoubled and vulnerable contract failing by just one trick will cost 400 points above the line.

50 points above the line for winning a doubled or redoubled contract.

150 points for having the five highest cards in the trump suit in one hand. This is called *'honours'*.

150 points for *'honours'* for having all four aces in a no trump contract.

100 points for honours if four high cards in the trump suit are held in one hand.

500 points for bidding and making a small slam when not vulnerable, and 750 points when vulnerable.

1000 points for bidding and making a grand slam when not vulnerable and 1500 points when vulnerable.

500 points when winning a rubber in three games.

700 points when winning a rubber in only two games.

When a rubber has been completed, all scores are added up and the side with the most points wins. Note that it is possible to win the rubber but lose the match.

Bidding Conventions

The most popular way to determine what to bid is to calculate your Points Total. The card ranks are worth points as follows:

Ace = 4 pts.
King = 3 pts.
Queen = 2 pts.
Jack = 1 pt.
Void = 2 pts.   (no cards in a particular suit)
Singleton = 1 pt.   (only one card in a suit)
Therefore if you hold one Ace, one Queen and three Jacks and are void in Clubs, your point total is 11 (4+2+1+1+1+2=11).

In general, you should not open the bidding unless you hold at least thirteen points. If you hold thirteen or more points, you should bid at least one of a suit. If you don't bid, there is a chance that the hand might pass out and you will have lost the chance to establish a contract.

If you hold thirteen or more points, you should bid the suit that has the most cards. If two suits have the same number of cards then bid the suit with the higher cards. An exception to this, when playing the Five Card Major system, is that you should generally not open with the Major suits (Hearts and Spades) unless you hold at least five cards in them. The idea here is to let your partner respond with his strength before forcing the contract too high.

If your hand contains 16 to 18 points, it is considered best to open with a bid of 1 No Trump. Higher point totals have special openings as well, since there is a greater chance of establishing a game contract or even a slam.

Responses to Bids of One in a Suit

Pass with less than 6 points.

Raise by one in the same suit with 7 to 10 points and some support in the partner's suit (four cards or a high card).

Raise by two in the same suit with at least four cards in the partner's suit and about 13 to 16 points.

Bid 1NT with 6 to 9 points and a balanced hand.

Bid 2NT with 13 to 15 points and a balanced hand.

Bid 3NT with 16 to 18 points and a balanced hand.

Bid a new suit at level One with 5 to 17 points and a wide range.

Bid a new suit at level Two with 9 to 17 points and a wide range.

Responding to 1 No Trump

Pass with less than 7 points.

Two of a suit with less than 7 points, but one suit that has many cards (a *'long'* suit).

Three of a suit with about 8 points and a five-or-more card suit.

2NT with 7 to 8 points and a balanced hand.

3NT with more than 9 points.

Stayman Convention

Following a bid of 1 No Trump, a response of 2 Clubs is the way to ask your partner if he has four cards in a Major suit (Spades or Hearts). If he does, he will bid two of that suit, otherwise he will respond with 2 Diamonds.

Blackwood Convention

This convention is used when going for a slam to determine how many Aces your partner holds. A bid of 4 No Trump is the Blackwood Convention. The response to this bid should be as follows:

5 Clubs with no Aces or four Aces
5 Diamonds with one Ace
5 Hearts with two Aces
5 Spades with three Aces

There are many more bidding conventions, especially for higher level bidding. Please note that the above rules are by no means exhaustive. The computer uses many complex bidding strategies, and it may deviate from the rules given above in certain situations. It is this complexity of communication in the bidding phase of bridge that gives the game its depth and intuitive qualities.

Many good books are available that you can refer to if you are interested in all levels and aspects of bidding.

Strategic Playing

You should keep track of which cards remain in each suit (especially the trump suit) so that you know which cards will be winners. The following are popular techniques used during play to help you make your contract:

The Finesse

A finesse takes place when you try to make a lower card a winner by playing *'through'* a higher card. For example: West holds the King of Spades and North holds the Ace and Queen of Spades and South leads a low Spade. Now if West plays his King, North can win with the Ace, while if West plays a low Spade then North can win with the Queen. This is said to finesse the King.

Ruffing

Ruffing takes place when you are void in a suit, and partner leads that suit so that you can trump it. This works very nicely if both

you and partner are void in different suits and have many trumps so that you can '*cross-ruff*'.

Ducking

Ducking is the process in which you purposely lose a trick or play a low card so that the lead will be passed or regained.

Drawing Trumps

You can lead trumps to draw out your opponents' trumps so that your remaining trumps are all good and so that high cards in other suits cannot be trumped by your opponents.

These are just a few of the many strategies involved in playing the game of bridge. Again, many good books are available for those wishing to hone their skills.

Technical Note

Omar Sharif's Bridge relies on a massive 'rule-base' to select its bids and plays. The rule base used in the program is the result of eight man-years of development and is believed to be the largest and most comprehensive yet created.

In certain circumstances during play Omar Sharif's Bridge is able to predict the distribution of cards contained in the hands and carries out an exhaustive search of all possible combinations before playing its best card.

Unlike many other bridge programs, Omar Sharif's Bridge does not cheat! The program bids and plays each hand using intelligence similar to a human player and without the knowledge of the whereabouts of the cards distributed in the other hands.
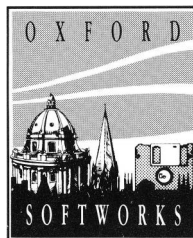
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In the unlikely event that your master disc fails to load please return **the disc only** with a clear description of the problem to:
Oxford Softworks, Stonefield House, 198 The Hill, Burford, Oxfordshire OX8 4HX, England.

Credits

Bridge Engine	Oxford Softworks
Programming	Chris Emsen
Music	Charles Deenan
Speech	Omar Sharif
Manual Design	Andy Pennell, Vince DeNardo and Sasha
Testing	Interplay Productions
Producers	Chris Whittington and Tom R. Decker

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