

Bridge Base Online: User Guide

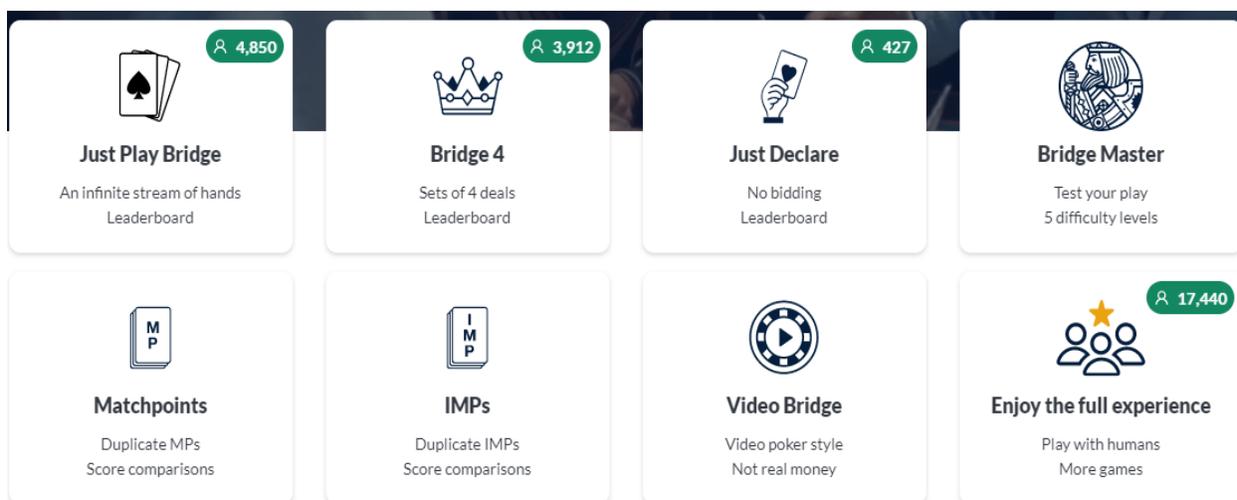
Etobicoke BC

Last revised: Aug 4, 2020

by OVohya

Bridge Base Online (BBO; bridgebase.com) is the top online site in many ways. Play against robots or other humans. If you prefer to play robots instead of humans, you can do so without creating a login. I recommend that you start with robot play, as it allows you to familiarize yourself with this site in a more relaxing way. Here are the excellent options for anonymous/vs robots play on the first screen

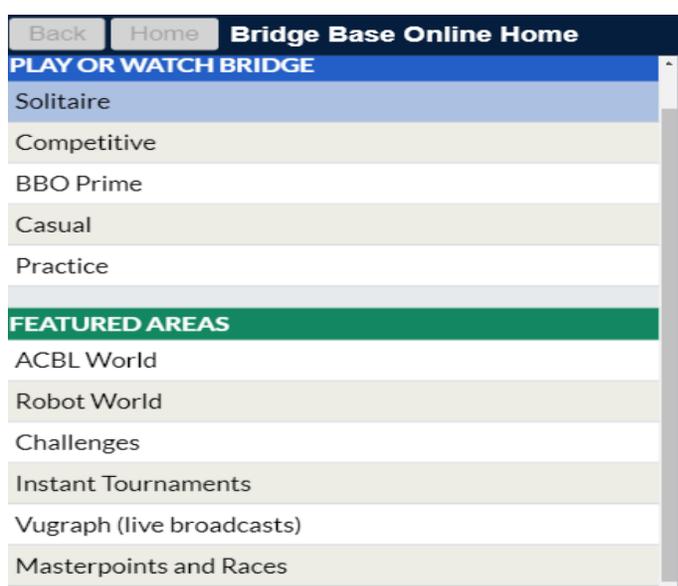
- Generally on this site....
 - To see a review of the bidding, click the contract (ie 4S N). To get rid of it, click on the bidding or on the Contract.
 - To see what a bid means, sometimes you can click on the bid
 - Setting options: Y/N bar is gray = N, Orange = Y
- Options on First Screen



- **Just Play Bridge:** with computers, bidding and play. Display bidding by clicking contract. You can also click on a bid to see its meaning.
- **Bridge4:** Bid and play 4 hands. See what bids mean as you bid (hover over bid). Get the best hand at the table. Get a rank, but not sure out of what? Hands disappear quickly after done and good luck making the leaderboard
- **Just Declare:** as above except computer bids & shows bids.

- Check out **Master Play**. This is a great option; Someone has done a ton of work creating over 400 hands at different levels of difficulty and containing solutions
 - The hands are much harder than you might expect. Any non-Life Masters should definitely start in section Beginner, Part A (Only A-1 and A-2 simple, start at A-3). I had my hands full in the Intermediate section
 - Neat algorithm – if you misplay the hand, computer re-positions any cards to ensure you go down. For example, if you take a two-way finesse instead of a better play, your finesse will lose, ouch.
 - The bidding is done for you.
 - If you need help, click “Show Solution” and the computer will walk you through the correct line of play
 - Replay hands that you get wrong, earn yourself a check mark
- **Matchpoints**: Bid w computers and play. At the end, you get a matchpoint percentage and you can see other contracts/results from other players. This one does show what bids mean, nice.

If you wish to **compete** w humans (your partners or anonymous people) or robots, set up an account. Consider a BBO name/handle that will help others see/find you, making up a weird handle will make life harder for you. Your first time, you will have to “Become a Member”, at no charge. After that you login.



Solitaire

- Offers several options to play on your own vs robots. Some of these are the same programs as those you can access on the first (pre-login) page

Instant Tournaments:

- You will be dealt 8 deals from a past tournament you haven't played before and have your scores compared against players in those tourneys. If you do well, you will receive BBO points. Instant Robot Tournaments cost 33 cents to play.
- “Weekly free instant tournament”: Play 8 hands by yourself against robots with the cumulative matchpoint percentage changing after you complete each hand. You get one free 8-game per week, new one comes out Friday morning. Neat thing is you can stop mid-game and leave the site, then come back to the same point later in the week. If you actually do want to withdraw, click the  button, “Withdraw”
- You can also play one of several other Instant tournaments anytime for a very small amt like \$1.25 for ACBL ones (award Masterpts) or BBO ones for 45c.
- After the tournament, you can immediately see your current game score so far. Once the event ends, you can see your official final results.
 - To see your final results, click on the “Messages” tab on the very right side of the screen, then click “History”, then click on the game you played in. At the left will be all the player’s scores. Your score is at the top, You can scroll down to find it, tedious but look for orange-highlighted box w your BBO handle. Once there, click on your % to get detail for each hand. You can see the “traveler” or see the full hands which they call “movie”.
 - Once in “movie”, you can see how the hand was played or replay the hand, but sadly your score won’t change (☺).
 - Click “Next” to replay hand as it was played at your table.
 - Click “Play” to choose all the cards as you replay the hand. The cards can be played one full trick at a time, or, click “Options” Advance Card by Card.

Competitive

- ACBL Masterpoint Tournaments

ACBL Masterpoint Tournaments					
Pending			Running		Complete
Host	Title	Type	Start	Entries	Entry Fee
ACBL	ACBL Daylong (MP) 2 - 2020-03-22	Individual	Running	336	1.35 BB\$
ACBL	ACBL Daylong (MP) 1 - 2020-03-22	Individual	Running	666	1.35 BB\$
ACBL	ACBL Daylong (MP) 3 - 2020-03-22	Individual	Running	295	1.35 BB\$
ACBL	ACBL Daylong (IMP) 1 - 2020-03-22	Individual	Running	281	1.35 BB\$
ACBL	ACBL Robot Duplicate (12 Boards) - IMPs #514	Individual	<1	33	1.25 BB\$
ACBL	ACBL Robot Duplicate (12 Boards) - Matchpoints #615	Individual	6	1	1.25 BB\$
ACBL	Pairs ACBL Sun 3pm Speedball #4079	Pairs	48	121	1.25 BB\$
ACBL	Ind. ACBL Sun 3pm #4081	Individual	50	9	1.25 BB\$
ACBL	Pairs ACBL Sun 4pm Speedball #4082	Pairs	108	15	1.25 BB\$
ACBL	Ind. ACBL Sun 4pm #4083	Individual	110	1	1.25 BB\$

Above shows a sample list of all ACBL tournaments offered

- Status (top left white rectangle) is one of 3
 - “Pending” shows upcoming tournaments you can register for
 - “Running” means in progress, cannot join (Daylongs are exception)
 - “Complete” – you now can check how you did, look over results, boards
- Info on tournaments includes....
 - Title: “Daylong” means runs all day (18 hands), you can play anytime that day and you play as an individual vs robots. Note that, for any individual event, hence playing against robots, you can stop playing mid-game, and come back later to the exact same point to continue, hence the name “Daylong”. “Speedballs” are at set times as indicated and are the only tournaments (here) that are played with a human partner as a pair (except new Support-your-club events). I would avoid speedballs until you are very used to the interface. MP are MatchPoint events, IMP are team-scoring
 - Type: Individual (yourself only) or Pair (with a human partner)
 - Start: When, in minutes, the event is starting. Daylongs say “Running” but you can do them any time that day
 - Entries: how many people are registered
 - Entry Fee: cost of tournament in BBO money
- After you finish an event and it has ended, and wish to look at results and hands, click on the “History” tab in vertical column at far right. Your recently played events show. Click on desired event to show results and each board result (to see event overall results, click

“Results” tab upper right in blue). To see the hand, click anywhere on the row. Note that these steps lead to a small display of each hand. Instead, for a bigger hand screen, after clicking “Results”, find your score in the event results on the far left. Click on your % to get all your scores. Now click on “Movie” to see the hand displayed much larger, in what I call seniors view (☺). See “Instant Tournaments” above for detail on navigating replaying the hand.

- To play in tournaments, you must pay small fees with BBO money, called BB\$. You need to buy some amount of BB\$ to be there for any ACBL tournament entry. To do so, click the

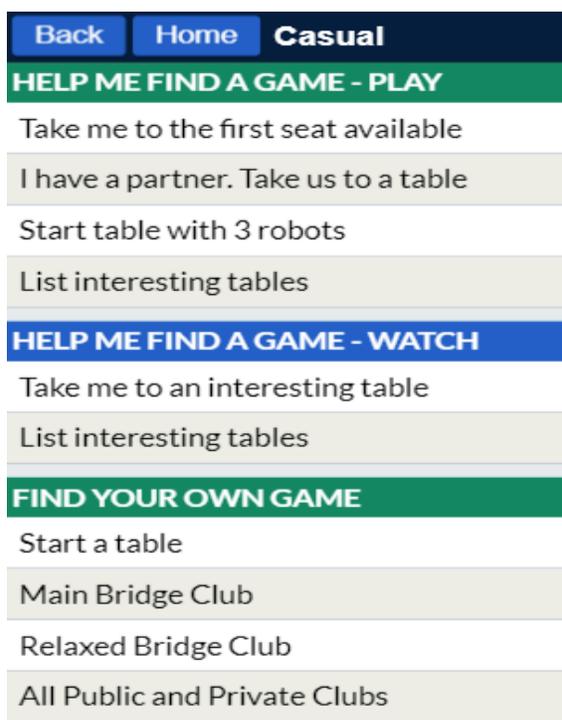


BB\$ symbol at top right of main screen.

- New “Support-Your-Club” events. With the huge increase in interested players and the loss of club operations, ACBL has started a new game using BBO. These events are running 3 times a day, 10:00, 5:10 and 7:30pm and last about two hours. They are for pairs and they are normal-pace (6 min per hand x 18 hands) games, making them the only human pair events that are not speedball.
 - Registration opens 2 hours before the game. You and your partner must both be online to register. At that time, the SYC game will pop up in the list of tournaments. One of you clicks on the event and you are prompted to enter your partner’s BBO name. An invite is sent to your partner who must accept. You will know you have registered successfully as the tournament listing will now be yellow-highlighted. Make sure both of you have sufficient funds in your BBO bank account to cover the fee. If not, the registering player can pay for their partner. It appears that you have anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes to register before they cut off registrations. These games are more expensive at \$5 or \$6 per but the ACBL is sending most of that to the local clubs that each player supports. They will allocate the funds according to their records of where you play.

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Casual



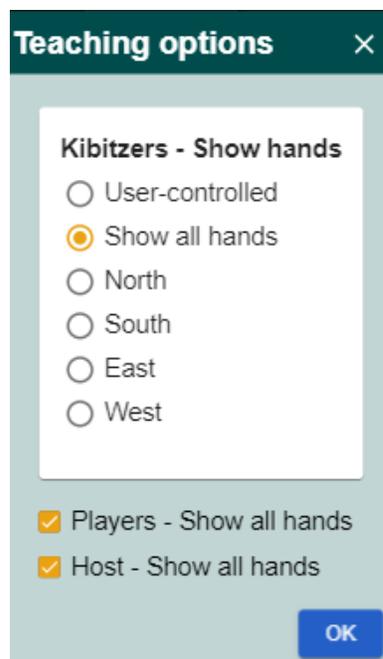
This is where you can have a “casual” game w humans, just like playing at your kitchen table. If you join a game, expect it to be on the weaker side. You can ..

- Join a game in progress via “Take me to”
- With a human partner, join a table. You will get to identify your partner
- Start a table with robots, very relaxing
- “Interesting” tables are those with any of your “friends” at them.
 - To establish someone as a “friend”, click “People” tab at right edge column, then click Friends. At the bottom, you can “Add friend”, so you need the BBO names of those people. You can now see a list of any of your existing friends who are active currently, perhaps in a tournament or at a table.
- Start a table; This is how you can set up a table for relaxed play with your bridge friends. Bidding and play speed are at your own control, so if you wish to stop for a while and discuss the previous hand, you can do so. You will input the BBO names of your friends and invite them to this table. They need to be logged in and they will receive this invitation. Once all are there you can ...
 - Play for any length of time. Vulnerability is shown by the red and green colours around the board number. D on the same board box shows the Dealer

- Chat with each other. The person who set up the game is called “Table”, others by their handle. You can chat with the “table” or a specific player, this is controlled by blue box at bottom left of screen.

Practice

- Start a **Bidding** Table
 - Practice Bidding allows you to bid (* no play) with another person or persons. Reserve seats as you require, putting your own name as South. Set the non-human seats as robots, otherwise they will pass throughout (unless that is desired).
 - Click the Option button  to ...
 - Undo - go backwards cancelling bids
 - Opponents must accept the undo
 - Redeal – the next hand
- Start/Playing at a **Teaching** Table
 - Start as above.
 - The teacher can set the option to show each player 1 hand (the default) or show all of the hands, often a nice way to teach
 - **Kibitzers** are people who are watching the hands but do not have a seat. The kibitzers see all four hands. For kibitzers to find the teaching table, they must have the teacher as a friend (see above/p.6 for instructions). Having done that, when the student logs in, click the “People” tab at the far right, and then click the teacher name, and now click “Join”, which will take them to the teaching table as a kibitzer. The teacher can set the rights of the kibitzer, but the default is that kibs can chat with all players at the table
 - Students are to be on BBO a few minutes before session time. The teacher sends an invitation to the 3 or 4 players once the table is created. The players simply accept the invitation and will then be seated at the table. Say hello to the table when you arrive.



EBC Online “bridge school”

Using BBO’s teaching table facility allows the EBC to simulate in-person bridge teaching. Here is some info about the site features available.

- You can self-alert bids, meaning explain any non-standard bids you make. To do so, right after you make the bid, click the bid. A box will appear prompting you to explain your bid. Your opponents see the alert info, but not your partner. Alternatively because our focus is learning, you can use chat to explain/ask about bids
- If you have the rest of the tricks, or say all but one for sure, you can claim using the CLAIM button, but only when you have the lead.
- By using the chat feature, the teacher can teach almost as normal, asking questions, correcting bids, guiding play, etc.
- Teacher may make the odd comment **during** the play, when timely. After the hand ends, all players will have time to look at all four hands and then the teacher will lead analysis of the hand.
- Teacher (or players) may ask for an UNDO, meaning to take back a bad bid (or play). Click on the blue button top right with 3 lines  . Click undo, and then rebid or wait for teacher suggestion
- For the following 6 bullets, note that EBC has moved to Zoom sessions and hence no longer using “chat” as the mode of communication. See the end of this document for Zoom instructions

- If the teacher-chat starts with your name or direction, the question/comment is directed to you, ie

→Table Message Jack: How many spades does your partner’s double show?

- Often the teacher will ask the group for suggestions

→Table Message Anyone, is there a line of play to make five?

- Try to confirm you follow a teaching point, easiest is with “k” for oKay
- Kibitzers are encouraged to join in the “conversation” and answer any of the group questions
- Once the teacher feels the hand analysis is done and all questions answered, he will deal the next hand
- If you enjoy these sessions, and wish to do more, email Steve with good times to book your next session. There will be a session Tuesday thru Saturday at 1:30-3:00/3:30, and possibly a morning or evening session. Also Mondays are “Topic” sessions, where a subject such as “Slam Bidding” will be covered. Note you can kibitz any of these sessions without any booking required, just show up.

Hand Records

- At any time, you can actually see any hands you played, called "History" throughout the site (results for any tournaments where applicable as well). For an even more complete list of all hands played, click "HAND RECORDS" on the very first screen, even before you log in.
- You can click thru the play of each card as the hand was actually played
- * Note: Hands played at a teaching table are NOT saved anywhere (BBO: why not?)

Sending hands to another BBO person

Sometimes you play a hand, and want to send it to a BBO bridge friend for fun, or to a bridge mentor for their analysis

- History,
- Select "recent hands" or "tournament"
- select a hand
- Click option button  in hand box
- Export
- Send to member
- You can include(chat) a fairly long comment with hand

- For the recipient to get the hand ...
 - Messages
 - Mail
 - click message title

Instructions to play or kibitz an EBC learning session

To kibitz, first make me a "friend" as follows

- Log on
- Click "People" at far right
- Click "Add a friend" at bottom
- Add "ovohya" as a friend

Now, when my table is active, my name will pop up in the Friends list

- click my name
- in upper right, click "Join"
- you are now at my table, seeing all four hands, able to chat to table
- Pls do not hesitate to ask questions, make (a few) comments

1:30 - 3:15/30ish sessions every day, you should play in one, just send me an email w good days to play

If you one of the 4 playing at the table

- Log on to BBO.
- Wait for an invite from me to join my table
- At 1:30 - 3 minutes = 1:27, I start my table
- I need your BBO name to invite you, pls email to me in advance

Attending an EBC BBO/Zoom session

I am now doing all lessons using the Zoom audio/video platform. This allows me to provide audio support instead of (harder to follow) chatting (typing text at bottom of BBO bridge table), making for a more effective lesson.

How will this work?

- As per usual, Log on to BBO and play at table (accept invite) or kibitz (Join ovohya table)
- You will receive a Zoom meeting invite in an email about 5 minutes before lesson time (1:25). Accept the invite "Join with video" unless you just can't bear being seen in which case you participate with just the required audio connection. I will see you requesting to join our mtg and I will admit you. You will now arrive at our meeting, seeing myself and the other students. If you join without video, you will appear as an empty black box (okay but not encouraged)
- The key to the learning is that you will look at the BBO bridge table throughout, and you will be hearing comments and questions of myself and others.
- With a small group (4), we can stay "unmuted" at all times, meaning you can say something any time you wish.
- With a large group, like on Mondays, we likely need to switch to players staying muted. When you cursor to the top right corner of your image box, mute/unmute options appear – set this to muted if you are a kibitzer. When you wish to ask a question or make a comment, "raise your hand". To do so, click on the icon labeled "Participants" at the bottom center of your screen. At the bottom of the window on the right side of the screen, click the button labeled "Raise Hand." Your digital hand is now raised and I will see it on my screen, and ask you to speak as soon as possible. Be sure to unmute when speaking and remute when done.



Playing in a virtual competitive game as a newer player (Solitaire w robots, then with human table mates)

First you should get used to BBO via solitaire playing, then it is exciting and fun to try a competitive game. You can play lots of games sponsored by ACBL or BBO or virtual clubs (like MOBridge). Best to first play against the robots. To do so

- Be sure to have money in your BBO account to cover the cost of the game. Prices for solitaire games (you against robots) tend to be prices like \$1.67, 1.25, etc. When you move to club games, costs are more, like \$4 or \$5
- Log on to BBO, under “Play or watch bridge”, Click “Solitaire”, which means you will be playing with robots as the other 3 spots at the table, but you will score compared to how other humans do.
- My recommendation is your first game be “Weekly Free Instant Tournament”, so you don’t even have to pay your \$1, wooh-hooh. Click on Yes to start playing.
 - Play the 8 hands
 - Then you can see provisional results, ie how you scored approximately
 - Once the event is over, you can see how you did, ie 44% perhaps
- Next, perhaps try an “Instant Tournament”. Here you pay a little bit to play. The only difference is you can win ACBL Masterpoints or BBO points if you place in the top 40% of participants, just like at a club. The BBO ones are only 45cents, ACBL ones \$1.25 and I think you play 8 boards. To play, log in, click Solitaire, click Instant Tournaments.
- Once you are used to the above, you are ready to compete in your first “human” event, meaning everyone at the table is a human, not a robot.
- Before you play
 - 1) have BBO money in account, game costs \$5 or \$6 so be sure to have at least 6 in the account. If you (hopefully) continue to play, you can add more for next time.
 - 2) put your full name in your "profile" on BBO. Click Account, Profile. On right side but hard to read , it says "real name" so enter there.
- As a new player, you have 2 best options
 - 1) play in a limited game, 0-20 best, at a virtual club. MOBridge has two 0-20 games, one Friday at 10:00, the other Tuesday at 7:45. And both of these games are supervised, meaning you can call for help on occasion. Note that getting registered your first time is a bit complicated so contact Steve O to assist. These games are getting a decent number of players and will run. Note that players must
 - 2) play in a 0-5 game on BBO. These pop up frequently. Login to BBO, click Competitive, select BBO tournaments. Look for a “Newcomer Pairs 0-5” game, any starting within 2 hrs will be listed. To enter, click on the game name and you will be prompted to register. To do so, your partner has to also be on BBO (just logged in), enter your partner’s BBO name,

This tournament has a 0.60 BB\$ entry fee.
This tournament will be starting in 5 minutes.
You need a partner to play in this tournament.

Partner

I will pay for both myself and my partner

and click the Invite box.

- Your partner will receive an invitation to play, which they accept. Note the game will now show up in yellow highlighting, meaning you are registered to play. Now, you can do whatever, but be sure to be on BBO a few minutes before game time. At game time, the first round will show up, with your partner and opponents, and away you go!
- DO NOT WORRY ABOUT YOUR RESULTS!!! Given you are new to this, you will be anxious and not at your best, but nobody cares. Contact Steve to relate how it went, and feel free to send any hands for suggestions of proper play.

Enjoy playing or learning bridge on BBO.

Any questions, email Steve at etobicokebridge@gmail.com or call 647.897.6179

What a game !!