

1 DUPLICATE BRIDGE

There are a number of formats for competitive bridge – the most common being Duplicate, Teams and Rubber.

We will be playing **DUPLICATE bridge for Match Points**.

In Duplicate, using set hands which move from table to table, North-South **PLAY** against East- West, but they **SCORE** against all the other North-Souths in the room (and East Wests **SCORE** against East Wests)

Thus it does not matter if one side feels that they are getting ‘bad cards’ or not getting hands to play – because you are **scoring** against the players with the **same** cards, it depends entirely on what you can do with those cards compared with the others in the room sitting in the same direction.

The ‘winner’ of each hand is the pair with the highest positive score or the least negative score – depending on the direction you are playing – the MARGIN is irrelevant when playing for match points. (you get no more match points if you win by 10 or 1000). An alternate scoring method is IMP or Butler scoring – in this format the actual margin does matter and is critical.

Scoring at the table

Per Trick score (more than 6) :

No Trumps 30 (+10)

Spades and Hearts 30

Diamonds and Clubs 20

Bonuses	Not Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Making Contract < Game	50	50
Making Game Contract	300	500
Making Small Slam	500	750
Making Grand Slam	1000	1500

Penalties

Not making contract / trick	50	100
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(much more when doubled)

From this table it is clear that there are huge bonuses applied when Games and Slams are bid and made.

The Goal in Match Point Duplicate Bridge is to gain a higher score compared with those playing in the same direction – this will normally mean bidding games or slams where

possible and preferring no trump contracts over major suit contracts, with minor suit contracts the poorest scoring.

When bidding :

Think with every hand: **Could we have GAME?**

Could we have SLAM? - if the answer is 'yes', try to bid it.

When playing (or defending): EVERY trick counts – your side has to make every possible trick it can. Even if you are only at the 2 level, some-one making 9 tricks beats everyone making 8.

How strong is your hand?

Count your high card points (HCP)

Ace = 4, King = 3, Queen = 2, Jack = 1 (so more than 10 is more than your share)

You need to take advantage of your strength by bidding whenever you can.

Almost always open the bidding with 12 hcp and always with 11 hcp and a 5 card major.

4 card suits are bid 'up the line' according to suit rank – so C > D > H > S

5+ card suits are bid 'down the line' – so the higher ranked suit then the lower ranked

You	S	4 3	Partner S	Q J 7 6
	H	Q J 10 2	H	6 4
	D	J 9 8	D	K Q 7 6
	C	A K J 10	C	8 7 6

bidding : 1 C > 1 D > 1 H > 1 S then 1 NT and pass

You	S	Q J 10 4 3	Partner S	7 6
	H	Q J 10 4 2	H	K 6 4
	D	Q J	D	K Q 7 6
	C	A	C	Q 7 6 2

bidding : 1 S > 2 C > 2 H > 2 NT > 3H - shows that you have 5 spades and 5 hearts

Now here there is a dilemma - you have opening points, you can't open a major with less than 5 cards and you have no 4 card minor!

In this situation you need to open the longer minor (even with only 3 cards – the 'better' i.e. longer, minor)

You	S	J 8 4 3	Partner S	Q J 7 6
	H	Q J 10 2	H	6 4
	D	J 9 8	D	K Q 7 6
	C	A K J	C	8 7 6

bidding : 1 C > 1 D > 1 H > 1 S > 2S - you have found your 4:4 major fit! – probably pass.

When you have found a fit in a suit which will be trumps, the hand becomes stronger if you have shortages in outside suits – you may get the chance to trump losers in that outside suit.

This increases the strength of your hand and you can add additional points to your HCP tally – **'distribution points'**.

Add 1 point for a doubleton (2 card outside suit)
 3 points for a singleton
 5 points for a void

26 'Total Points' (HCP + Distribution points) should be enough to bid game in a major and 28 game in a minor.

Remember – you can't add distribution until a fit in a trump suit has been found.