

Welcome to the family of NZ Bridge

Congratulations on learning bridge and becoming part of the several thousand strong New Zealand bridge playing community. Playing bridge is a lifelong skill that you never stop learning.

This booklet tells you all you need to know about the system New Zealand uses in running bridge at club, regional and national level.

The NZBridge Association administers all Masterpoints, Rating points, national grading and tournaments.

For more detailed information on everything mentioned here you can visit the NZBridge website and look under the Masterpoint tab or delve into the NZBridge manual. www.nzbridge.co.nz

Special events for Novice, Intermediate and Junior Players

Intermediate and Junior Leagues- Many Regions run special tournament leagues over the calendar year, just for nationally ranked Intermediates and Juniors/Novice players. Prizes are given out to the winners. All you need to do to take part is play in pairs tournaments in your Region.

National Congress Sponsorship – each year some Regional Committees sponsor at least one pair to attend the NZ National Bridge Congress held in Hamilton in September. Check to see what is happening in your Region.

Other special tournament events

Rubber bridge tournament – this event is open to all players and is played over several months, first in your region then if you qualify at the NZ National Bridge Congress held in Hamilton in September. It is a very social fun form of bridge

Inter – Provincials – this is the ultimate chance for you to represent your province. The IPs are open to all players. Trials for all Regions are held in May with those successful representing their province in November at the Inter Provincial finals. We strongly encourage all Intermediate and Junior players to aim to take part in the trials. It is a great honour to represent your province and no one is 'not good enough' to have a go. Many top players started out their advancement in bridge by trialling for their Region as Intermediates.

For more information on both these initiatives check out the NZB website or the website for your Region (links on the NZB site)

Pairs and Teams

- Pairs are usually played over 2 sessions with your chosen partner. Your scores are compared to everyone else playing to get a result (like at your club).
- Teams are usually played with two pairs forming team. The result is compared to your team mates scores at the other table. All teams are playing the same boards and usually held over 6 matches or more matches of 10 to 12 boards per match. It is the accumulated Victory Points (VPs) that decide the overall winners.
- After match one, the draw for the teams matches are decided after each round based on the standing.

Some tips for playing in tournaments

- Get a good night's sleep beforehand! Playing all day is great for increasing your mental stamina and concentration. Just like getting physically fit it can be tough to start with but you will improve quickly with practice. The more you play the fitter you get!
- Fill out a system card before the tournament starts (see Systems Card)
- Make sure you know what time the tournament starts and be there on time
- Look after and be kind to your partner.
- Relax and have fun. If you aren't sure about something ask the Director or a senior player, they are always happy to help

System Cards

- You must use the NZBridge systems card in a tournament. It can be found on the NZBridge website (under 'Resources').
- For tournaments up to and including 5As you only need to fill out the outer two pages. For 10As or higher, the inside of the card needs to be completed too.
- On the NZBridge website there are templates already filled out for you to use and download. There are some basic cards that would suit you.
- If you need help filling one out ask your club. They will have someone who can help you.

Directors

What is a Director and what do they do ?

- The Director is like a referee or umpire. Treat them with respect at all times
- Their job is to set up the tournament and make it run smoothly.
- They are there to restore equity where necessary
- The Director is your friend; they want you to have a good time. They are not there to tell you off.
- The Director can't tell you what to bid, but, they can help you with almost any other problem.
- Listen carefully to all explanations and do not be afraid to ask for clarification as some rulings have several options.
- Never argue with the Director, but if you think you have been harmed, you can ask for the ruling to be reviewed at the end of the session.
- If you are not sure about anything, call the Director. Never be afraid to do this.

Masterpoints

Masterpoints are the lifeblood of bridge players. They are what we all earn when we play well in our club sessions or tournaments. You can only earn Masterpoints if you play at a club that is affiliated to NZBridge.

You can view your Masterpoints and everyone else's on the NZBridge website

There are three categories of Masterpoint awards:

C POINTS

- C Points are awarded to players who are successful in any one session of play organised by a club, a region or NZ Bridge. Therefore all club sessions award C points.
- C Points are converted to B Points in the ratio of 100 C Points to 1 B Point
- C points are awarded for the top third place getters in a session.

C Points table for session places

	Place				
Pairs	1	2	3	4	5
4	40	12			
5	40	17			
6	40	21	2		
7	40	24	8		
8	40	26	12		
9	40	27	15	2	
10	40	28	17	6	
11	40	29	19	9	
12	40	30	21	12	2

Tournaments

Tournaments are a great way to improve your bridge while having a great day out. There are tournaments for all levels of bridge player and there is a tournament somewhere in the country every weekend for you to play in! Playing in tournaments will help to quickly improve your skills.

See the tournament schedule for all events held in New Zealand on the NZBridge website.

Most tournaments run for a whole day (2 sessions) and usually break for morning, afternoon tea and lunch. 10A and above tournaments often have 3 sessions per day. Sometimes lunch is included and sometimes you bring your own. Compared to other activities bridge tournaments are a very inexpensive day out doing something fun.

The differences between club bridge and tournament bridge

- You play more bridge (although some Novice and Junior tournaments are only one session too).
- Most tournaments are played during the weekend.
- You can only get A points from playing in A point tournaments.
- You need a systems card (see Systems Card).
- You need to pre-enter. This can be done on-line. Most entries can be done on the NZB website, in the Tournament tab, but some may only take entries directly or via their own website. Check posters and notices to see how to do this or ask a senior player for help.
- There is a prize-giving and prizes (usually money and sometimes trophies) for the first few places. Often there are special prizes for Junior and Intermediate players in large tournaments too.
- It is a lot of fun and you meet lots of new people around the country.

Ranks

Below is the table of ranks currently available in NZ.

Rank	Aggregate of A & B Points
Certificate of Proficiency	5
Club Master	20
Local Master	50
Provincial Master	100 (including at least 50 A Points)
Master	200 (including at least 100 A Points)
National Master	350 (including at least 175 A Points)
Life Master	500 (including at least 250 A Points)
Grand Master	1000 (including at least 500 A Points)
Silver Grand Master	2500 (including at least 1250 A Points)
Gold Grand Master	4000 (including at least 2500 A Points)

- A Player with fewer than 5 A and B Points is classified as "Novice".
- On reaching an aggregate of 100+ Master Points, a Local Master who has not earned 50A Points is accorded the status of Local Master with 1 Star. At 150 Master Points, the player becomes Local Master - 2 Star, and receives an additional Star for each additional 50 Master Points if sufficient "A" Points have not been attained.
- Similarly, Stars are awarded to Masters of other ranks who have not attained sufficient "A" points for promotion to a higher rank. For example: A 1-star National Master will have acquired 700 plus total Points but not yet attained 250A Points to move to the rank of Life Master.

B POINTS

- B Points are awarded to players who finish in the top placings of approved B Point tournaments and to all session winners of B Point pairs Tournaments.
- B Points are not convertible to A Points.

A POINTS

- A Points are awarded to players who finish in the top placings of A Point tournaments and to all session winners or teams match winners of A Point tournaments.
- Teams match winners earn fractions of A points depending on the type of event and the number of boards played. A drawn match means both teams take half the available points of a win.

Examples of fractional A points awarded

Boards per match	Basic 3A & 5A	x2 for 10A	x3 for 15A
12	.24	.48	.72
13	.26	.52	.78
14	.28	.56	.86

There are numerous points tables to refer to on the NZB website
<http://www.nzbridge.co.nz/points-tables.html>

Rating Points

- They are derived from your accumulated Masterpoints.
- They are used to determine your national grade.
- They are calculated soon after 31st December each year and the new Rating points come into effect on 1 January (or as soon after as possible) and remain in effect for the calendar year.
- They are calculated as follows:
 - Your previous years Rating points x 0.8
 - Plus the total of A and B Points earned in the immediate past year.

Example:

- Previous Rating Points 80 x 0.8 = 64
- Plus the total of A and B points earned in past year 3A + 17B = 20.
- New Rating Points: 64 + 20 = new total of 84.

Grades

There are two types of grading in NZ. Club grades and National grades. There is no correlation between the two.

Club Grading

- Individual clubs determine their own club grades. It is up to each club to decide what grades they have and how to grade their members.
- Examples of club grades are: Learners (Novice), Junior, Intermediate, Senior Reserve and Senior, Silver, Gold
- Club grades may be used by clubs for determining club grade nights, handicapping and seeding etc or for club-only events.

National Grades

- National grading is based on a person's current rating points, the number of A points they have and their rank (see below)
- Grades are used to determine what level of tournament you can play in. For example:
 - Junior players can play in all tournaments
 - Intermediate players can play all tournaments **except** Junior tournaments.
 - Open players can only play in Open or All Grades tournaments.

Grades are determined as follows:

Open

- Local Master 0-4 stars and 101+ Rating Points or
- Local Master with 5+ stars or
- Provincial Master or higher Rank

Intermediate

- Certificate of Proficiency or Club Master with 5+ A Points and 31+ Rating Points or
- Local Master 0-4 stars with 100 or less Rating Points

Junior

- Club Master or lower Rank with 30 or less Rating Points and 0-4 A Points