

Boards



The first time you sit down to play duplicate bridge you will see the trays that hold each hand. These trays are called **BOARDS**. We use them to share one bridge hand across two or more tables.



In a pairs game, everyone will get to play from the same set of hands. If there are more than one section of players in a game, the hands can be duplicated across the sections. This allows scoring across the entire field and larger Masterpoint awards. Sometimes a score sheet called a traveler accompanies each board. Never look at the score sheet until you've finished playing the board.

In a team game two or more teams share the boards. After a KO or Swiss team match, the boards are typically reshuffled and made ready for the next round. In Board a Match Teams the boards are used each round by a new pair of teams. Many team events have no hand records. Premier National Team events use pre-duplicated boards and offer hand records in the later rounds.

You might enter a large club or a tournament pair game and be asked to duplicate a set of boards before you start to play. Sometimes you will duplicate more than one set. The Director will bring the official printed hand sheet to your table for several boards. Players at the table will sort the cards from each board into suits (it's often helpful to arrange them in order). Then each player will take a suit and distribute cards to North South East and West according to the official printed hand sheet. The pairs will repeat this step until all boards are made. Don't worry, any board that you manually prepare you will **NOT** play during the course of the game.

Manual or automatic duplicating allows clubs and tournaments to offer players a **HAND RECORD**. These hand records show all hands in a set (typically 1-36) and might offer additional statistics about the hands (high card points, singletons, voids, 7-card suits, 6 card suits). Many hand records use a double dummy analyzer to show what each side can make given perfect knowledge of all 52 cards. Of course no one has perfect information...



Each board has 4 slots to hold 13 cards. The slots are oriented to each compass position: North, East, South, and West. At the table North and South are primarily responsible to ensure the boards are pointed in the right direction (North to the North player). It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the right boards are at the table for the round being played.

Board markings show the Hand Number, Vulnerability and the Dealer. These markings are consistent with the scorecard found inside your convention card. How boards are marked varies. The boards might be made out of aluminum or plastic.



Some have hinges – these open so that an automatic dealing matching can pre-deal hands for everyone to use. **NEVER** open the hinges of a plastic board – you might mix the hands and cause a major delay in the progress of the game.



In a pairs game at the end of a round, North-South will pass the boards to the next **LOWER** table while the east west pairs will move to their next table (*in a Howell movement*)

the table card tells you where to go next and what boards to play. In a Mitchell movement East West move to the next higher table). For more information check out [Wikipedia](#)

Tips:

- 1) **Always check the board to be sure it is the right number and it is pointed in the right direction.** Do not take or look at any cards if either is amiss. Correct the situation immediately.
- 2) **Always count your cards before looking at them when you first take them out of the board.** Sometimes you can catch a missing or extra card in time – the director can fix the error, if you have not looked at your cards.
- 3) **Be courteous and allow others to take their cards first.** Some players might need help getting their cards out. Help them! Some players might need help sorting a specific hand for the next round (rare – and only when directors approve in cases of disability).
- 4) **Be sure to check who is dealer and what the vulnerability is.** Bidding out of turn is an unnecessary penalty. Vulnerability affects your score – be sure you know what to do! Red plastic boards might make it hard to see vulnerability at a glance – check!
- 5) When the hand is complete, gather your cards face down and return them to the board. Make sure no cards are exposed. **Do NOT return sorted cards to the board** (*exception: you are helping a disabled player who will play your hand in the very next round*). Returning a sorted hand to the slot suggests 1) the hand was passed out, 2) there was an unusual result. Either way you do not want to communicate unauthorized information to other players because you forgot to shuffle your hand before returning it to the board. Don't!
- 6) In a pairs game you might find you are waiting for a table to complete the final board of the previous round. Help out! **Pass completed boards to table you just left** so the players there can get started. This keeps the game on time.
- 7) **NEVER take cards from a slot that is NOT yours.** It is unethical and impolite to grab for partners cards and inappropriate to touch opponents cards. You might ask permission but don't be surprised if you hear "Why don't you wait for the hand records at the end of the game?" Sound advice – this keeps the game moving and puts the postmortem where it belongs – at the end of the game.
- 8) **Never turn boards over.** Simply stack the finished board at the bottom of the pile. The plastic boards used with automatic dealing machines might open unexpectedly. Importantly the bottom card of each hand might reveal enough information inappropriately (e.g. the outline of an honor card (K, Q or J) might be visible).
- 9) **As North-South, keep no more than 2 - 4 boards on the table.** When you have 5 or more boards at a table put 2 or more aside (on the floor or on a chair). Start with the first 2 or 3. This helps everyone by keeping the view of the hand across the table free and clear. It also helps avoid playing board out of order.
- 10) At the Club, **help collect the boards at the end of the game and return them to the director.** Don't forget your hand record. Many clubs post hand records on line.