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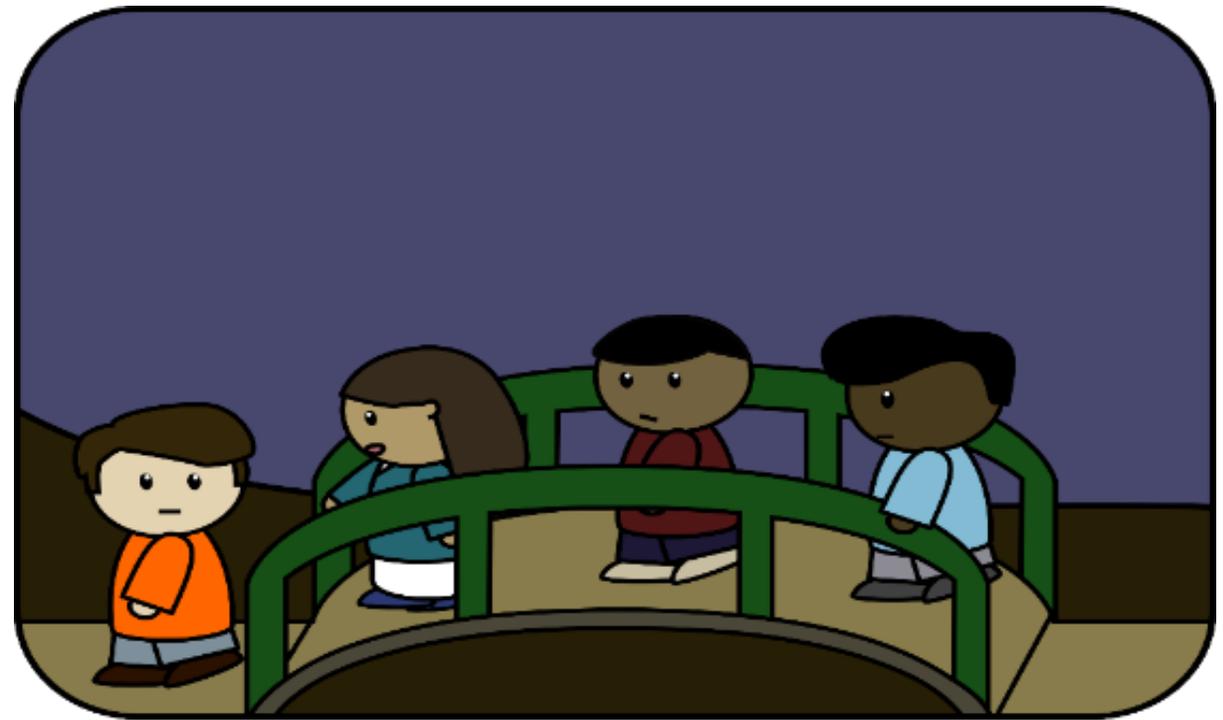
Presents:

**Bridge** Basics and **Bidding**

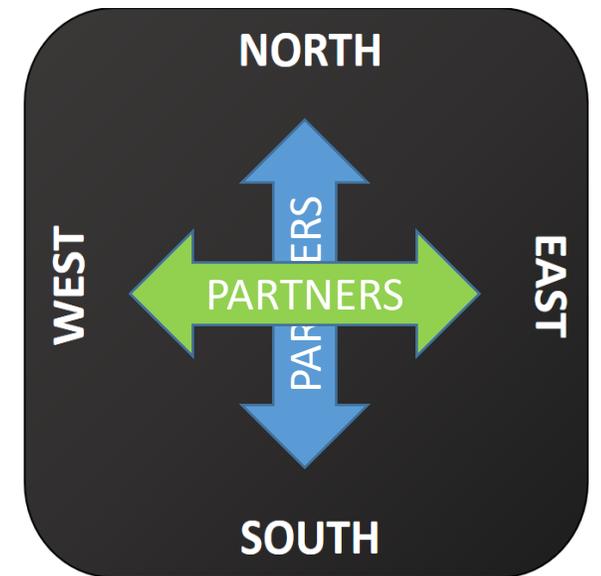
Bridge is one of the greatest card games ever. Bridge is popular worldwide because it is highly social and very challenging.

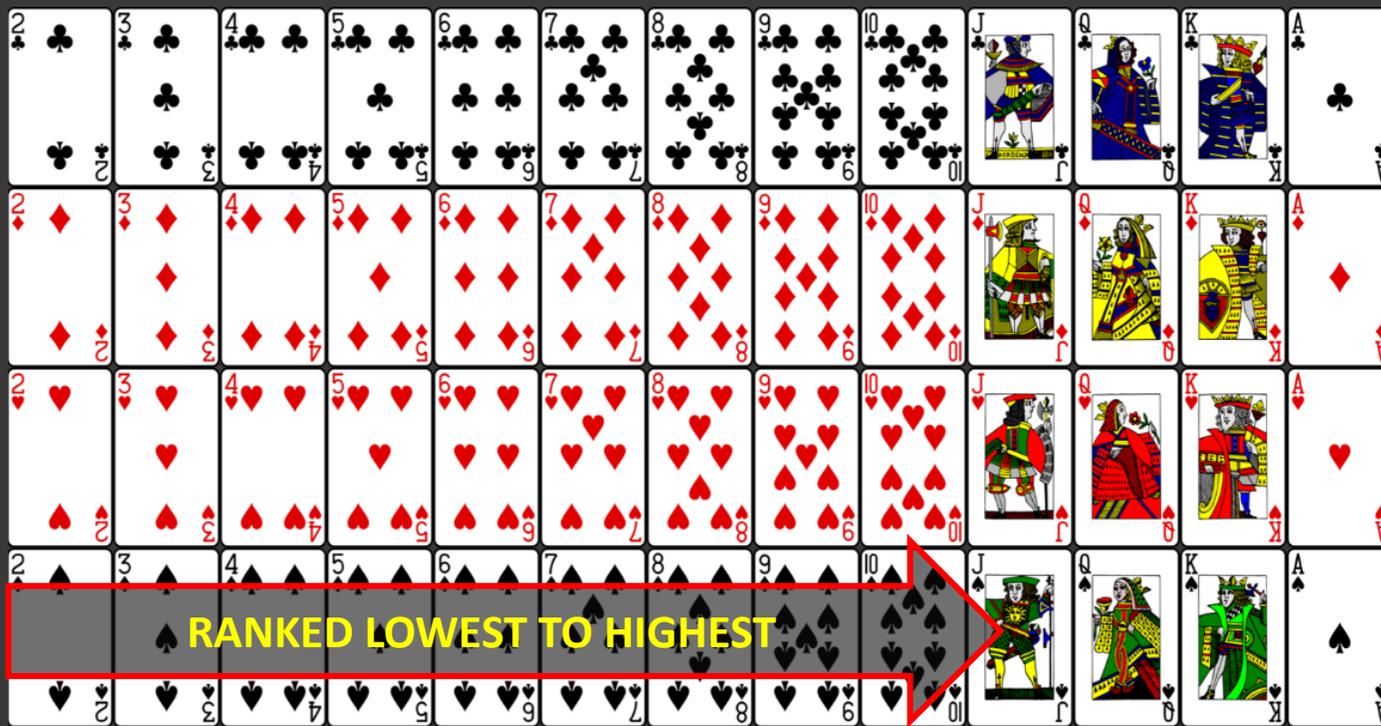
It is played by 4 players but does not involve an actual bridge in any way 😊.

The 4 players break down into two partnerships. Each partnership plays together to score points against the opposing pair.



The 4 players sit around a table with partners facing each other. The seats at the bridge table are named for the points on a compass. Sitting West will make East your partner. Sitting South will make North your partner.





### *Fun History of the Suits:*

*In 14<sup>th</sup> Century France the suits represented the classes of French society at the time.*

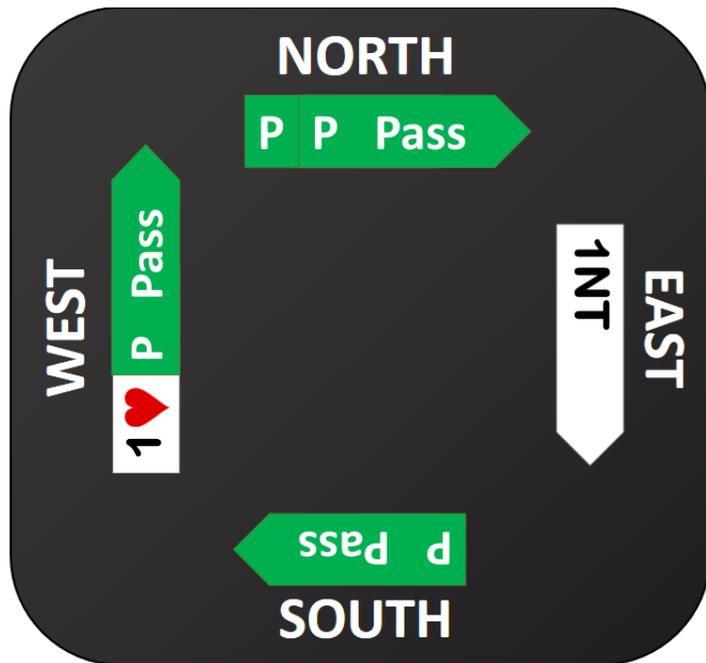
Spades = Nobility  
Hearts = Clergy  
Diamonds = Merchants  
Clubs = Peasants

The game of Bridge is played with a standard 52 card deck. There are 4 suits in the deck and 13 cards in each suit. The Ace is the highest ranking card in each suit and the Two is the lowest. In Bridge, we rank the suits as follows.

- 1  SPADES
- 2  HEARTS
- 3  DIAMONDS
- 4  CLUBS

# There are Two Segments to every Bridge Hand.

- 1. The Auction:** During the Auction, each player will make bids to describe what cards they hold in their hand. This is an effort to determine how many tricks each side can take.



*The Auction will be the focus of this lesson. If you want to read about the Play Segment of the hand, read our "Basic Card Play" notes.*

- 1. The Play:** During the Play, the side that won the Auction will try to take the number of tricks necessary to achieve their contract.



Let's take a look at the game of Bridge in action.

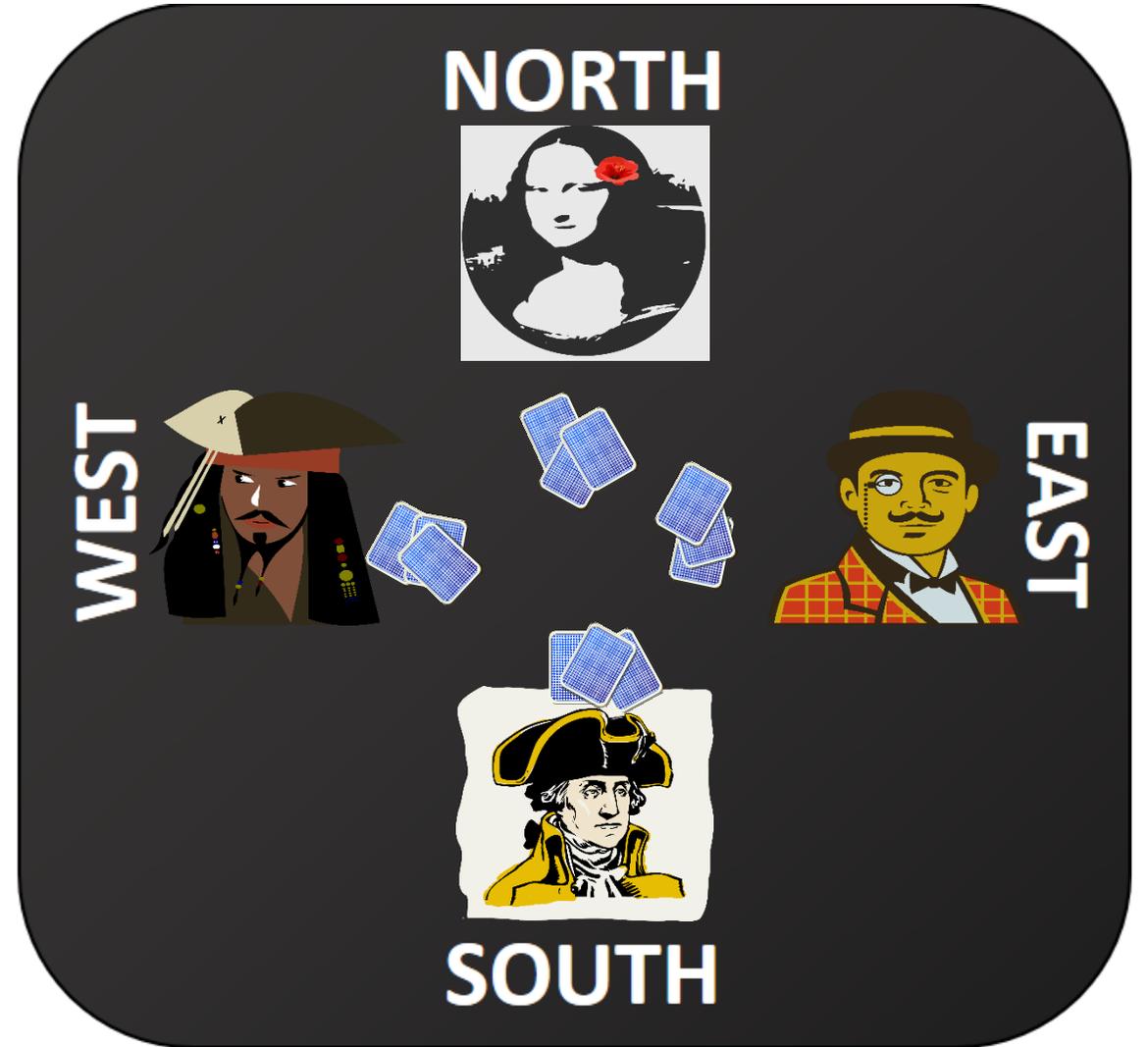
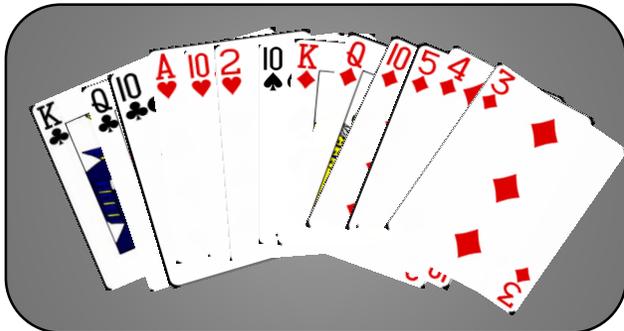
George Washington, The Mona Lisa, Captain Jack Sparrow and Hercule Poirot decide to play Bridge. George and Mona decide to be partners leaving Captain and Hercule as the opposing pair. The partners sit across from each other at the table and the game can begin.

Mona Lisa, the best player of the group, correctly explains that each player should pick a card from the deck. The highest card will be the dealer.

George Washington pulls the Ace of Spades and wins the deal for the first hand. *The deal will rotate clockwise around the table after each hand.* George shuffles the deck and deals 1 card to each player in a clockwise direction. He repeats this until the deck is completely gone.

Each player will have 13 cards to start each hand of Bridge. When the players pick up their hands they should sort them into suits and by rank. It is also a very good idea to separate the colors of the suits. *(put red suits next to black suits if possible)*

A properly sorted hand should look something like this:



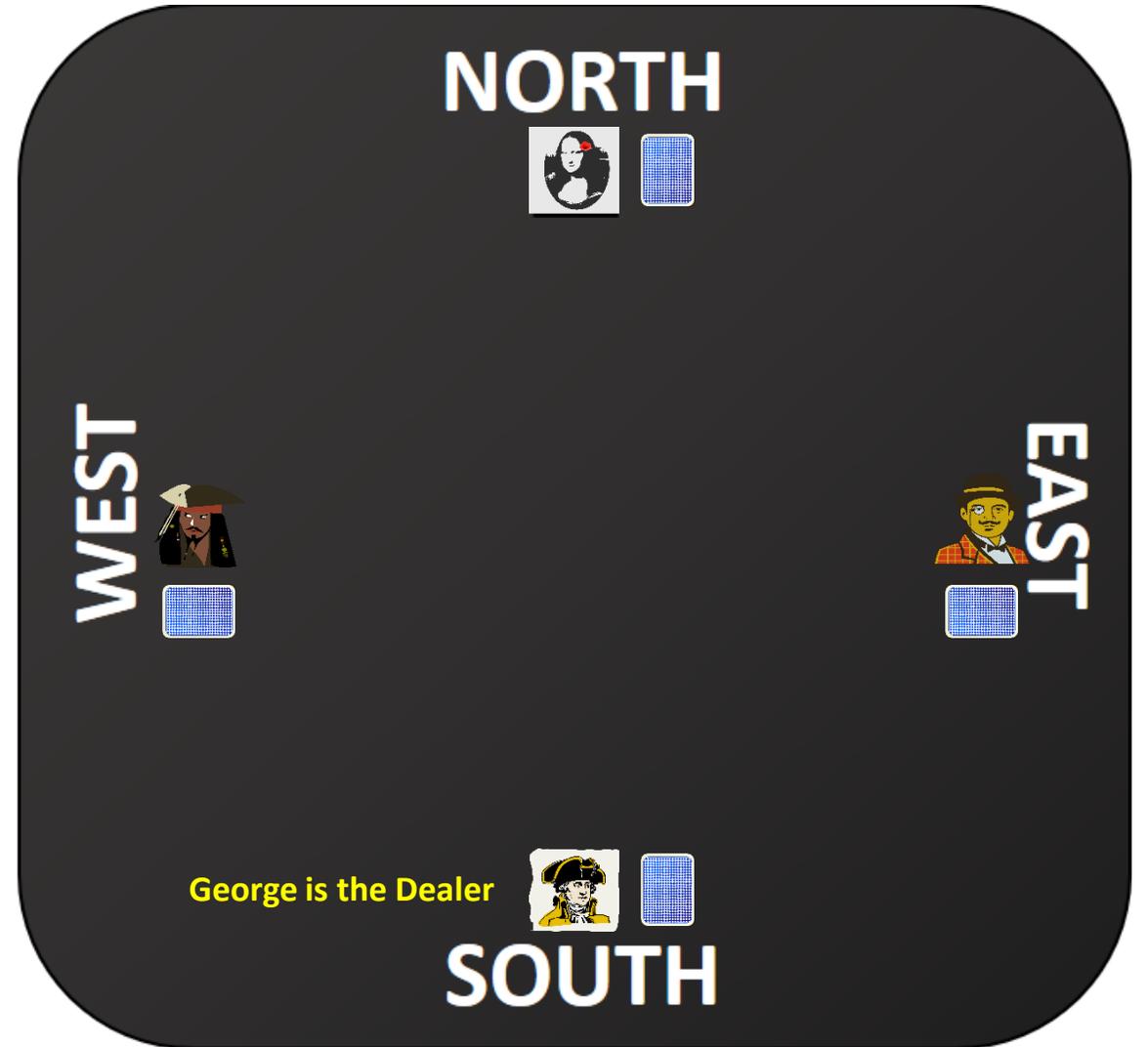
After our players sort their hands and finish discussing their strategies, the Auction can commence.

**The Auction** is the segment of the bridge hand that allows the players to communicate key features of their hands to the table and most importantly to their partners.

They do this through an agreed upon system of bidding. Each **Bid** a player makes will tell their partner something specific about their hand.

### Rules:

- The Dealer is the player that starts every auction.
- The auction will proceed clockwise around the table.
- Every Player has the chance to bid at least once during the Auction
  - If everyone passing during the 1<sup>st</sup> round of bidding we re-shuffle and deal a new hand.
- After someone makes a bid, the auction continues until 3 consecutive players Pass.
- The last bid of the auction will be ***“The Contract”***



## What's a Bid?

When it is a player's turn in the auction they can choose whether to Pass or to make a Bid.

Every potential bid that can be made during the Auction portion of the bridge hand is to the right.

As you can see there are a lot of choices in this bidding box. Ranging from the lowest ranking bid of 1 Club to the highest ranking bid of 7 No – Trump.

The auction will go in order of the bid rankings you see to your right.

So if one player bids 1 Heart, the players after him can not bid 1 Club or 1 Diamond. If they want to bid Clubs they would have to proceed to the 2 Level by bidding 2 Clubs.



## Jack Sparrow's Choices of Bids



George is the Dealer



			1♠	1NT
2♣	2♦	2♥	2♠	2NT
3♣	3♦	3♥	3♠	3NT
4♣	4♦	4♥	4♠	4NT
5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5NT
6♣	6♦	6♥	6♠	6NT
7♣	7♦	7♥	7♠	7NT

P Pass

X

Hearts is higher ranking than Diamonds and Clubs so Jack can not make either of those bids at the 1 level.

Spades and No-Trump Are both higher ranking than Hearts so those two bids are still available at the 1 level.



George is the Dealer



## Mona Lisa's Choices of Bids

	2♦	2♥	2♠	2NT
3♣	3♦	3♥	3♠	3NT
4♣	4♦	4♥	4♠	4NT
5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5NT
6♣	6♦	6♥	6♠	6NT
7♣	7♦	7♥	7♠	7NT



This auction will continue until 3 consecutive players Pass.

## The Last bid of the Auction will be **The Contract**

The side that makes the last bid of the Auction will play the next segment of the hand in that Contract.

So, if North bids 4 Hearts and the next 3 players pass, North & South will be playing in the contract of 4 Hearts.

Should you win the bidding, you will have to take 6 tricks + the level of your contract to be successful and score points for your side.

Examples:

- Contract is 4 Hearts = 10 Tricks (6 + level)
- Contract is 2 Spades = 8 Tricks (6 + level)

**Rule:** If you do not take enough tricks for your contract, your opponents will score points and you will lose points.

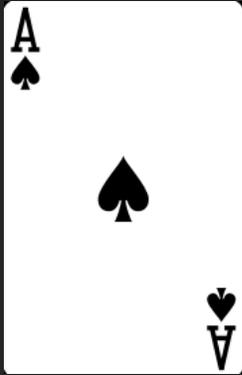
So how can we be sure we can take the number of tricks necessary to be successful in our contracts?

We use a point count system....

7 Tricks -	1♣	1♦	1♥	1♠	1NT
8 Tricks -	2♣	2♦	2♥	2♠	2NT
9 Tricks -	3♣	3♦	3♥	3♠	3NT
10 Tricks -	4♣	4♦	4♥	4♠	4NT
11 Tricks -	5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5NT
12 Tricks -	6♣	6♦	6♥	6♠	6NT
13 Tricks -	7♣	7♦	7♥	7♠	7NT

P Pass      X      XX

## Evaluating the Strength of your hand using Points



Aces = 4 Points



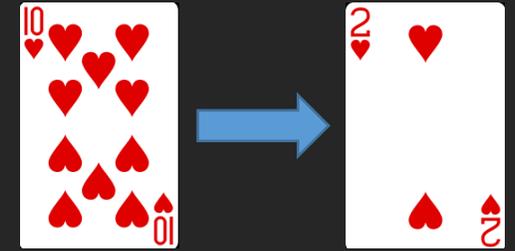
Kings = 3 Points



Queens = 2 Points



Jacks = 1 Point



0 Points

In Bridge we use a points system to determine the strength of our hands. The points are broken down above. Aces are worth the most. This is very logical as the Ace is the highest card in each suit. This is important during the play segment of the hand because, an Ace will always win over any other card in the same suit. The King will beat all but the Ace... etc..

There are 10 points in each suit (AKQJ) and 4 suits in the deck, so...

There are **40 points** in the entire deck.

### Numbers So Far:

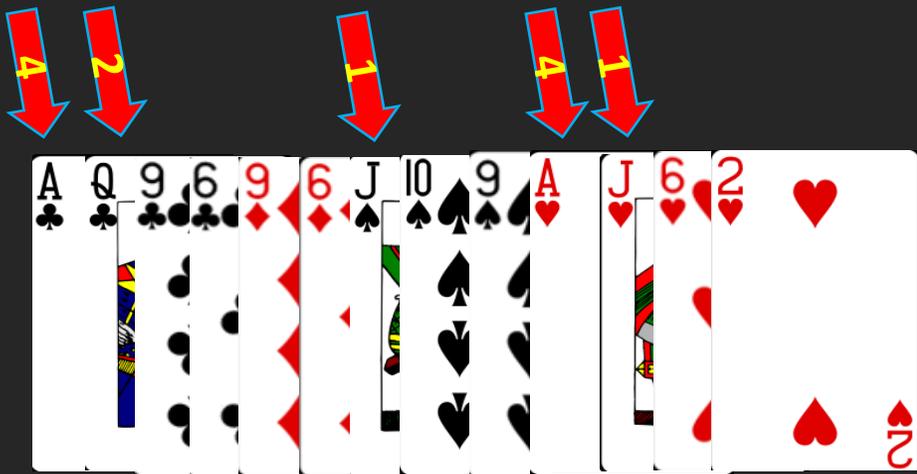
**13** Cards in Each Suit

**13** Cards per Player

**10** Points in Each Suit

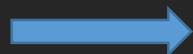
**40** Points in the Deck

# Let's Count A Bridge Hand



This hand has 12 points.

The hand above can be represented as the simpler diagram to the right:



 JT9  
 AJ62  
 96  
 AQ96

# Count these Hands:

<u>1</u>		KJ42	<u>2</u>		76543
		Q9			AKJ
		J542			Q63
		K93			A9

<u>3</u>		2	<u>4</u>		T94
		AKQJ			KQ
		KQ54			AJ32
		AJT3			J853

## Count these Hands:

<u>1</u>		KJ42	<u>2</u>		76543	
		Q9			AKJ	
		J542			Q63	<u>1</u> 10 Points
		K93			A9	<u>2</u> 14 Points
						<u>3</u> 20 Points
<u>3</u>		2	<u>4</u>		T94	
		AKQJ			KQ	<u>4</u> 11 Points
		KQ54			AJ32	
		AJT3			J853	

## Points for Length

The reason the face cards and Aces are worth points in the game of Bridge is because they are much more likely to take tricks than the lower ranking cards.

So the more Aces and face cards your hand has, the more tricks you are likely to take.

Length in a suit can also have trick taking potential. For that reason we can add points to our hand when we have a suit with honors and extra cards in it.

**Rule:** We can add 1 point to our hand for each extra card, **above four**, we have in a suit.  
(i.e. 5 card suit = +1; 6 card suit = +2).

**Note:** We should only do this with good quality suits (suits with honors).

# How do we know what level to bid to during the Auction?

We use the “Points System” to determine what level our hands can safely bid to. Each bid we make will show a range of points in our hand. During the auction we will be able to determine how many total points our partnership has. The total points needed for the best chance of success at each level are broken down to the right.

**Logic:** The higher the contract the more tricks you have to take for success. The cards that are worth points in our hands, are the cards that are most likely to take tricks (Aces, Kings...). The more points we have, the more tricks we can take.

The bids highlighted in yellow are what’s called **Game Bids**. If either pair wins the contract with these bids AND makes the required number of tricks during the play segment, that pair will get a big **bonus score**.

Total points  
In partnership

16 – 18 pts. -



19 – 21 pts. -



22 – 24 pts. -



25 – 27 pts. -



28 – 31 pts. -



32 – 36 pts. -



37 – 40 pts. -



During every Bridge Auction, each pair will try to determine if they have enough points (*between both hands*) to make a game bid. If they do, the pair will try to set the contract in one of the game bids in yellow. If both pairs lack the points for game they will usually opt for a lower level contract. These contracts, below the game level, are called partial scores.

# GAME LEVEL CONTRACTS

The contracts listed below are all Games. Successful Game bids will result in big bonus scores for the pair that makes them.



These are the “Major Suits”. Game in these two suits is played at the 4 Level. If your partnership bids 4 Spades or 4 Hearts, and makes 10 tricks, your side will be awarded a game bonus score.

## #1 Priority

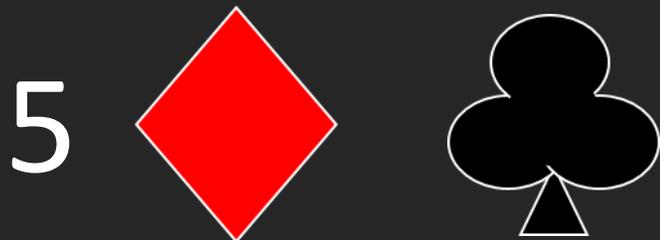
2<sup>nd</sup> Highest Scoring Game  
Usually the easiest to make  
**25+ Points Needed**  
*(Must have at least 8 cards in the Major Suit your side is bidding.)*

3 **No - Trump**

Game in No – Trump is played at the 3 Level. If your partnership bids 3 No – Trump and makes 9 tricks you will be awarded a game bonus score.

## #2 Priority

Highest Scoring Game  
Tougher to make than Majors  
**25+ Points Needed**



These are the “Minor Suits”. Game in these 2 suits is played at the 5 Level. If your partnership bids 5 Clubs or 5 Diamonds and makes 11 tricks your side will be awarded a game bonus score.

## #3 Priority

Lowest Scoring Game  
Toughest to make  
**28+ Points Needed**  
*Try to avoid these games if possible*

Back to our Bridge game....

George Washington was the dealer so he gets to enter the auction 1<sup>st</sup> if he so chooses.

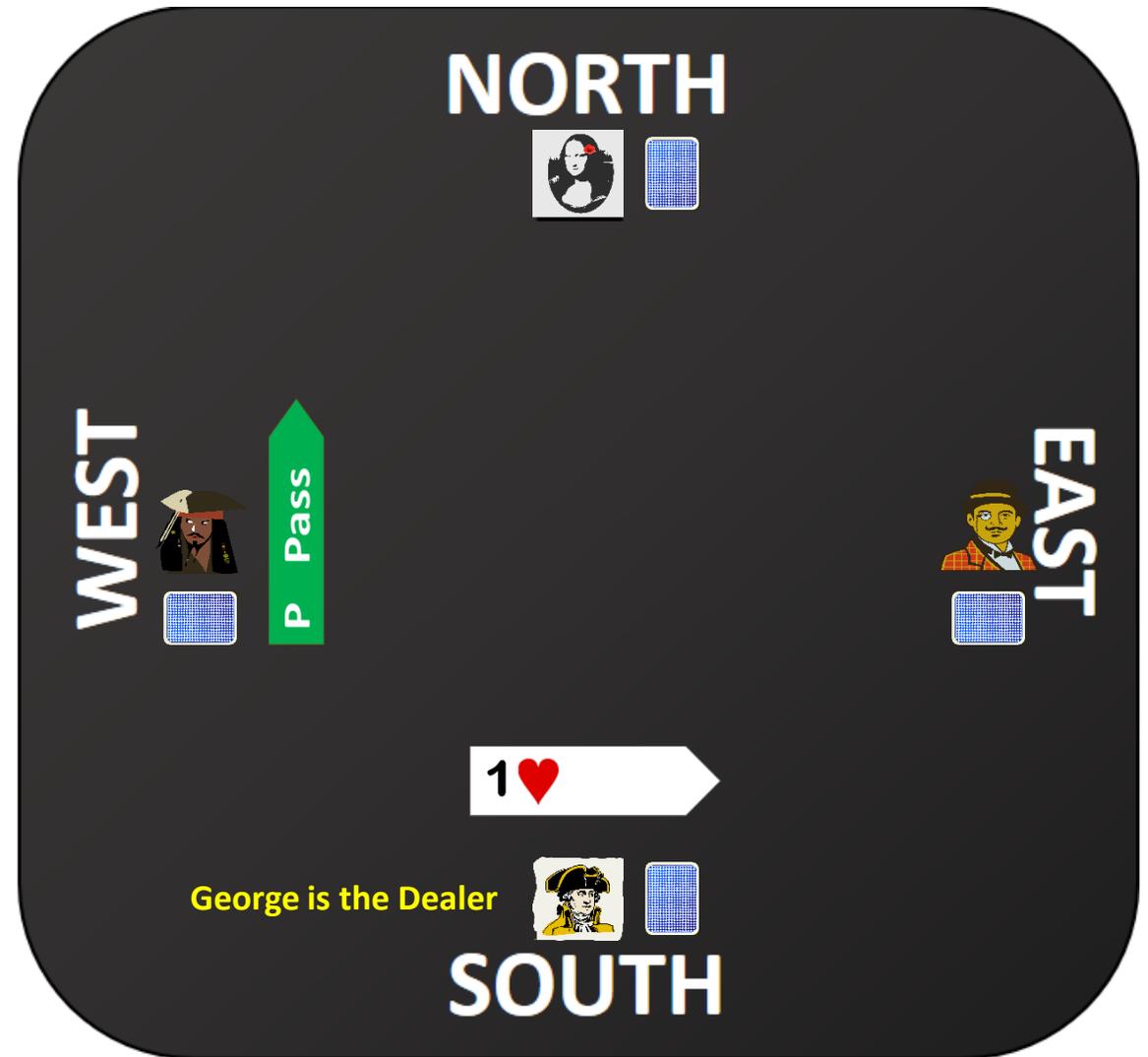
He makes the bid of **1 Heart**. Every bid means something and this one happens to show; 12 – 21 Points and 5+ cards in the Heart suit.

George's bid of 1 Heart is what is called an **Opening Bid**. The Opening Bid is the 1<sup>st</sup> non pass of the Auction.

**Rule:** There is only one Opening Bid during every bridge auction.

Captain Jack Passes. This just means, that at this moment, he does not choose to bid.

**Note:** Just because Jack passes now, does not mean he won't make bids later in the Auction.



After Mona Lisa makes the bid of 4 Hearts, the next 3 players Pass.

George and Mona Lisa have successfully bid to the Game Contract of 4 Hearts.

The Auction has determined that North – South will be playing the contract and East – West will be defending against it.

**Rule:** The player that introduced the suit of the final contract will be what is called **“The Declarer”**.

**The Declarer** will be able to control both hands of the partnership during the play segment of each Bridge hand.

So in this contract of 4 Hearts, George will control both hands from his partnership. He will attempt to take at least 10 tricks to score points for his side.

To learn about the Play Segment of a Bridge hand, check out our **“Basics of Card Play”** Lesson.

