

RUBBER BRIDGE

Why Play Rubber Bridge?

No fancy equipment required

All you need is a pack of cards and a scoresheet.

Anyone can win

Playing well can help a little but even a Super-Gold Grand-Master cannot manipulate bad cards to get a winning score

Your scores always count

Unadulterated by electronic wizardry which can convert a well-bid and well-played 5D contract into a 0% score just because others with the same cards got 10 tricks in 3NT which is worth a bit more than 11 tricks in 5D

No time constraints

You can play as fast or slow, and as many hands as you like.

Errors can be concealed

If you screw up and get a bad score you can blame it on the cards, which are manually dealt.



The "Hideous Hog" in fine form with his friends at Rubber Bridge
(from "Bridge in the Menagerie" by Victor Mollo)

Contents:

- Page 2 Introduction and some FAQs
- Page 3-4 Scoring details (replicated on Page 5 to fit all essential parts onto one page)
- Page 6 A blank sample scoresheet with details of contract and tricks made (although many just record the raw scores as in the sample in the next two pages).
- Pages 7-8 A sample scoresheet from actual play.

RUBBER BRIDGE

This is the traditional form of the game as played, for example, by “the three fat women of Antibes” and other characters in the Somerset Maugham stories.

The procedures and rules are the same as bridge played at the club (that is “duplicate bridge”, pairs or teams); only the scoring is different.

The chief difference between Rubber and Duplicate bridge is:

In Rubber a pair can make a “Game” by accumulating part-scores over two or more deals until they get the 100 required for “Game”.

Some FAQs

What is Rubber Bridge?

It is the original form of the game as your grandmother would have played.

Rubber Bridge is a stand-alone contest between two pairs. What happens at other tables can never detract from your result.

Pre-Contract Bridge games (Whist, Auction, Plafond) were all played on the “Rubber” principle.

In the second quarter of the 20th century Rubber was virtually the only form of bridge, and **everybody** knew how to play it. After 1950 matchpoint pairs became increasingly popular.

What is different in the way Rubber and Duplicate are played?

Nothing

So why are there different forms of Bridge?

The scoring is different

Matchpoint Scoring is favoured by zealots who want to have serious competition.

Rubber Scoring is favoured by real people who want to have fun.

How is the scoring different?

In Rubber Bridge there is no **immediate** bonus for making a contract; that is the 50 for Part-score and 300/500 for Game.

But when one side makes **two** games they win the “rubber bonus” which is quite substantial.

And, importantly, a pair can make Game by accumulating part-scores over two or more deals.

The actual score values are similar to the raw scores in matchpoint pairs. (In fact duplicate scores were concocted so as to be as close as possible to the equivalent result in Rubber)

(See next page for details)

What makes a player do well at Rubber Bridge?

Good cards.

Playing well helps a little bit.

Rubber Bridge Scoring:

Scores are recorded in two parts separated by a horizontal line on the scoresheet ("**above the line**" and "**below the line**" scores)

The first side to get a total of at least 100 points ***below the line*** gets a **GAME**. At that point a new line is drawn ***below everything*** so both sides resume with no scores below the line.

A side which has made a game becomes **vulnerable** (see below).

The first side to get two games gets a **rubber** and the "rubber bonus" above the line.

At that point the rubber has finished and all scores (above and below the line) are added up for each side.

A new rubber is started (with or without changing partners).

Vulnerability: At the start of any rubber both sides are non-vulnerable.
A side becomes vulnerable when they have made one game.

Scoring [1]

"Below the line" scores

These are only the scores for *what is **bid** and **made***, that is

Minor suits: **20** for each trick bid and made

Major suits: **30** for each trick bid and made

Notrumps: **40** for first trick, **30** for each further trick bid and made

If the contract is doubled and made the above score is x 2 (and x 4 if redoubled)

The score for any overtricks (made but not bid for) go ***above the line***

All other scores (such as for defeating an opponent's contract (undertricks), slam bonuses etc)

all go above the line (see next)

Scoring [2]

“Above the line” scores

All scores for *other than* what is **bid** and **made** go above the line

Overtricks:

Not doubled:	Minor suits: 20 each;	Major suits or Notrumps: 30 each
Doubled:	Non-Vul: 100 each;	Vul: 200 each
Redoubled:	Non-Vul: 200 each;	Vul: 400 each

Slams:

Small slam (bid and made 6)	Non-Vul: 500	Vul: 750
Grand slam (bid and made 7)	Non-Vul: 1000	Vul: 1500

Insult:

Making a doubled contract:	50
Making a redoubled contract:	100

Honours:

All the top 5 cards of the trump suit in one hand:	150
4 of the top 5 cards of the trump suit in one hand:	100
All 4 aces in one hand in notrumps:	150

Rubber:

Winning rubber 2 games to 1:	500	
Winning rubber 2 games to nil:	700	
Unfinished rubber: One game in:	300;	“live” part-score: 100

Undertricks:

Not doubled	Non-Vul: 50 each;	Vul: 100 each
Doubled; down 1	Non-Vul: 100;	Vul: 200
Doubled; down 2	Non-Vul: 300;	Vul: 500
Doubled; down 3	Non-Vul: 500;	Vul: 800
Doubled; down more	Non-Vul: 300 each;	Vul: 300 each
Redoubled:	twice the doubled scores as above	

Rubber Bridge Scoring:

Scores are recorded in two parts separated by a horizontal line on the scoresheet ("**above the line**" and "**below the line**" scores)

The first side to get a total of at least **100 points below the line** gets a **GAME** and they become **vulnerable** (see below).

At that point a new line is drawn **below everything** so both sides start with no scores below the line.

The first side to get **two games** gets a **RUBBER** at which point all scores above and below the line and including the "rubber bonus" are now added up for each side. A new rubber is started.

Vulnerability: At the start of any rubber both sides are non-vulnerable.
A side becomes vulnerable when they have made one game.

"Below the line" scores

These are only the scores for *what is bid and made*, that is

Minor suits: **20** for each trick bid and made

Major suits: **30** for each trick bid and made

Notrumps: **40** for first trick, **30** for each subsequent trick bid and made

If a doubled contract is made the above score is x 2 (and x 4 if redoubled)

The score for any overtricks (made but not bid for) go **above the line**

"Above the line" scores

All scores other than those for what is bid and made go above the line: that is:

Overtricks	Not doubled:	Minor suits: 20 each;	Major suits or Notrumps: 30 each
	Doubled:	Non-Vul: 100 each;	Vul: 200 each
	Redoubled:	Non-Vul: 200 each;	Vul: 400 each

Slams	Small slam (bid and made 6)	Non-Vul: 500	Vul: 750
	Grand slam (bid and made 7)	Non-Vul: 1000	Vul: 1500

Insult	Making a doubled contract: 50
	Making a redoubled contract: 100

Honours	All the top 5 cards of the trump suit in one hand: 150
	4 of the top 5 cards of the trump suit in one hand: 100
	All 4 aces in one hand in notrumps: 150

Rubber	Winning rubber 2 games to 1: 500
	Winning rubber 2 games to nil: 700
	Unfinished rubber: One game in: 300 ; "live" part-score: 100

Undertricks:	Not doubled	Non-Vul: 50 each;	Vul: 100 each
	Doubled; down 1	Non-Vul: 100 ;	Vul: 200
	Doubled; down 2	Non-Vul: 300 ;	Vul: 500
	Doubled; down 3	Non-Vul: 500 ;	Vul: 800
	Doubled; down more	Non-Vul: 300 each;	Vul: 300 each
	Redoubled:	twice the doubled scores as above	

Rubber Bridge Scoresheet

players: N _____ S _____

E _____ W _____

Dir	Vul	partscore US	partscore THEM	contract by	made	score US	score THEM
N						_____	_____
E						_____	_____
S						_____	_____
W						_____	_____
N						_____	_____
E						_____	_____
S						_____	_____
W						_____	_____
N						_____	_____
E						_____	_____
S						_____	_____
W						_____	_____

SAMPLE RUBBER SCORESHEET

Deal 1:

Frank & Lena bid 3♦ and make 5♦
Minor suits are worth 20 each so they get 60 below the line for bidding 3♦ plus 40 above the line for two overtricks.

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
40	
60	

If Frank & Lena had *bid* 5♦ (and made the same tricks) they would have had a game. As it is they need another 40 (1NT or any 2-level contract) to complete a game

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Deal 2:

Arrow & Beatrice bid 6♠ and make 6♠
They get 180 below the line for bidding 6♠
And 500 above the line for the small slam
Also Beatrice’s hand had ♠AKQJ10 so they get 150 above the line for “honours”

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
	150
40	500
60	180

Arrow & Beatrice have a game so they are now vulnerable.
Frank & Lena’s part-score of 60 is no longer “live”. To make a game now they need to bid the full value of it (100 points).

Deal 3:

Frank & Lena bid 4♥ and are doubled and go 2 down
Arrow & Beatrice get 300 above the line

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
	300
	150
40	500
60	180

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Deal 4:

Frank & Lena bid 2♥ doubled and make 2♥
They score 120 below the line so that is game. They are said to be “doubled into game” as they wouldn’t have made the game had they not been doubled.
They also get 50 above the line for “insult” (making a doubled contract)

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
	300
50	150
40	500
60	180
120	

Both sides are now vulnerable

Deal 5:

Frank & Lena bid 2♥ and make 2♥

They get 60 below the line.

Now they only need another 40 (1NT or any 2-level contract) to complete a game

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
	300
50	150
40	500
60	180
120	
60	

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Deal 6:

Arrow & Beatrice bid 1NT which is doubled and they make 2NT

They get 80 below the line plus 200 above the line for the overtrick and 50 for "insult"

With 80 below the line any contract made will give them the game (and the rubber)

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
	50
	200
	300
50	150
40	500
60	180
120	
60	80

Deal 7:

Frank & Lena bid 1NT and make 5NT.

They get 40 below the line and 120 above the line for the four overtricks.

Frank & Lena now have 100 below the line so they win their second game and get the rubber bonus of 500.

Note Frank & Lena didn't need to bid higher than 1NT to make game. Their total for that deal would always be 160 (plus the rubber bonus) if they bid anything from 1NT to 5NT and make 11 tricks.

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
	50
500	200
120	300
50	150
40	500
60	180
120	
60	80
40	

End of this Rubber. Time to add up

Frank & Lena	Arrow & Beatrice
500	50
120	200
50	300
40	150
60	500
120	180
60	80
40	
TOTALS 990	1460

Frank & Lena pay Arrow & Beatrice **\$4.70** (or \$470 or 4.70 peanuts or whatever stakes they play for)

Note although Frank and Lena won the rubber bonus they still lost points overall