

Honeymoon Bridge

2 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Hard

Duration: Long

Build a strong hand from the stock, bid a contract, and win the declared number of tricks.

SETUP

- 2 players with a standard 52-card deck.
- Deal 13 cards each. Remaining 26 cards form the stock.

SCORING

- Standard Bridge scoring: 100 below the line wins a game.
- Best of three games wins the rubber.
- Overtricks above the line; undertrick penalties to opponents.

Tip: During drawing, keep cards that build strong suits and discard from weak ones.

ON YOUR TURN

- Drawing phase: draw 2 cards, keep 1, discard 1. Alternate until stock is empty.
- Bidding: bid using standard Bridge conventions.
- Play 13 tricks. Follow suit; trumps beat led suit.

Honeymoon Bridge is a two-player adaptation of Contract Bridge. Players draw cards from a stock to build their hands, then bid and play tricks using standard Bridge conventions. It preserves the strategic depth of Bridge while making it accessible for just two players.

Objective

Score points by bidding on and making contracts, then winning the declared number of tricks with or without a trump suit, just as in standard Bridge.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Deal 13 cards face-down to each player. Place the remaining 26 cards face-down as the stock pile.

Drawing Phase

1. **Draw turns:** Players alternate drawing from the stock. The non-dealer draws first, looks at the card, and decides to keep it (adding it to their hand) or discard it face-down.
2. **Second card:** The player then draws a second card. If they kept the first, they must discard the second face-down. If they discarded the first, they must keep the second.
3. **Opponent draws:** The other player does the same, drawing two cards and keeping one.
4. **Continue:** This continues until the stock is exhausted, leaving each player with a 13-card hand.

Bidding

1. **Standard bidding:** After hands are formed, players bid using standard Bridge bidding conventions (1 Club, 1 Diamond, 1 No Trump, etc.).
2. **Contracts:** The highest bid becomes the contract. The declarer must win the bid number of tricks (plus 6).
3. **Pass out:** If both players pass immediately, the hand is redealt.

Trick Play

1. **Lead:** The non-declarer leads the first trick.
2. **Follow suit:** Players must follow suit if able. If not, they may play any card including trump.
3. **Win tricks:** The highest card of the led suit wins unless trumped. The highest trump wins if trumps are played.
4. **13 tricks:** All 13 tricks are played out.

Scoring

1. **Bridge scoring:** Use standard Bridge scoring for making or failing contracts.
2. **Game bonus:** First side to score 100 points below the line wins a game. Best of three games wins the rubber.
3. **Overtricks and undertricks:** Score overtricks above the line and undertrick penalties to the opponents.

Variations

- **Single dummy:** One player's hand is placed face-up on the table as a dummy, similar to standard Bridge.
- **Simplified scoring:** Use a simpler point system instead of full Bridge scoring for casual play.
- **No draw:** Some variants deal all 26 cards directly to each player without a drawing phase.

Tips and Strategies

- During the drawing phase, prioritize keeping cards that build toward strong suits and potential contracts.
- Pay attention to which cards your opponent keeps versus discards to infer their hand strength.
- Bid conservatively until you are comfortable with two-player bidding dynamics.

Tips & Strategy

The drawing phase is critical. Keep cards that build suits for strong bids. Discard low cards from short suits to create voids for trumping later.

The drawing phase adds a layer of strategy absent from regular Bridge. Choosing which cards to keep lets you craft a hand, but your opponent is doing the same. Reading their discards is key.