

## **Bridge Teaching and Teacher Training**

**Grow your own duplicate players**

Does your club need new members? Is the membership at your club declining? Is the age profile increasing with fewer new players joining the club? We all know that you cannot walk into a bridge club and join in an evening's duplicate, just like that, without a period of learning the game first. If one looks at bridge clubs up and down the country, there is a correlation between bridge teaching and successful clubs.

Broadly speaking, the clubs which are flourishing (and there are many of them) are those which have a successful bridge teaching programme associated with the club. Where the club does not have any teaching, and there is no bridge teaching nearby, it is often the case that membership is declining, and new people are not coming into the club.

The key to increasing the membership of your club and ensuring the future of duplicate bridge at club, county and national level is to make sure that bridge is taught to people who may wish to take up the game in your area. We all love the game of bridge, and what better way to keep it thriving than to pass on our knowledge to the next generation of learners.

The way that people learn bridge has changed over the years. Children now rarely learn from their parents and grandparents. TV and computer games have frequently taken over as family home entertainment. It is no longer common for bridge to be taught in Local Education Authority Adult Education programmes since government funding has been withdrawn for non-vocational courses. Bridge clubs can fill this gap, teachers must step up to the plate and the EBU through EBED (the charity English Bridge Education and Development) is helping them to do so with its well resourced learning materials, training courses and expert support.

There are always people looking for something to do in their spare time. Their children may have recently left home, they may have recently retired or moved, or they may have had to give up another activity for one reason or another. They might simply look around to see what is on offer in their area and choose to take up learning a language, flower arranging, joining a book club or whatever else happens to take their fancy....even bridge! If bridge is on offer, some of them will take it up.

If it is not on offer, they can't. The EBU and its affiliated clubs need to make sure that bridge teaching is available throughout the country, and that it is widely known to be available. The social advantages of playing at a bridge club where you can meet all kinds of interesting people and

make new friends are well known, but the other important positive message is the benefits bridge brings to personal well being by keeping an active mind.

People often think that any bridge player can take up teaching bridge. Why would they need to go on a course to learn to do so? Well, the truth of the matter is that there is a vast difference between just sitting down to teach a small group of friends kitchen bridge and providing effective tuition in such a way that your students will continue on to become regular members of your club.

EBED's teacher training courses not only instruct you in the techniques of teaching bridge, which can be quite an eye opener if you do not have previous experience of teaching, but also show you how to teach, so that people learn to play duplicate from the beginning in an enjoyable way. They also provide guidance in the important arts of recruiting and retaining students.

### **Bridge For All – the national learn and play programme.**

The bridge teaching materials developed and provided to affiliated teachers by the EBU and EBED are second to none. Bridge teachers who are member of EBTA, EBED's Teachers' Association, have access to a fantastic range of teaching and practice booklets, Really Easy Bridge materials, practice hands, course work books and EBED staff support and a help line.

The EBU is helping its affiliated clubs to develop their membership through bridge teaching. We are offering discounted bridge teacher courses designed especially so that students will naturally graduate from classroom to club room. If your club does not already have a successful teaching programme, it is to your club's great benefit to find someone at the club to attend one of these courses and begin a teaching course for you. The future of your club and duplicate bridge in England depends on it.

The current cost of the club teaching course is £106. For all bookings received from, invoiced to, and paid by, an EBU affiliated club, a 20% discount applies. The discount is only offered to clubs that are paying for their teachers to attend and there is no limit on the number from each club who can attend. If someone from your club would like to attend one of these courses, please contact EBED on 01296-317217 or [lisa@ebedcio.org.uk](mailto:lisa@ebedcio.org.uk)

Further information is also available on the EBU and EBED websites:

## [Education Pages](#)

### [Club Teacher Training](#)

If you already have bridge teaching in the area, there is merit in developing links between the students and club members. As the students progress, they might be invited to a few selected club sessions, with the offer of a regular member as a partner. In this way they would get the feel of a “real” bridge session and already feel at home when the time comes to consider joining as full members.

#### **Don't keep your new beginner's classes secret!**

When people want to learn to play bridge in their area they will often use a search engine starting with 'Learn to Play Bridge ( my town)'

This is where your webmaster comes in. If your club or teachers nearby are running beginners' classes make sure that during the key recruiting times – August, in time for a traditional Autumn start and over Christmas in time for a January start - your website has a prominent 'shop window' display on the home page. EBED has generic artwork which your webmaster can use. Local details can be overwritten. Teachers names and contact details, starting dates and times and venues should be made prominent.

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