

Teacher's Tip for Preparing Hands Ready for Play with a group of 4:

If you are fortunate enough to have duplicate boards and several decks of cards, you may wish to set up the hands ahead of time to play these games with a group, but even so, that could take up a lot of time and effort. Here is an alternate way to set up the hands which has everyone involved and helping and takes less time. This method requires only one deck of cards (per table), plus it gets every player involved in the process. Once players do this a few times, it will go much faster.

You need only one deck of cards. Start by sorting the deck into the 4 suits.

- 1) Print a copy of the Practice Games.
- 2) Under the position of each hand (North, South, East, West), label the hand (e.g. Bd #1, Bd #2, etc.) to correspond with the Board number of each game. This is so they do not get mixed up.
- 3) Cut out the hands with scissors. You should now have 16 hands for each position. Put them in order from #1 to #16. You should have 4 stacks of 16 hands (one stack for North, one for South, etc.) You will hand these to each of the players (N/S/E/W). Four paper clips could be used to hold the four stacks in place.

Here are the four hands for Board #1, Lesson 1, which each player should be looking at. These Bd #1 hands are at the top of the stack of 16 hands they each have:



Give each player one of the suits. Looking at his/her own hand only, each player should take the cards s/he needs from that suit and place the cards in front of him/her.

Each player passes the remaining cards to the left and takes the next suit from the player on the right. Take the cards needed from that suit and place on the table; pass remaining cards to the left.

Repeat. (Take the cards from the next suit and then pass to the left.)

Repeat one more time for the last suit.

Now all cards have been taken and each player should have the same hand as is shown on the picture; each player should make sure s/he has 13 cards. Put the picture away and start the bidding. Be sure to start with the dealer. The dealer changes for each Board.

5) Bid until the auction is completed (3 passes in a row). What is the final contract? At this point, you may wish to check the bidding and compare with the suggestions, or you may wish to finish playing before reviewing.

6) Play the hands. After each round is played, remind the players to keep each card played in front of him/her, face down, either vertical to show a trick won or horizontal to show a trick lost. After the game is finished, count how many tricks declarer's side took to make sure that you all agree. It is important that all players agree on the final contract and how many tricks were taken (or lost).

For example, the picture on the right shows 4 tricks won, 4 lost, 2 won, 2 lost, and the final trick won.



7) Did the number of tricks taken match the predicted number? If it's quite different, the playing may have been less than perfect. Either the defenders did not defend well or the Declarer did not play well, or both. This should not be looked at as a failure — it should be regarded as an opportunity to learn.

The practice games show the cards as you would see them in your hand, so it's easier to reference the bidding from the printout of the hands. Even so, sometimes you may wish to lay the cards out in front of each player, dummy style, and review the bidding and playing. This is a good time to ask questions, identify weaknesses and learn from your mistakes and from each other in a congenially manner.

How closely did your game match the bids and expected results shown? If the bidding is not the same, then why not? Sometimes you may reach the same final contract even though the bidding was different. You will also see how important it is for partners to communicate accurately with each other, using the same rules.

When finished analysing and discussing Board #1, do this next:

- 1) Each player sorts their hand into suits. Place all cards in the middle of the table, one pile for each suit.
- 2) Each player takes one suit.
- 3) Put the picture of Bd #1 at the bottom of the stack of 16 hands and look at Bd #2.
- 4) Each player takes the cards they need from that suit and then passes the remaining cards to the left, taking the next suit from their right. Continue as before until each player has 13 cards which match the picture for their position for Bd #2.