

ACBL
BRIDGE
AMBASSADOR

PROGRAM



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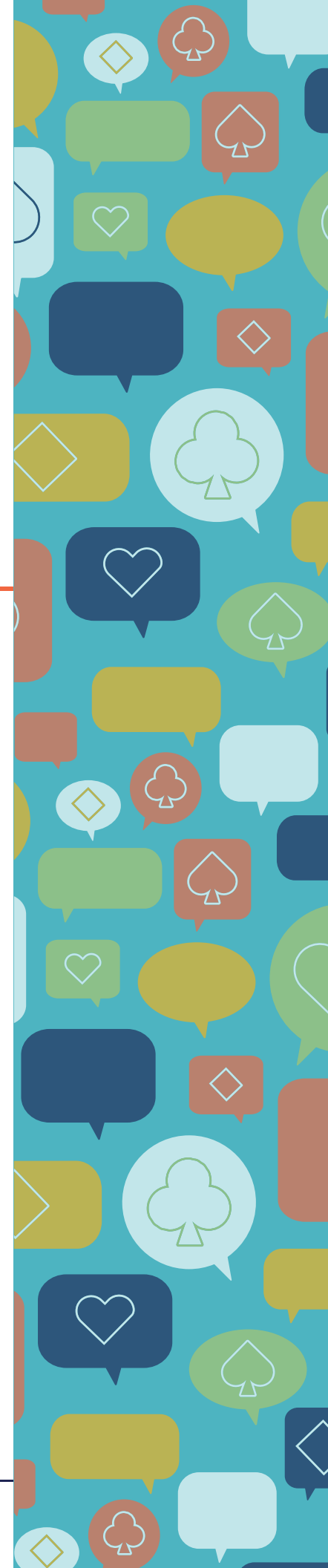


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Bridge Ambassador Program Overview



What is a Bridge Ambassador?

Local bridge clubs have a unique ability to connect with their communities while advocating for the game. With a passionate Bridge Ambassador, a local club can have a go-to person that can reach out to the community with in-person events that promote bridge, the club and the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL). In turn, this will foster community engagement.

Program Goals

- Increase awareness of bridge and participation in club games, lessons
- Create a sense of camaraderie in the local community
- Promote the club and resources from the ACBL

Benefits for the Bridge Club

- Greater visibility of the club in their community
- Opportunity for the club to gain new players and students
- Potential to earn recruiter incentives (participants must list club number on member application forms)
- Periodic recognition for clubs and their ambassadors in ACBL communications

Bridge Ambassador Responsibilities

- **Define a short, friendly event introducing members of the community to bridge.** An example is an interactive workshop that features a brief overview of a trick-taking game followed by play with a table mentor.
- **Decide whether your event will be held at a neighborhood organization or invite the community to the club.** Examples of an area organization are the YMCA, a country club, golf club or adult community center.
- **If looking to partner with a local organization, reach out to them and explain the event and how they and their members will benefit.** The event promotes mental stimulation, social interaction and community in a fun, casual atmosphere. You can also volunteer to post details of the organization's activities in the bridge club or on your social media. Talking points are included in this packet.
- **Recruit volunteers.** Volunteers may teach the lesson, act as table mentors, handout surveys and collect contact information.
- **Gather necessary resources.** You will need items like tables and chairs, cards, etc. The ACBL will provide a teacher's guide, lesson PowerPoint, take-home sheet for students, business card-sized handouts with helpful links and PBN or DUP files. \$40 for refreshments will also be provided when you contact the ACBL at playcards@acbl.org.
- **Promote the event.** This could be done with posts on personal social media accounts, on neighborhood groups, like Nextdoor, or a flier posted at a partner facility or community bulletin board – anything you can think of to spread the word!
- **Host a fun, interactive event that features card play and also introduces bridge.** An example would be several hands of related games, like spades, Bridge War and euchre, along with a brief bridge lesson.
- **Collect names and contact information of participants and send to playcards@acbl.org.** This will allow the ACBL to reach out with an 18-week series of bridge tips, a monthly beginner newsletter and other no-pressure, fun activities.
- **Gather feedback from participants and any volunteers with a brief survey.** The ACBL has included surveys that can be printed and distributed in this packet.

Bridge Ambassador Program Overview *Cont.*



Following Up with Event Participants

The club will share their participants list with contact information to the ACBL, who will follow up within 30 days and periodically over the following 12 months. The League will include more information about learning and playing bridge in the participant's area.

You may also want to personally reach out to invite them to events or lessons at the club.

Tracking Success

These metrics will be evaluated to show the strength of the events:

- Number of attendees at the event
- Number of sign-ups for lessons
- Number of event attendees at future club games
- Number of new memberships (guest or regular)
- Survey feedback

Conclusion

The Bridge Ambassador Program is a pivotal step toward creating a thriving and engaged bridge community. With a passionate ambassador, we can spread the joy of bridge, enhance local community connections and contribute to the growth and success of the ACBL. Let's bridge the gap together and build a stronger bridge community!



Bridge Ambassador Program: The Role of the Bridge Club



Watch Your Bridge Ambassadors Take the Community by Storm!

Bridge clubs like yours are uniquely positioned to grow the bridge community. An ambassador to take bridge to where the people are will serve as a funnel to becoming new students and players into your club.

It's this idea of bringing bridge out into the neighborhood that led to the ACBL's Bridge Ambassador Program. A Bridge Ambassador can showcase the game at places like country clubs and senior centers or at the club itself with short, friendly events including card play and perhaps a lesson, too.

Choosing a Great Bridge Ambassador

Your bridge ambassador will not only serve as the face of your bridge club, but will also be creating and executing events with the help of other volunteers. They will need to be friendly and outgoing with basic bridge knowledge and a knack for organization. Smiling a lot helps, too!

What Will the Bridge Ambassador Do?

First, the bridge ambassador should design an outreach event that is friendly, easy and fairly short. Something that will entice casual card players and introduce them to bridge. We have an example timeline of an event in this packet, but you're not limited to it. Be creative and think about what can be a gateway to learning to play bridge or playing duplicate.

Next, decide if your club will host the event or you will "go where the people are" somewhere where they gather socially. Examples are community centers or senior centers, churches and synagogues, country clubs and sports clubs (think golf, pickleball, tennis, etc.).

If you do aim to partner with a neighborhood organization, the ambassador can engage a representative to ask about the possibility of sharing space for the event in return for promotion at your bridge club, on your social media and in emails. (Suggested talking points are also in this packet.)

Alternatively, your club could host the event. Because you will already have the resources at the club, it may be easier, but be sure to consider what will be most effective at recruiting casual card players.

Finally, the ambassador should collect participants' contact information for follow-up by your club and the ACBL.

Helping Your Bridge Ambassador

Your bridge ambassador will likely need help executing and promoting the event. Please assist them in recruiting volunteers at your club and in your community.

The ACBL has created several resources (below) that you can share with the ambassador. Also, we encourage you to tell the ACBL when an event is scheduled so we can further support the effort. Simply reach out to us at playcards@acbl.org.

Resources for the Event

- Overview for the Bridge Ambassador (p. 6)
- Talking Points for Partner Organizations (p. 13)
- Optional Event Timeline (p. 12)
- [Printable Business Card-Sized Handouts](#)
- [Lesson Hands PBN](#)
- [Lesson Hands DUP](#)
- [Lesson Hand Record](#)
- [Bridge War Powerpoint](#)
- [Bridge War Pdf](#)



For the business card template, just fill in the first card. The others will automatically be populated with your information. We recommend you use cardstock (65 lbs.) for printing the cards. If you print at home, be sure the print settings are set to actual size. You can also take the file to your local print shop.

Thank you for your investment of time, expertise and manpower. The ACBL is grateful for your dedication to growing the game. Together we can infuse your club with excited new players.

Bridge Ambassador Program: The Role of the Ambassador



Bridge Ambassador Program Overview

A Bridge Ambassador is an outgoing, passionate member of the local bridge club who organizes and promotes in-person events introducing bridge to the community. With their events, the bridge ambassador can showcase the fun of bridge, bridge lessons and the ACBL.

About the Ambassador's Events

The bridge ambassador is responsible for managing an in-person, community event that combines playing a trick-taking card game, some basic instructions and a few simple hands of bridge.

This kind of event could be held in two different ways to reach the community. First is to go to “where the people are” – community centers or senior centers, churches and synagogues, country clubs and sports clubs (think golf, pickleball, tennis, etc.). Second is to hold the event at the bridge club and invite others in the area to join you.

The first kind of event – one at a neighborhood facility – will be a little harder to organize, but you will have the benefit of attracting the attention of the facility’s patrons and passersby.



How to Get Started

- Decide whether you want to hold the event at a local facility or the bridge club.
 - An event introducing bridge to the community is certainly a win for your club, but the organization will want to see “what’s in it for them.” We included some general talking points you may use in this packet.
 - Reach out with a firm plan in place and, if necessary, follow up and be persistent.
- Create a detailed plan or timeline for the event (there is a sample one in this packet).
- Recruit volunteers to help run the event and be table mentors.
- Recruit a teacher, if necessary.
- Gather materials, like duplicated boards and handouts.

Bridge Ambassador Program: The Role of the Ambassador *Cont.*



Planning the Event

An engaging event will appeal to casual card game players while introducing them to the fun and challenge of bridge. Perhaps draw them in with a simpler trick-taking game, like spades, and ease into learning and playing bridge. Showcase how bridge promotes mental stimulation, social interaction and a fun, inclusive atmosphere.

Event Example

- Briefly explain the trick-taking game you will start with. Bridge War is a good one to begin with. (Bridge War is similar to bridge but there is not a suit contract, and the first partnership to take 7 tricks wins.)
- Hand out the duplicate boards (8 for each table). PBN and DUP files are included in this packet, along with a PDF of hand records.
 - Hands 1-3: Bridge War.
 - Hand 4: Introduce a trump suit with hearts as trump. Every hand should include some hearts.
 - Hands 5-8: Created so that one partnership has the most high-card points and has a trump suit fit. Dealer is also the Declarer.
- Distribute business card-sized handouts so the participants can learn more about bridge and your club (templates in packet).

Materials Needed

- **Tables and chairs.** If not available at the facility, bring easy-to-move ones from the club.
- **Duplicated boards.** 8 hands with about 10 minutes per hand would be 1 hour and 20 minutes of play, ensuring all players will be declarer twice. Duplication will ensure teachers can make relevant comments on hands to all players at the same time.
- **Table mats.** Just to familiarize players with the concept of direction designations.
- **PowerPoint for lesson.** Either with a projector, printed ahead of time for each participant or if a smaller group, shown on a laptop.
- **Printed hand records.** A PDF of an 8-board hand record is included in this packet.
- **Nametags.** Be sure to bring plenty of pens or markers.
- **Sign in sheets.** Templates leaving space for contact information are provided in program packet.
- **Business card-sized handouts.** Useful take-home information with links to helpful websites, like Bridge4Friends.fun. Printable templates included in this packet.
- **Club promotional fliers.** Promoting upcoming games, lessons or other events at the club.
- **Surveys.** For both participants and volunteers to fine tune the event.
- **Do not include bidding boxes.** No bidding for the events, just Minibridge format, to ensure ease of learning and play.

Bridge Ambassador Program: The Role of the Ambassador *Cont.*



Event Promotion

There are several ways that will spread the word in your local community.

- **Post on social media.** In addition to the club's accounts, recruit the players at the club to share the information on their personal accounts.
- **Send an email to your contact list.** Encourage club members to do the same.
- **Add to digital bulletin boards.** You can find neighborhood-related community groups and pages on Facebook. Also, Nextdoor serves as a message board neighbors based on zip code.
- **Hang and pass out fliers.** Some effective places are libraries, community centers, coffee shops and other local businesses.
- **Advertise with local news outlets.** A small ad in a local publication or a short ad on a local radio station can be effective.

If you hold the event at a local facility, ask them to use their channels to promote the event, as well. You can offer promoting their facility at your club in return.

Following Up

Ensure that each participant added their contact information to the sign in sheet. Both the bridge ambassador and the ACBL will follow up with participants to connect them to resources and take them further on their bridge journey.

While still at the event, the bridge ambassador will pass out the business card-sized handouts and any fliers about the club. After, the bridge ambassador will reach out with a phone call about upcoming lessons at the club and other events.

The bridge ambassador will also share the contact information with the ACBL (email to playcards@acbl.org) so that the League can send tailored emails, including bridge tips and beginner newsletters.



Bridge Ambassador Program: Teacher Guide



About the Bridge Ambassador Program

Local bridge clubs have a unique, powerful opportunity to introduce bridge to their community, and their grassroots efforts are often the best way to create a bridge player. With the help of a Bridge Ambassador, a club can reach out to potential players with in-person events that pique the interest of those who play games - especially cards - and inspire them to attend lessons.

The Bridge Ambassador Program aims to assist clubs, volunteers and teachers with structuring and implementing an event that serves as a gateway to bridge with resources and guides. The goal is to give players a fun activity and leave them wanting to know more.

Role of the Bridge Ambassador

The bridge ambassador is a volunteer at the local bridge club who designs and organizes in-person events for community outreach. These events could be held at the bridge club, or - and potentially more effective as a recruiting tactic - go “where the people are” at local social gathering places.

The bridge ambassador is responsible for gaining and setting up the space with all materials needed (tables, chairs, cards, direction mats, etc.). Bidding should not be included in this lesson, so there will not be bidding boxes.

Role of the Teacher

The ideal event a bridge ambassador creates will be a hybrid of playing a basic trick-taking card game (like spades or Bridge War) and easing into bridge with the benefit of a brief lesson and mentored play. A sample lesson format and script are below, along with resources. A prospective timeline is also in this packet.

Sample Event Format

- Divide the group into pairs while explaining the concept of partnerships.
- Introduce table mentors, if available, and explain how they can help players.
- Overview of trick-taking games and the way bridge takes basic games a step further (about 5 minutes).
 - Be sure to describe what they see on the table.
 - You may want to use a short PowerPoint or handout to assist.
- Allow for questions, but don't go down any one path for too long. They will learn by doing in a few minutes!
- **Note:** Hand records and dupe files are included in this packet to help the teacher effectively lead the lesson to all participants.
- Begin with a few hands of spades or Bridge War (no trump suit, first to take 7 tricks wins the game).
- Segue into a few simple hands of bridge
- Help the bridge ambassador pass out business card-sized handouts and any other promotional materials.
- Assist the bridge ambassador in collecting event surveys.



Sample Lesson Script

Below is a sample script that corresponds with the suggested lesson plan in this packet. Instructions and reminders just for the teachers are in italics.

- Remove the cards from the board and count how many cards are in your hand. There will be 13.
- Note that the board designates a “Dealer.” The player to the left of the Dealer “leads to the first trick” by putting any card from their hand in front of them on the table.

Try to not get involved with which card is “best” at this point.

- The player to the left of the card on the table now puts all their cards down, face-up on the table and in suit order, (alternating colors, red/black for ease of viewing). This is called the “Dummy” hand.
- Play continues clockwise until all 4 players have “played” to the “trick.”
 - A “trick” is made up of 1 card played from each hand.
 - You must “follow suit.” If the first card led to the trick was a ♣, then every player must contribute a ♣ from their hand. If you don’t have a ♣, just “discard” any card from your hand.
 - The one who plays the highest card of the suit led is the winner of the trick.
- The player who wins the trick leads a card to start the next trick, by playing any card from their hand on the table.

Allow time for play.

- Count your winning tricks. Who won 7 tricks? Did anyone win 8? 9?

On board #3, introduce hand evaluation and high-card points (HCP). Explain: A=4, K=3, Q=2 J=1.

- Please put your hands on the table, everyone, as if you were the dummy. We’re going to evaluate our hands together, as partners.
- Each side please count your combined HCP. The side with the most HCP in each hand will be the declaring partnership.
- The player from the pair that has the most HCP will be the Declarer. Partner’s hand will be the Dummy.

On board #4, introduce the possibility of a trump suit.

- You must follow suit, but if you cannot follow suit, then you can play a trump card, like a wild card. The trump suit “outranks” any other suit.
- You don’t HAVE to trump! It may be a better strategy to wait to use your trump card.

Between boards #4 and #5, please allow 5 minutes for a hospitality break.

Allow time for play.

- Count your winning tricks. Who won 7 tricks? Did anyone win 8? 9?
- Turn over the cards where you won the trick – are they all high cards? Did anyone win a trick with a small card? Why might that be?

Bridge Ambassador Program: Teacher Guide *Cont.*



Allow time for play.

Wrap up by asking if they like playing in notrump or with a trump suit better.

Ask if there are any questions.

Suggest the players continue to learn and play bridge while presenting upcoming opportunities.

Re-introduce the bridge ambassador, who will distribute handouts, any promotional fliers and a survey.

Resources for the Event

- [Optional Event Timeline \(p. 12\)](#)
- [Lesson Hands PBN](#)
- [Lesson Hands DUP](#)
- [Lesson Hand Record](#)
- [Bridge War Powerpoint](#)
- [Bridge War PDF](#)



Bridge Ambassador Program: Proposed Event Schedule



Registration

- A sign in sheet to gather contact information is included in this packet.
- Encourage participants to create and use a nametag.

Bridge Ambassador welcomes participants and introduces themselves, volunteers and teacher.

Bridge Ambassador explains what the participants can expect during the event.

Teacher begins event (a sample script is included in this packet).

Note: Boards, table mats and any instructional materials should already be in place.

- **Hands 1-2:** Play a simple trick-taking game, such as Bridge War or spades, with light instruction.
- **Hand 3:** Introduce the concept of high-card points and hand valuation.
- **Hand 4:** Introduce the concept of a trump suit with hearts as trump. Every hand should include some hearts.
- **5-minute break**
- **Hands 5-8:** Created so that one partnership has the most high-card points and has a trump suit fit. Dealer is also the Declarer.

Closing Remarks

- Reintroduce the bridge ambassador.
- Thank participants and volunteers.
- Distribute business card-sized handouts, promotional fliers and surveys.

Bridge Ambassador Program: Talking Points for Partner Organizations



In some ways it may be easier to hold an event at the club – tables and chairs already there! – but partnering with a neighborhood facility creates an extremely effective funnel for getting participants. You're meeting the people where they are. You may even pique the interest of passersby on the day of the event!

Here are examples of the facilities to target:

- Country club
- Sports club (golf, tennis, pickleball, etc.)
- Community center
- Senior center
- Church or synagogue

When you reach out to the facility, be sure to have practiced your talking points and bring an event schedule. Some talking point suggestions are below.

- Their patrons will be introduced to bridge's amazing mental and social benefits, helping them lead more active, healthier lives.
- The event will be a fun activity that includes more casual card games, like spades, and eases them into some of the exciting differences found only in bridge. (Show event schedule.)
- The event will be short, less than two hours, so that it serves as a bonus for their patrons and not a distraction.
- With a partnership, the facility will make a significant positive contribution to an engaged, inclusive community.
- The club will provide refreshments.
- If the facility does not have tables and chairs, the club can provide them.
- The club can help to promote the facility in many ways.
 - The facility can be temporarily featured in future club emails, social media and in the club itself.
 - An informational session on the facility's offerings could be presented at the club.
 - The facility's logo and other information can be included on fliers the club uses to promote the event. Fliers will be spread locally to places like coffee shops and libraries.

If the facility says no, don't give up! Regularly try again, tweaking your tactics. Persistence can be a great asset.

Participant Survey



We're Grateful for Your Feedback!

Thank you for participating in our recent bridge event! Your input is valuable to us, and we appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts.

Name of Event: _____

Date of Event: _____

Sponsoring Club (if known): _____

1. After this event, are you interested in learning about or playing more bridge? _____

2. If so, how would you like to hear about future events (e.g., email, phone call, mailed flier)?

3. What did you enjoy most about the event?

4. What aspects do you think need improvement?

5. How did you hear about our event?

6. Please share any other comments or suggestions.

Thank you for helping us enhance our bridge events! We hope you'll spread the word!

Volunteer Survey



We're Grateful for Your Feedback!

Thank you for volunteering at our recent bridge event! Your input is valuable to us, and we appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts.

Sponsoring Club: _____

Name of Event: _____

Date of Event: _____

1. How well do you think the event went? Were participants interested in learning about or playing more bridge?

2. What aspects do you think had the most positive impact?

3. What aspects do you think need improvement?

Thank you for helping us enhance our bridge events!