

Virtual Vacation ACBL Tournament



August 12-15
Break Away to Bridge



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Virtual Vacation Regional Tournament FAQ

Q: I've never played online bridge. How do I get started?

A: ACBL has compiled several videos to help players get started and find their way around BBO. You can find those here: <https://www.acbl.org/bbotutorials/#players>

Q: How do I know if my ACBL number is connected to my Bridge Base Online profile?

A: From the [home page](#) under Featured Areas: (1) click on ACBL World, then (2) click on "Add your ACBL Number". If your ACBL number is not shown, enter it. Log off and log back on before you register for an upcoming event.

Q: Where can I find the schedule? How much do games cost? What time are the games?

A: You can find the schedule for the Virtual Vacation regionally rated event at www.acbl.org/virtual.

All events are \$15 per person per session. For single-session events, you will pay \$30 per pair at registration. For two-session events, you will pay \$60 per pair at the time of registration. All game times listed on the schedule are Eastern Time.

Q: How many boards per session and how long will each session take?

A: Each session will be 18 boards except the Top-Flight and Mid-Flight two-session events will be 20 boards. Each session will take between two hours and two hours and 20 minutes to complete.

Q: How do I sign up for the tournament?

A: Registration opens on Bridge Base Online (BBO) two hours before game time and remains open until the event begins. You are encouraged to register at least 15 minutes before game time to ensure your place. You and your partner must both be logged into BBO in order to register. You must both have sufficient money in your BB\$ account, and your ACBL numbers must be associated with your BBO Account. If you are registering for a two-session event (such as Gold Rush, Mid-Flight or Top-Flight Pairs), you will register and pay for both sessions before the first session starts. There will be no need to register for the second session separately.

Q: How do I pay for my entry?

A: You must first purchase BB\$ (with credit card or PayPal) from BBO, and then when you register, the money will be deducted from your BBO account. Make sure you have sufficient funds in your account to pay for your entries! Check out BBO's instructions online: <https://www.bridgebase.com/purchase/pay.php>

Q: Is there a Junior discount?

A: Yes! If you are 25 or under, send an email to online.tournament@acbl.org as soon as you can after your last session including your name, age, ACBL number, BBO ID and the sessions in which you played, and your BB\$ account will be refunded \$10 per session.

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Q: There are identical listings for the Gold Rush Pairs. Which one should I register for?

A: For practical reasons, very large events are split into manageable pieces. You can register for either listing of the event. They are both the same.

Q: Do my partner and I need a convention card? How do we make one?

A: Yes, every pair must have a completed convention card available for their opponents to view. To create a convention card with your partner, click on the "Account" tab on the right side of your screen and choose "Convention Cards" from the menu at the top, then "new convention card". IMPORTANT: Put your partner's BBO username (not their real name) in the box to the right of the word "Partner" in the blue section at the top of the card. If you do this, your convention card will automatically upload to any tournament in which you play. Once you've completed and saved your convention card, it will show up under "Personal Cards" in both you and your partner's accounts.

To view your opponents' convention card during the tournament, click on the menu (blue box with three white horizontal lines in the upper left hand side of your screen), and you will see an option to view their card.

To load your convention card in case it does not load automatically, click on the "Account" tab on the right side of your screen and choose "Convention Cards" from the menu at the top. You will see a list of convention cards (Stock Cards and Personal Cards). Click once on the one that you want to use. You will see a new window "What would you like to do with...". Type partner's BBO username on the empty box next to "Use With Partner" and after that click "Use with partner". Do NOT click on "Use With Partner" before typing partner's BBO username. If you don't see a list of convention cards, but instead you open one convention card, click "Back" on the top left of that convention card and you will see the list of available convention cards.

Q: What if I don't have a partner?

A: Go to the Registration Desk of the event in which you wish to play and add your name to the Partnership Desk, which you'll see in the upper right side of the Registration window. Or choose a player listed on the Partnership Desk and "invite" them to play with you.

Q: If I don't sign up two hours before the game, will it fill up?

A: We have dramatically increased the number of entries available for each event, especially the very popular Gold Rush Pairs. New sections will be added if the ones originally available fill up. We will have room for all players who register before game time.

Q: How do I win gold points?

A: In order to win gold points, you must: (1) play in a two-session event; and (2) for strata of 750 masterpoints or more, place first in your section and direction or be among the overall winners. Single-session events and events or strata limits below 750 masterpoints award red points only. Gold points are also available in the Side Game Series with the following conditions: (1) you

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must play at least two sessions of the same series; and (2) you must place first in stratum A in your section and direction, or (3) have a series score, the sum of your two best percentage games, which ranks among the overall winners. Gold points for Side Game Series are only awarded in stratum A. Strata B and C award red points only.

Q: What is a Side Game (Side Game Series)?

A: The Side Game is an Open stratified pairs game that is just one session. It is similar to a club game. Side Games award fewer masterpoints than events which require a two-session commitment. They do offer a chance for earning gold points if you play in two or more sessions in the same series.

A Side Game Series is several games under the same name played at the same time each day. In the Virtual Vacation Online Regional there are four Side Game Series: the Campfire Side Game Series played each day at 10:45 a.m.; the S'mores Side Game Series, played each day at 2:15 p.m.; the Firefly Side Game Series, played each day at 5:30 p.m.; and the Moonlight Side Game Series, played each day at 9:00 p.m. (all listed times are Eastern Time). If you play in two or more side games in the same Series (in other words, at the same time of day), you may be eligible for Gold Points if you do well.

Q: May I play with a different partner in each Side Game?

A: Yes! You and your partner can play in a Side Game and you might play with a different partner in another Side Game in the same Series. When the Series overall awards are determined, your own two best percentage games are used to determine your placing. If your partner plays only one session or with different partners, your overall scores will differ.

Q: Can I play in the Thursday 10:45 side game and the Sunday 10:45 side game and have those count as combined two sessions?

A: Yes! You can play in any two sessions (or more!) of the same series to have those count towards your overall placement.

Q: Can I win gold points if I play two sessions of a 499er event?

A: No. 499er games award only red points, even if you play more than one session.

Q: I have 150 masterpoints®. In what event may I play?

A: Any player may play in any event that has no masterpoint limitation. For any event with an upper masterpoint limit, neither player may have more points than the masterpoint limit. For example, to play in a 499er event, neither player may have more than 500 masterpoints. Because you have 150 masterpoints, you may play in any event in the virtual tournament.

Q: I am a Life Master with 720 masterpoints. Am I allowed to play in the Gold Rush events?

A: Yes, as long as you do not have more than the upper masterpoint limit for the event, you are allowed to play in it. Being a Life Master does not affect your eligibility.

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Q: My partner and I only have enough time to play one session. Where can we play?

A: 499er and Side Games are all single-session events. If you and your partner choose to play in one of these events, you are committing to play just one session. Because these are all single-session events, they award only red points. The Side Game Series is a special exception. Playing two or more times in the same Side Game Series makes you eligible to win gold points in that series if you do well. You can register for all single-session games during the two-hour window before they start.

Q: What is a two-session event? May I play the first session of the Thursday Gold Rush and the first session of the Friday Gold Rush?

A: A two-session event is one in which a partnership commits to play in and pays for two sessions in advance. At this tournament, all two-session events are played on the same day, and the second session begins three and one-half hours after the first session begins. Therefore, if you want to play in the Thursday Golden Sunshine Gold Rush Pairs which begins at 10:15 Eastern Time, you are also paying for and committing to play in the Thursday 1:45 (Eastern time) Golden Sunshine Gold Rush Pairs session. The Thursday morning and Friday morning games are not part of the same event.

Q: If my partner and I sign up for the two-session Gold Rush Pairs on Thursday morning, may we withdraw after the first session?

A: If you plan to withdraw, PLEASE notify the director that you are withdrawing. Although you are allowed to withdraw, your money for the second session will not be refunded.

Q: If my partner and I do not do well in the first session of Gold Rush Pairs, may we switch into the 499er game for the second session? Or just get our money back for the second session?

A: Your entry fee can only be used in the event you entered and is not refundable. Keep in mind, however, you still have a chance to win masterpoints, even gold points, if you stay in the event and do well in the second session.

Q: My partner has 480 masterpoints, and I have 140. May we play in the 499er pairs, even though our combined total of masterpoints is more than 500?

A: Yes. To qualify for the 499er pairs, each player must have fewer than 500 masterpoints. Your combined total does not have to be under 500.

Q: I have 800 masterpoints, and my partner has 400. Since we average only 600, may we play in the Gold Rush pairs where the upper limit is 750 masterpoints?

A: No. To qualify for an event with a 750 masterpoint limit, both players must have fewer than 750 masterpoints. Since you have more than 750 masterpoints, you are not eligible to play in this event. Remember, eligibility for events is based on the higher player's masterpoint total. Once you are eligible to play in an event, your stratum is determined by the average of the two players' masterpoint totals.

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Q: What do I do if the game starts and I am not taken to a table?

A: If you (or your partner) have not been active on your BBO screen for some time, BBO may think that you (or your partner) are offline when the game starts and remove you from the tournament. It's a good idea to chat with your partner through BBO a few minutes before game time so BBO knows you are active, and make sure you are in the Competitive or Home page area and not playing in or watching a Casual Game. If your registration is cancelled or you are not taken to a table when the game starts, click on the box to the left of the event you were going to play in ("ACBLTour" or "ACBLTour2"), send an email to online.tournament@acbl.org, or from your people tab, click on "hosts" and chat to anyone with an ACBLT# BBO handle for help before or at the start of the event.

Q: What happens if I get disconnected during the tournament?

A: If you get disconnected, try to log back on as quickly as you can. Your seat will be held for you. Generally, you will be taken immediately back to your table once you log back on. If it takes some time for you to log back on, a substitute player may be put in to complete a hand or round. Once you are back online, you will be returned to your table as soon as the hand or round is complete.

Q: How do I contact the Director if there is a problem?

A: The blue box with three white horizontal lines on your screen is your menu. If you click on the menu box, you will see an option to Call the Director. Write a brief note in the box that appears explaining what the issue is.

Q: I misclicked on a call or card, can I undo and how?

A: Undos for misclicks on a played card are not allowed. For a misclick of a call (1 Spade instead of 1 Heart, for example), the undo is allowed under certain conditions. To ask for the undo you need to stop the action at the table as soon as possible and call the director. Best way to do this: Click on the "Undo" option (blue icon with three horizontal lines on the top left of the table) to ask for the undo at the table, and then call the director through the same blue icon. The director will assess if conditions for the undo are met and instruct the table accordingly.

Q: My opponent claimed. Do I need to play it out if I don't agree?

A: After a claim by declarer, defenders either accept the claim or not. If they don't accept, they have the option of playing it out or calling the director. If either defender wishes to call the director, just click on the blue icon with three white lines on the top left of the table area and select that option (no need to reject the claim). If both defenders reject the claim and play at least one card, they are deemed to have decided to play the hand out and the result achieved at the table will stand.

Q: Does my partner alert my bids by chatting to the table?

A: No, unlike live bridge, when you make an alertable bid online you must Alert it yourself. This includes announceable bids such as opening NT range (even if it is 15-17), transfers and "short

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club.” When you intend to make an alertable bid, first click on the red Alert Box (located below your rows of bids), then type in a brief explanation of your bid, THEN click on the bid. Your opponents will see a pop-up with the explanation. If you have a question about an opponent’s bid, click on the bid and they will see a pop-up box requesting an explanation. If you forget to alert a bid, click on the bid and you will see a box in which you can type your explanation. Do not ask questions about bids or explain bids in the table chat as this could lead to Unauthorized Information for your partner and your opponents.

Q: I heard there are new Alert Procedures. Will they be in effect at this tournament?

A: Yes. The revised Alert Procedures went into effect on January 1, 2021. Most of the changes are relatively minor and a learning curve is expected. Here is a link to a brief summary of the changes that will affect most players: <https://bridgefeed.acbl.org/red-alert/>. And here is a link to the entire revised Alert Procedures:

<https://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/AlertProcedures2.pdf>

Q: Whom do I contact if a score was adjusted incorrectly?

A: The Director in Charge (DiC) of your event will send out chats during the last round of the session to let you know whom to contact with score corrections or other issues once the session is complete. You can also click on the people tab, then click on “hosts” and chat to anyone with a BBO handle ACBLT#.

Q: My partner and I had a 52% in the second session of the Gold Rush pairs, and we won nothing. One of the other pairs had a 49% game and won gold points. Why did they win gold points even though we scored better than they did?

A: At the end of the second session, the masterpoint award next to your names represents your total masterpoint award for the event. Remember, another pair who had 49% this session might have had a much better score during the first session. If that score was first place in its section and direction, or if the sum of their scores was high enough to rank among the overall winners for the two sessions, they would have earned gold points.

Q: Why were the masterpoints for my first session crossed out when I looked on ACBL Live?

A: Your masterpoints were not taken away. Your total masterpoints for both sessions are shown next to your name in the second session results of a two-session event. ACBL Live puts dashes through your first session total to indicate that those points are now included in your final result.

Q: My results said I won Gold/Red points. How do I know how many points are Gold and how many are Red?

A: Contact online.tournament@acbl.org and we’ll let you know the breakdown of Gold and Red points you earned. The breakdown of Red vs. Gold points will appear shortly following the tournament in your MyACBL account. Click on “Masterpoint History” from the menu on the left once you have logged into MyACBL and you’ll see a daily breakdown of points by color.

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Q: How do I ask for help on BBO before the tournament?

A: From the list of pending tournaments, click on the box to the left of the event you are going to play in (“ACBLTour” or “ACBLTour2”) and send a BBO chat message, or send an email to online.tournament@acbl.org, or from your people tab click on “hosts” and chat to anyone with an ACBLT# BBO username for help before or at the start of the event.

Q: Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

A: Send an email to online.tournament@acbl.org with questions about the tournament.