

ON-LINE BRIDGE INSTRUCTIONS

Bridge Base Online (BBO) provides a free platform where you can play socially in groups of four or eight as well as taking part in on line 'tournaments' hosted by Auckland Bridge Club . This describes how to set up BBO on a PC so you can play online social bridge. (BBO uses Flash, relatively old software, which isn't supported by some models of tablet and other platforms).

This is a really simple system that is easy to use, even for those of us who are not very technologically literate, although set up can be a bit fiddly until you are used to it. Once the table is set up, you will also find that playing is intuitive and self-evident. It is just like being at the bridge club, and like the club you can have a glass of wine in your hand at the same time.

The platform allows for chat communication by typing text in a message board as the game progresses. If you want to be able to talk to each other, you may want to have an open hone line or download Zoom or an equivalent platform.

This guide is divided into three sections:

- How to register and join a table
- Tips for playing
- How to host a table (ie be the person who is arranging the game)

If you are a player rather than a host, just contact the host if you are having difficulty and they should be able to guide you through the initial steps.

If you want to learn about how to find your way around BBO, there is a blue Help button on the top right tab when you first go in, which triggers a drop down menu.

REGISTERING AND JOINING A TABLE

Step 1

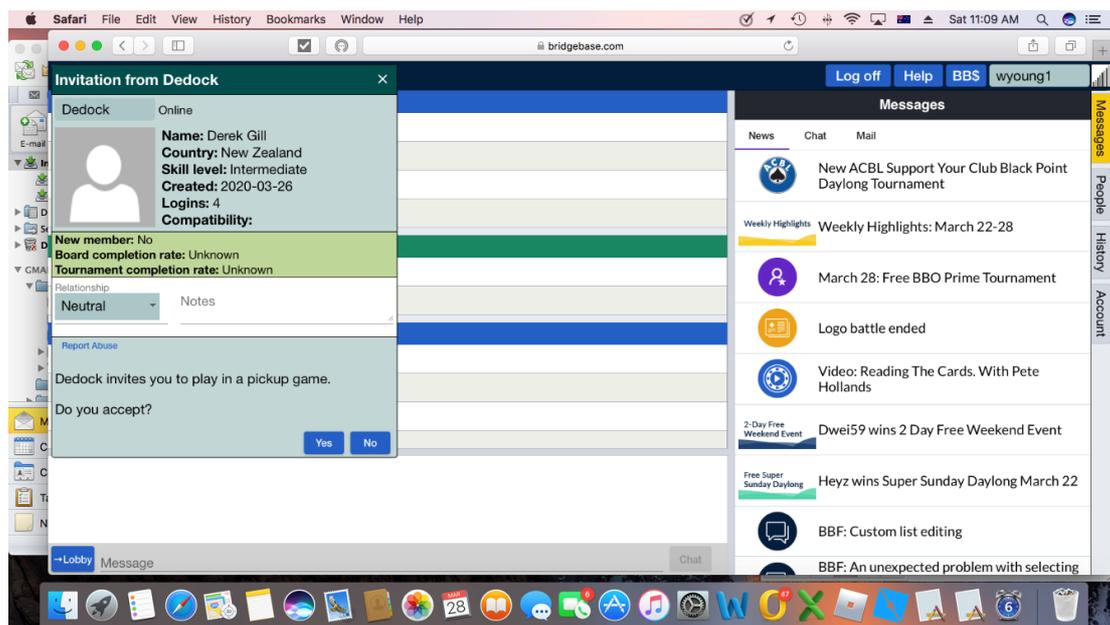
Log into BBO at <http://bridgebase.com>. If you've never used BBO before, you'll need to register first. To do this, click the "Become a member" button then fill in your details. (Note: Leave "ACBL number" blank.). You will get an email asking you to confirm your registration. You will need to go into that and click "Confirm" before you can go any further. (If you don't find it, look in your junk mailbox!) Once you have done that, go back and log in. You will now be a member, and all you have to do from then on is log in under your new username and password.

Step 2

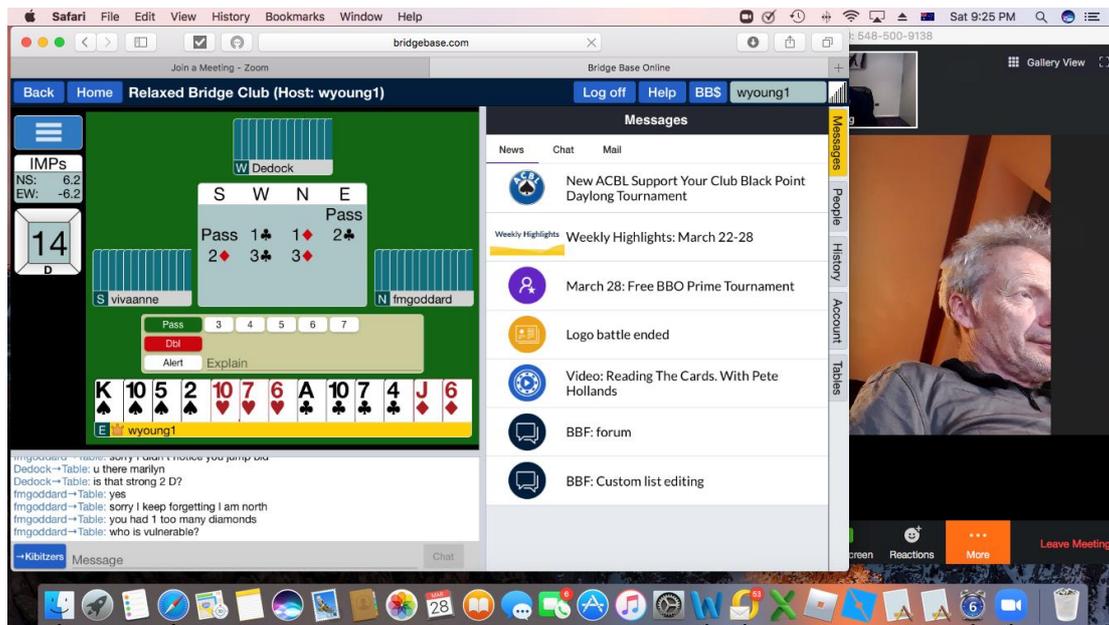
When you are joining a table of four being arranged by a host, you should wait for the host to tell you (by whatever form of communication) that the table has been set up and a place reserved under your username.

Step 3

Once you have received this confirmation, log in and you will immediately see a message pop up inviting you to join the table, as shown in the screenshot below.



Accept the invitation and the table with usernames of the players will appear on your screen. Once all players have accepted, the first board will appear on your screen with your cards set out in front of you as in the screenshot below (although without Derek's face).

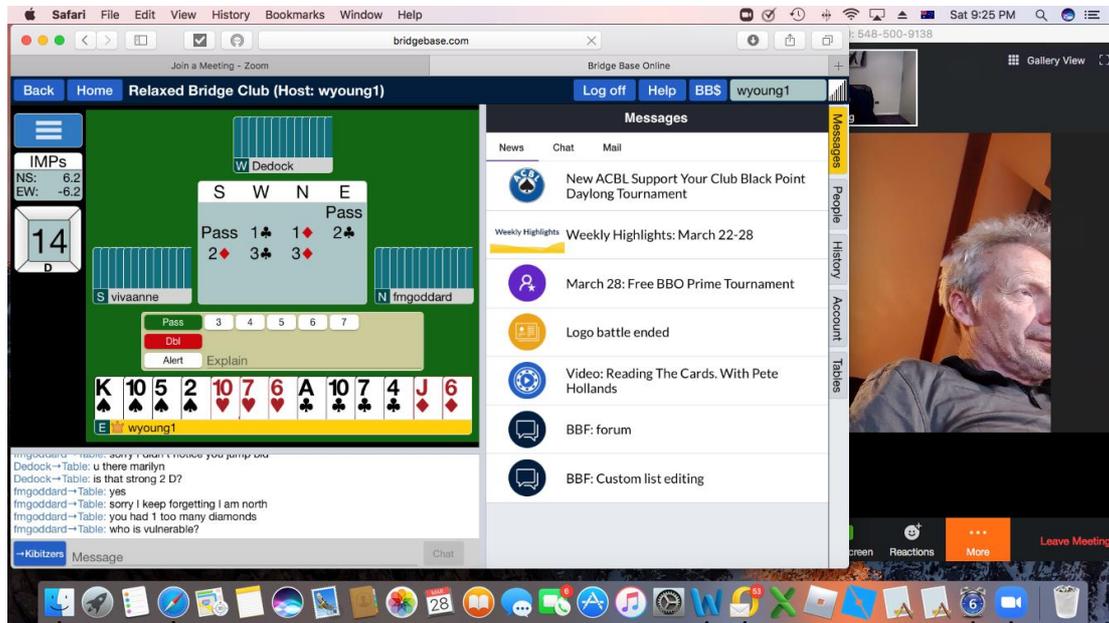


You are ready to go!

If you are first setting up and not confident about what you are doing, it is a good idea to have a phone line open as a means of communication until you have played at least one board. This will enable you to troubleshoot together until you all become used to it. Relying on the message board to sort out problems is a bit clunky.

TIPS FOR PLAYING

When the table appears, it will look like the screenshot below (again, fortunately, without Derek's face). This is a screenshot after the bidding has started.

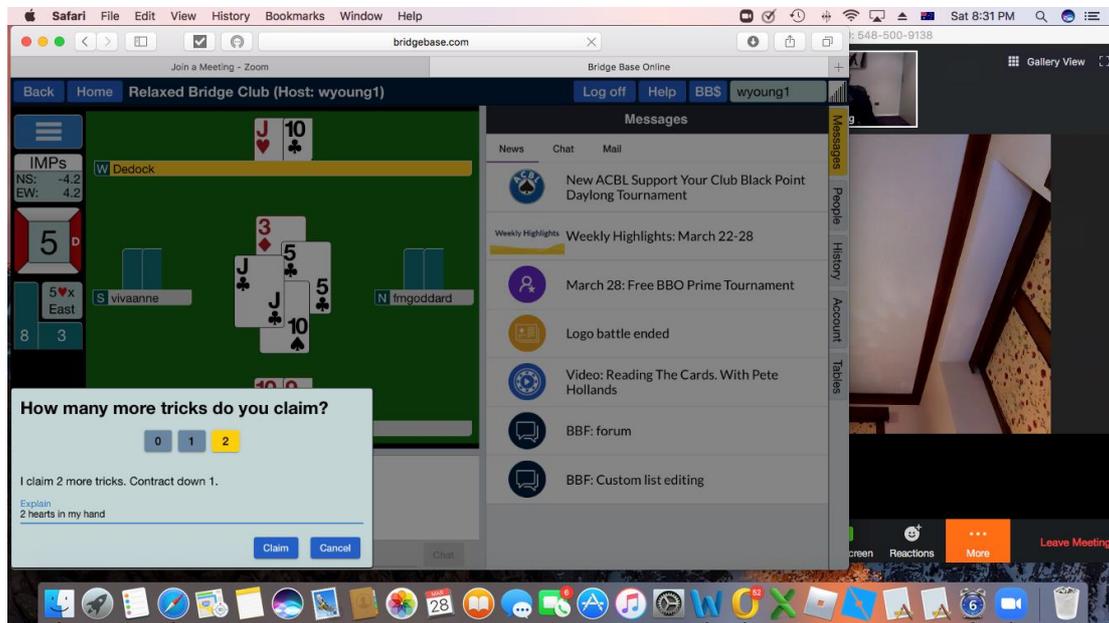


There are a number of things to note:

1. The dealer is the person whose username is highlighted in yellow. This is also shown in the box on the left hand side. (I am not sure why the actual players are not set out in a N/E/S/W compass configuration. It must have been a problem with the way I set the table up that I still have to figure out).
2. The teams who are vulnerable are shown in red in the box on the left hand side and also in the bidding box. In this case, nobody is vulnerable.
3. The number in the box is the board number – we are up to board 14.
4. While you are playing, you can communicate with each other through the chat box shown in the screenshot above (unless you have arranged an alternative form of communication).

5. As each player is due to bid, the bidding box appears on screen. In this case, East is due to bid.
6. The rules for alerting are very different when you're in BBO. It's a bit confusing, at first, but you'll quickly get the hang of it. Here are the main points:
 - In club bridge, you alert your partner's bid, but in BBO it's the exact opposite. That is, you alert your OWN bids.
 - You alert your own bid like this:
 - Make your bid as usual.
 - Then immediately click on the bid you've just made. A small box will appear.
 - Enter a brief description (there isn't much space, so keep it short). Then click OK.
 - Notice that there's now an outline around your bid, which everyone except your partner can see.
 - If an outline appears around an opponent's bid, that tells you they've alerted it. Sometimes their explanation will appear next to the bid, but on a computer (rather than a phone), you may have to hover over their bid to see the explanation.
 - If they don't alert, but you want an explanation, just click their bid. A small box will pop up for them to enter the explanation.
 - You can also use the Chat part of the screen to ask questions or give information, but that has the disadvantage that the explanation is visible to the explainer's partner.
7. When bidding is complete, dummy hand will automatically appear and you are ready to play.
8. If the person playing the hand wishes to claim the board, they should click on the "Claim" tab. The box shown in the screenshot below will appear requiring them to give an explanation. The

claim will then appear on the opponents' screens, and they will be asked to accept or reject it.



Please see the next page for tips on hosting a game.

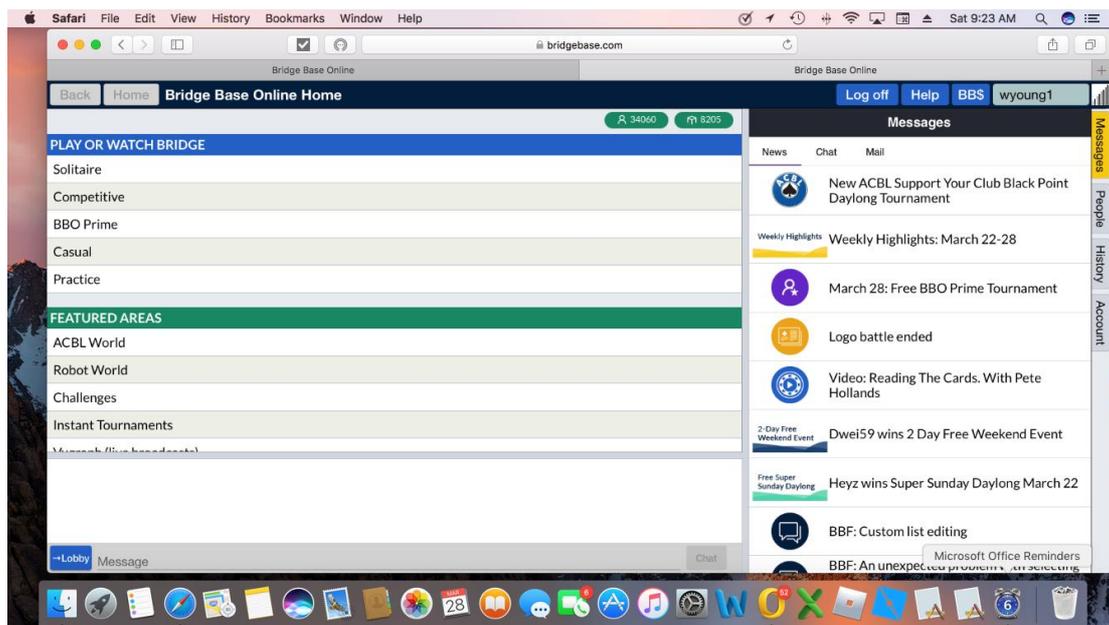
SETTING UP A TABLE AS HOST

Step 1

Register and log in as instructed on the previous page.

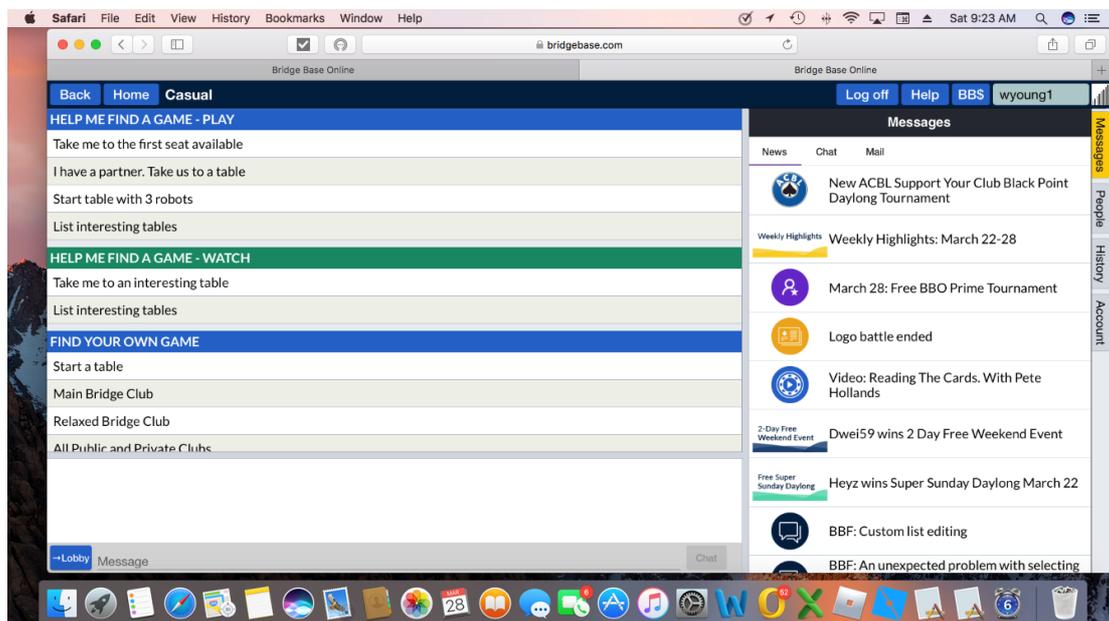
Step 2

Click “Casual” under “Play or Watch Bridge” as per screen shot below.



Step 3

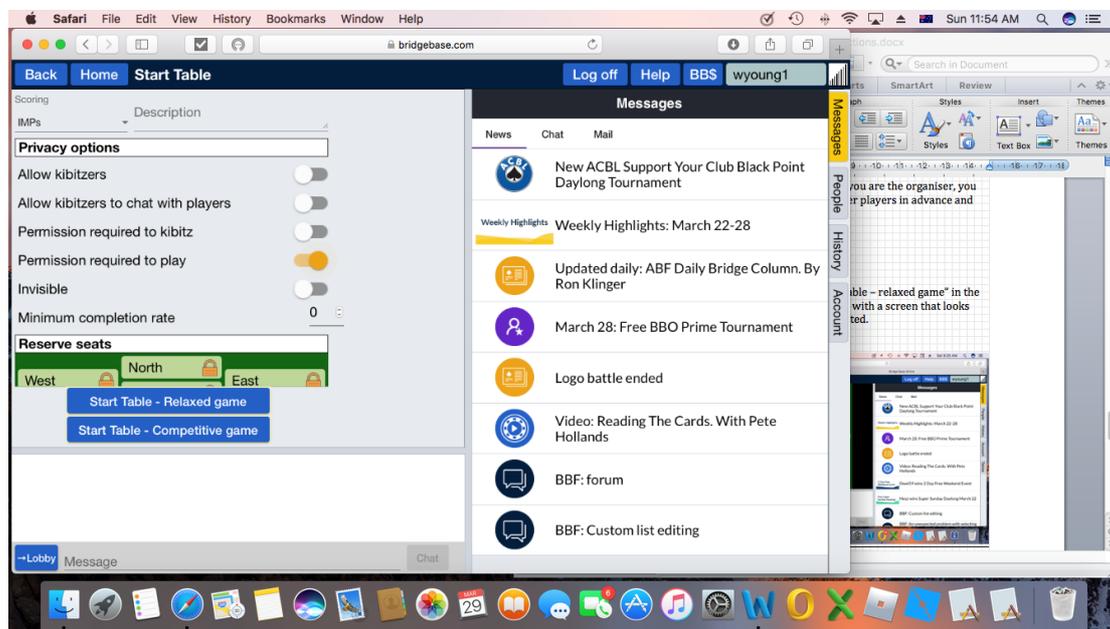
Select “Start a table” as per the screen shot below.



Step 4

Click on the tab “Permission required to play” shown in the screenshot below to restrict the table to the players of your choice. Otherwise you will find strange players from around the world (in my case Liberace) instantly grabbing a place at your table and you will have to log out and start the process again.

Do not click the “kibitzers” tabs unless you want strange players observing your play and entering messages about how you might have played better.



Step 5

On the same page, determine the minimum number of boards and the scoring system. The screenshot shows zero (no fixed number of boards), but you can choose any number you want.

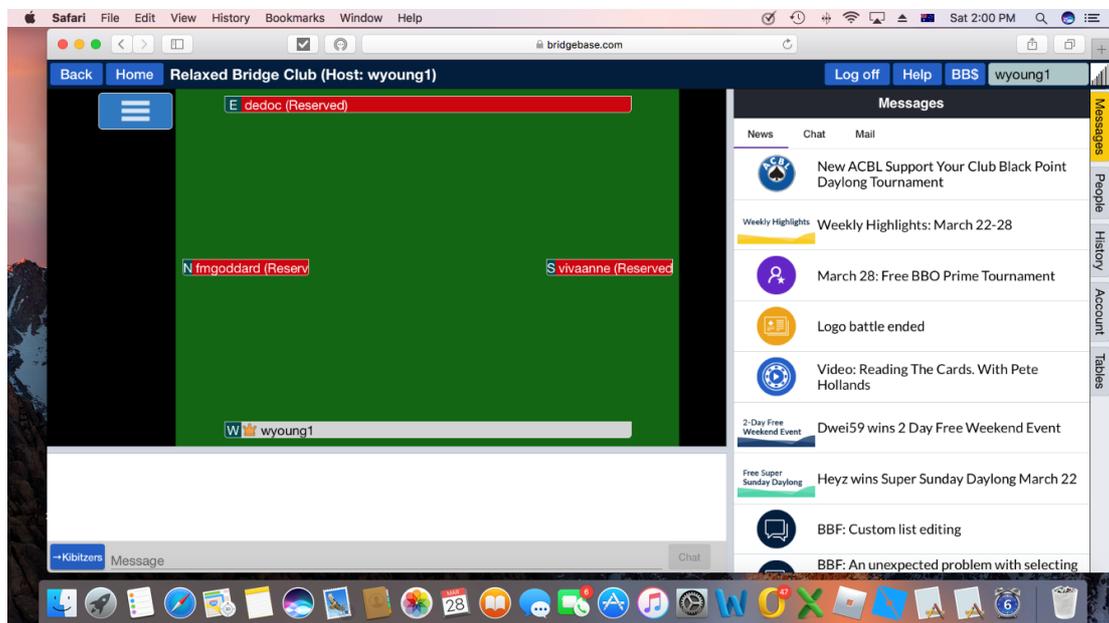
The scoring options appear in the top right hand corner. The screenshot shows IMPs but as an alternative you can select Total Points or Total Championship Points from the drop-down box.

Step 6

On the same page, populate north, south, east and west with the usernames of each player in the team. If you are the organiser, you will need to get the usernames of the other players in advance. They should not log on until you have set up the table.

Step 7

Once you have done this, click on “Start table – relaxed game”, and you should end up with a screen that looks like the following.



As each player accepts the invitation, they will come up as grey rather than red and the bracketed “reserved” will disappear.

As soon as all players have accepted, the first board will appear with your cards in front of you.

Enjoy your bridge