This user manual doubles up as a Tutorial. Print it, if you can, so you can run Bridge BPG alongside the Tutorial.

(for assistance with printing from iPad, see https://support.apple.com/en-au/HT201387)

If you are reading this on an iPad, and now wish to return to the Bridge BPG app, touch the left arrow button in the very top left corner of the screen (to the left of the app name Bridge BPG).

ABSTRACT
My Bridge Bidding & Playing Guide may help by improving your bidding skills as well as your general card playing proficiency.

Sven Eriksen
My Bridge Tools
Thank you for downloading the User Manual for my Bridge Bidding & Playing Guide (Bridge BPG). This document contains brief explanations, instructions and recommendations about Bridge BPG for use on an iPad. To some extent it also doubles up as a tutorial.

What is Bridge BPG?

Bridge BPG is an app for use on an iPad by people who play Bridge, the card game.

Bridge BPG is intended as a tool for self-study. You might use the tool at the Bridge table, if all three of the other players agree.

Bridge BPG has two main components:

1. **A core component about bidding** based on the cards you have on your hand. It is assumed that you and your partner have agreed between the two of you do your bidding according to the 5-Card Major bidding system built-into Bridge BPG. If Bridge BPG is also available at the Bridge table to your partner (on separate devices), each of you may benefit from tracing the bidding as it unfolds. This will provide useful information based on which both you and your partner can make bidding decisions. Please note that the bidding component of Bridge BPG is identical to what is provided by the Bridge Bidding Guide (Bridge BG app).

2. **Lots of examples demonstrating general card playing strategies** for you to study. It is well worth setting aside a bit of time to work through the strategies and associated examples presented. Please note that Bridge BPG will not play the cards for you. You make the decisions about which card to play to each trick. At the Bridge table, it is up to you to apply relevant strategies to the cards you have been dealt.

Of course, bidding is one thing and playing the cards is another. Lousy bidding makes it impossible to play the cards with any degree of success. Conversely, brilliant bidding can be ruined by lousy playing.

Bridge BPG is aimed at Bridge players who prefer to play the game in the comfort of their own homes with friends and family, or in a social Bridge group.

By the same token, Bridge BPG is not likely to be useful in Bridge Clubs (even though the challenges of finding the right bids are the same), Bridge Club mechanics of bidding and the rules of scoring are significantly different, because the focus is on competition between more than four players, all out to prove their skills.

For many years I have been reluctant to make my Bridge tools available to anyone else for fear that they would not be accepted by Bridge players at large. Purists would say that, at the Bridge table, you are supposed to use only your cards, your hands and your brain. Even so, it has been socially acceptable for a long time to make use of your private “cheat sheets” (the little booklets or fold-out charts people sometimes carry around) to help you along with the bidding.

Fast forward to the 21st century, where we all agree that times have changed dramatically as a result of Information Technology. In the 21st century many of us are totally atuned to using our mobile phones and computers to help us solve all sorts of everyday problems all day long, so why not for Bridge? On that basis, I think tools like Bridge BPG could well be acceptable at the Bridge table, provided all four players agree and if used in an ethical manner.

How to get Started

After downloading and installing Bridge BPG from the Apple App Store onto your iPad, sit down in a comfortable chair, start the app by touching the Bridge BPG icon on your iPad, read a printed copy of this manual as a tutorial and follow along on the iPad.

A Home screen similar to the following will appear:

![Bridge BPG Home Screen]

Here you can read a summary of what Bridge BPG might be able to do for you in terms of bidding, or while you are studying card playing strategies.

Before pressing one of the green Start buttons you might like to first take a look at what happens if you press one of the white buttons. They are pretty self-explanatory and provide you with additional information.
This User Manual/Tutorial

If you press the “User Manual” button while connected to the Internet, you will be shown the Bridge BPG User Manual/Tutorial (this document).

Alternatively, you can also download and print the document from the following webpage http://www.mybridgetools.com/apps.

To get back to the Bridge BPG app, if you did go into the User Manual on your iPad, you will need to press the small “left arrow” in the very top left corner of the screen.

Note About the Internet

Please note that for correct functioning Bridge BPG requires access to the Internet. Without it some of the buttons and links will be disabled.

Note About Seat Numbering

For purposes of discussion, there is a need to identify the position of the four players around the Bridge table (First Seat, Second Seat, Third Seat and Fourth Seat).

In the majority of Bridge literature, it is common practice to number the seats beginning with the player who deals the cards (the Dealer). There is some logic to that, since the Dealer is the first player to be given the opportunity to open the bidding. You can certainly argue that if the Opening Bid is preceded by one, two or three Passes, this does reveal something about the distribution of the cards around the Bridge table. However, that piece of information is just one more thing the players will need to consider during the bidding process.

Another way of identifying seats is South, West, North and East, but for my purposes that is not sufficiently accurate.

For purposes of discussion and logistics in my Bridge apps and in my documentation I prefer the following accurate way of identifying the seats around the Bridge table:

1. The player who opens the bidding is considered to be in First Seat
2. The player to the left of the Opener, also known as the Left-Hand Opponent (LHO), is considered to be in Second Seat
3. The player opposite the Opener, aka the Responder, is considered to be in Third Seat
4. The player to the right of the Opener, aka the Right-Hand Opponent (RHO) is considered to be in Fourth Seat
About the Bidding Guide Component of Bridge BPG

This section of the Bridge BPG User Manual deals with the facilities you have at your fingertips if you press the “Start Bidding Guide” button on the Start screen of Bridge BPG.

Depending on which position you are in around the Bridge table, you will be presented with one or more Yes/No questions, such as this one:

In this case, if you answer No to that question, the screen will merely refresh. Bridge BPG is trying to prevent you from bidding out of turn.

If you answer Yes, Bridge BPG needs to know if someone else has already opened the bidding:

If you answer No to that question, Bridge BPG attempts to help you with a recommendation for an opening bid, and for that you will need to tell the app which cards you have on your hand.

If instead you answer Yes, Bridge BPG will want to know whether you are in Second, Third or Fourth Seat.

Depending on your answer to that question, and a similar questions for Third Seat, the app will attempt to help you with a different bidding recommendation, and for all those cases you will need to tell the app which cards you have on your hand.
Entering your Cards

This is the card entry screen, where you can tell Bridge BPG about the cards you have on your hand. No cards have been entered yet, so all four suits are initially shown as void and the Analyze button is disabled:

Your Hand

Let’s imagine you were the Dealer and you have been dealt the following hand:

What will Bridge BPG make of this hand? Is it good enough for an opening bid? If so, what would it be? Let’s find out.

Enter the cards by pressing each of the relevant buttons for each suit one at a time. For the Spades, you would press the Spade button followed by A, K, T, 8, 7, 4 in that sequence. Following that you would press the Heart button followed by Q, 9, 8, then the Diamond button followed by J, 9, 6 and finally the Club button followed by the Ten. With a bit of practice, you will be able to enter any hand in about 10 seconds. It’s just like dialing a long phone number. You’ll soon get the hang of it. If you make a mistake, use the appropriate Delete button.

When the 13th card has been entered, you can press the yellow Analyze button which will now have been enabled.
Analysing the Cards

Pressing the yellow Analyze button makes Bridge BPG analyse your cards according to the built-in 5-Card Major bidding system. I am assuming that you and your partner have agreed between you to follow that system. Bridge BPG then presents the results of the analysis and comes up with a bidding recommendation, including the distribution of the suits, the shape of the hand and the strength of the hand. In this case, Bridge BPG recommends an opening bid of 2S and shows this in an active button (2S), i.e. one you can press.

If you press the recommended bid button (2S) once, Bridge BPG will interpret the bid for you. In this case the interpretation shown in red below the button will be “This bid tells your partner that you have 6-11 HCPs and a 6-card Spade suit with at least two of the top five honour cards (A, K, Q, J and T)”. It is your decision whether or not to follow the recommendation. If you do go ahead with this opening bid, the interpretation listed above is what partner will understand according to the system of bidding agreed between the two of you.

Further Bidding Recommendations

If you decide to follow the recommendation, you will announce the opening bid as per normal. Having done that, you might like to press the recommended bid button (2S) for a second time. In the above example, and if your iPad is connected to the Internet, you will see this:

Here, in the “Your Hand” column, once again you are being told about your own cards. In the “Your Bid” column, Bridge BPG recommends that you make a “Weak Two Opening” to annoy the opposition.
If you have gone this far, and your iPad is connected to the Internet, you will have come through to a comprehensive app support website featuring an integrated set of decision tables offering further bidding recommendations, including recommendations for partner’s response to your opening bid.

Let’s assume the player in Second Seat did not oppose your opening bid, i.e. player in Second Seat passed.

If you decide to go ahead and make a 2S bid as recommended, wouldn’t it be nice to know what options are then available for partner to choose from?

Well, the above screen will help you here. If you press the “2S/2H/2D” button in the “Your Bid” column, partner’s options will be listed for you to look at in a screen headed “Responder’s First Bid after 2S, 2H or 2D Opening”. Partner’s cards typically fall into a few cases based upon which partner will respond. In this particular case there are three possibilities (A, B and C):

- If partner decides to raise your opening bid by 1 (after counting the so-called “Total Points”), you will know that partner came from Case A with a fit (meaning you and your partner has 8+ cards in Spades) and extra length. You will also know that partner does not expect you to bid again.

- If partner responds by bidding 2NT, you will know that partner came from Case A with a fit and extra length, but you do not yet know the strength of partner’s hand.

- If partner responds by bidding a new suit, you will know that partner came from Case B with strength and a 5+ card suit, and that partner is looking for a fit with your hand.

- If partner Passes you will know either that partner came from Case A with less than 10 TPs, or that neither Case A nor Case B matched partner’s hand. That is useful information on which you, the Opener, can base your second bid.

This screen shows what your partner can do in response to your 2S bid. Your partner will be looking to match his or her holding against one of three cases listed in the “Your Hand” (partner’s hand) column.

- If partner decides to raise your opening bid by 1 (after counting the so-called “Total Points”), you will know that partner came from Case A with a fit (meaning you and your partner has 8+ cards in Spades) and extra length. You will also know that partner does not expect you to bid again.

- If partner responds by bidding 2NT, you will know that partner came from Case A with a fit and extra length, but you do not yet know the strength of partner’s hand.

- If partner responds by bidding a new suit, you will know that partner came from Case B with strength and a 5+ card suit, and that partner is looking for a fit with your hand.

- If partner Passes you will know either that partner came from Case A with less than 10 TPs, or that neither Case A nor Case B matched partner’s hand. That is useful information on which you, the Opener, can base your second bid.
Let’s imagine partner responds 2NT indicating a fit and that partner has no less than 13+ Total Points on hand. What do you, the Opener, do then?

To receive a recommendation for your second bid after opening the bidding, you can press the 2NT button in the “Your Bid” column on your screen and you will then see this:

### Opener's Second Bid after 2S, 2H or 2D Opening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Partner's Bid</th>
<th>Your Bid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2NT</td>
<td>With only 6-7 HCPs and 3+ cards in opened suit. Your partner is asking you to indicate strength.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With 8+ HCPs and the three top honours in opened suit 3NT closing off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With 8+ HCPs and an honour in another 4+ card suit 3 of New suit closing off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After partner responded 2NT, it looks like you, the Opener, have three options for your second bid. Your options are listed in the “Your Bid” column. In this case you will make your decision based on your HCP count.

- If you have less than 8 HCPs on your hand as analysed, you will bid 3S (to cancel the 2NT bid) and to instruct partner not to bid again.
- If you have 8+ HCPs with no less than 3 top honours in Spades, you will bid 3NT instructing partner not to bid again.
- If you have 8+ HCPs and a new 4+card suit, in which you have at least one honour card, you will bid 3 of that new suit to give partner a choice. This way you are leaving the decision to partner as to which of the two suits becomes Trump (Opener’s Spade suit or your new suit.

In any case, your second bid after opening the bidding will tell partner what to do.

**Conclusion about the Bidding Guide**

There you are! If you went through this as a tutorial and actually pressed the buttons on your iPad, you will have seen Bridge BPG in action.

Yes, it takes a bit of getting used to pressing those buttons on the Bridge BPG screens.

Of course, things might not always go as smoothly as this, especially not if the opposition intervenes in the bidding.

In any case, by now you will have a better understanding of what Bridge BG is trying to do for you.
About the Playing Guide Component of Bridge BPG

This section of the Bridge BPG User Manual deals with the facilities you have at your fingertips if you press the “Start Playing Guide” button on the Start screen of Bridge BPG.

Contrary to what you might think, the Playing Guide of Bridge BPG does not play the cards for you. It just offers you a number of card playing strategies for self-study. At the Bridge table it is your responsibility to apply the recommended strategies to the cards you have on your hand.

The Playing Guide, as it currently stands, teaches you general card playing strategies you can apply when you are in the position of Declarer (trying to win the contract) or when you are in the position of Defender (trying to defeat the contract).

After downloading and installing Bridge BPG from the Apple App Store onto your iPad, sit down in a comfy chair, start the app by touching the Bridge BPG icon and read about card playing strategies. You are in for some self-study.

What are the strategies you might apply?

![My Bridge Playing Strategies]

Well, it depends on whether you are playing as Declarer (trying to win the contract) or playing as a Defender (trying to defeat the contract).

In both cases, it pays to spend a short time planning the card play.
**Playing as Declarer**

This is about planning the card play to win the contract. When to do what and how?

Once the opening lead has been played, you are looking at Dummy’s cards as well as your own.

If you pressed the green “Playing as Declarer” button on the “Planning the Card Play” screen, you will have been presented with 8 important Declarer strategies for you to study:

- Counting Certain Tricks
- Taking Certain Tricks
- Taking Long Suit Tricks
- Retaining Entries
- Ruffing
- Pulling Trumps
- Promoting Honours
- Finessing

Press any one of these buttons and you will see a screen similar to this:

Read about each strategy and study the examples one by one.
Playing as Defender

This is about planning the card play to defeat the contract. When to do what and how?

If you pressed the green “Playing as Defender” button on the “Planning the Card Play” screen, you will have been presented with 4 important Defender strategies for you to study:

Press any one of these buttons and you will see a screen similar to this:

Read about each strategy and study the examples one by one.

Conclusion

There you are! If you went through this as a tutorial and actually pressed some of the buttons on your iPad, you will have seen the Bidding Guide and the Playing Guide components of Bridge BPG in action.

Just remember that Bridge BPG is intended as a tool for self-study. You might use the tool at the Bridge table, if all three of the other players agree.

Happy Bidding and Playing!

*Sven Eriksen*
Appendix A. Improving Bridge BG or Reporting a Problem

I hope you find the Bridge BPG app useful. For more information, you might like to visit [www.mybridgetools.com](http://www.mybridgetools.com).

Should you discover a problem on a particular screen while using Bridge BPG, I would be most grateful if you could email me either a photo or a screen capture demonstrating the problem.

In case you have never done a screen capture before, here is how you do it on your email-enabled iPad:

1. Bring up the screen on which there is a problem.
2. Hold down the Power button while briefly pressing the Home button. You will see the screen flash by and a new image will have been added to your Photos. The image will be shown in the bottom left corner of your screen.
3. Terminate the app by pressing the Home button.
4. Press the Photos icon on the Home screen and confirm that the screenshot was added.
5. Select the screenshot and press the little icon with an up arrow at the top right of the screen.
6. On a screen headed “1 Photo Selected”, press the Mail icon.
7. This will have created a new email message with the photo attached to the email.
8. Add a few words of explanation for my benefit.
9. Address the email to sven@eriksen.com.au and send it from your iPad.

I would also welcome any suggestions for improvements. Only that way can I make it better. If you have any comments on the app or on this documentation, please send me an email addressed to sven@eriksen.com.au
Appendix B. Recommendations about iPad Setup for Bridge BPG

Using an iPad in the middle of a Bridge table might work better if you spend a few minutes to set it up for this particular scenario. For example, it is not terribly convenient if the iPad keeps on turning itself off in the middle of the Bridge table. Ideally it should last for as long as it takes to play three rubbers. If you can afford it, it might even be a good idea to have an iPad dedicated to playing Bridge. That way you can set it up so it’s always ready.

If you are happy to change a few iPad settings for playing Bridge, it might be a good idea to record your current settings before you change them, so you can restore them later.

Here are a few items to consider:

- The iPad will only work for an extended period of time on battery power, if it has a reasonable charge at the beginning. Ideally it should show “90%” charged (or more) in the top right corner. You can, of course, plug in a charger, but this is a bit awkward in the middle of the Bridge table.

- The iPad does use more battery power if you have the screen set to maximum Brightness, but it is important for all players to be able to see quite clearly what’s on the screen, so this is perhaps one setting you may not wish to alter.

- If you have implemented a Passcode on your iPad it will lock itself after a certain period of time as per your preferred setting. To avoid having to enter your passcode while playing Bridge you may wish to change your Auto-Lock setting via Settings > General > Auto-Lock > NEVER. If you do this, remember to reset this setting for normal use.

- Some of the My Bridge apps do require wireless access to the Internet. Set this up via Settings > Wi-Fi > ON and select your network to provide the service. If you are using the iPad in somebody else’s home, you will need their permission and their wireless network security key to log in and connect your iPad to the Internet.

- Other Settings recommended for optimal use of My Bridge apps are as follows:
  - Settings > Airplane Mode > ON
  - Settings > Location Services > Location Services > OFF
  - Settings > General > Usage > Battery Percentage > ON
  - Settings > General > Restrictions > OFF
  - Settings > General > Use Side Switch to > MUTE (rather than Lock Rotation)
  - Settings > Mail, Contacts, Calendars > Fetch New Data > Push > OFF

Again, if you make these changes, remember to reset these settings for normal use, unless your iPad is dedicated to playing Bridge.