

This user manual is also a Tutorial. Print it, if you can, so you can run Bridge HA alongside the Tutorial.



Bridge HA User Manual

This document is downloadable from

www.mybridgetools.com

ABSTRACT

My Bridge Hand Analyzer (Bridge HA) may help you in a game of Bridge by recommending a good Opening bid. This User Manual can be downloaded for free from the My Bridge Tools website.

Sven Eriksen

My Bridge Tools

My Bridge Hand Analyzer User Manual/Tutorial

Thanks for downloading the User Manual/Tutorial for my Bridge Hand Analyzer. This document contains brief explanations, instructions and recommendations about the Bridge HA app for use on an iPhone. It doubles up as a tutorial.

What is Bridge HA?

Bridge HA is an app for use on an iPhone by people who play Bridge, the card game. It will take you about 20 seconds to enter 13 cards into Bridge HA for analysis. Bridge HA will be able to determine if those cards are good enough for you to make an opening bid and, if so, it you will receive a recommendation for a good opening bid based on those cards.

Bridge HA 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 HA 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 rules of scoring are significantly different, because the focus is on competition between more than four players, who are all out to prove their superiority.

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” (little booklets or fold-out charts) to help you along with the bidding.

Fast forward to the 21st century where we all agree that times have changed dramatically. In the 21st century many of us are totally atuned to using our mobile phones and computers to help solve all sorts of everyday problems. On that basis I think tools like Bridge HA will be quite acceptable at the Bridge table, provided all four players agree and if used in an ethical manner.

Bridge HA is based on standard American 5-Card Major bidding conventions. After receiving and sorting the cards on your hand it will take you less than 20 seconds to enter them into the app, and after that, at the press of a button, you will receive a recommendation for a good Opening bid based on that hand.

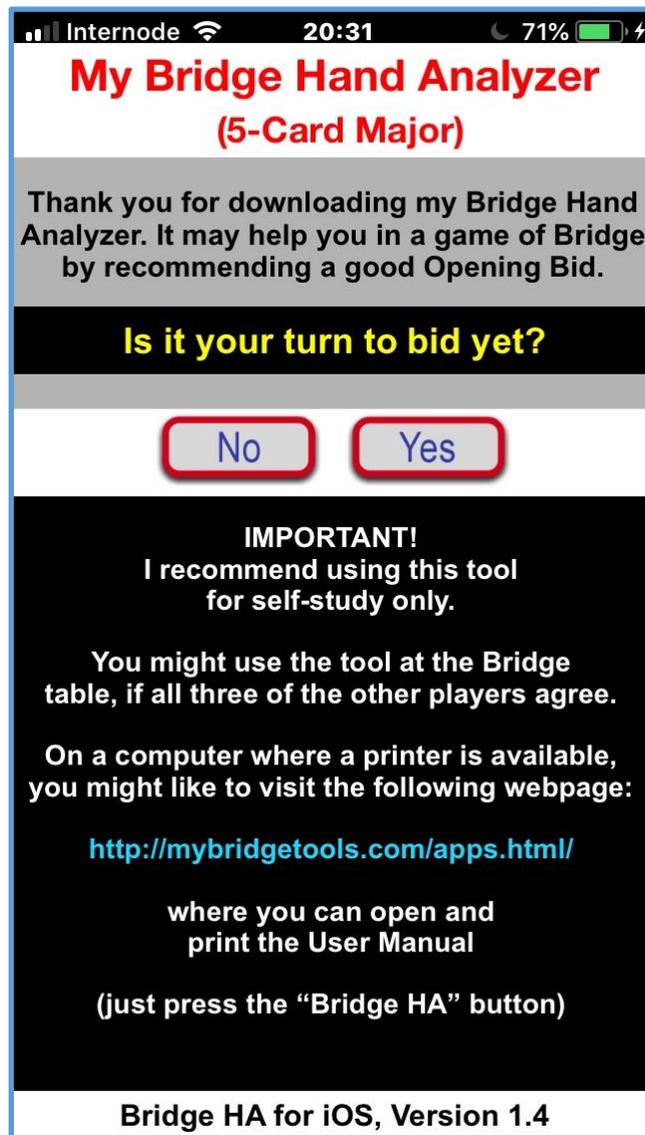
Practical Recommendations:

1. Hold the iPhone in front of your cards, in the palm of your hand.
2. Wait until it is your turn to bid.
3. If none of the other players have made an Opening bid so far, it is time for you to enter your cards on the on-screen keypad.
4. Apply firm and accurate finger touch when pressing buttons.
5. After pressing the Analyze button you get an opening bid recommendation.
6. Do not feel obliged to follow the recommendation. Go with your own ideas, if you think they are better.

How to get Started

After downloading and installing Bridge HA from the Apple App Store onto your iPhone, sit down in a comfy chair and start the app by touching the Bridge HA icon.

A Start screen similar to the following will appear:



Before we go on, I might just ask you to read the white text on this screen. It points out that Bridge HA is primarily intended for self-study.

It also tells you that printing this User Manual is best done using the Internet from a computer that has a printer attached to it (your iPhone may not be set up for this).

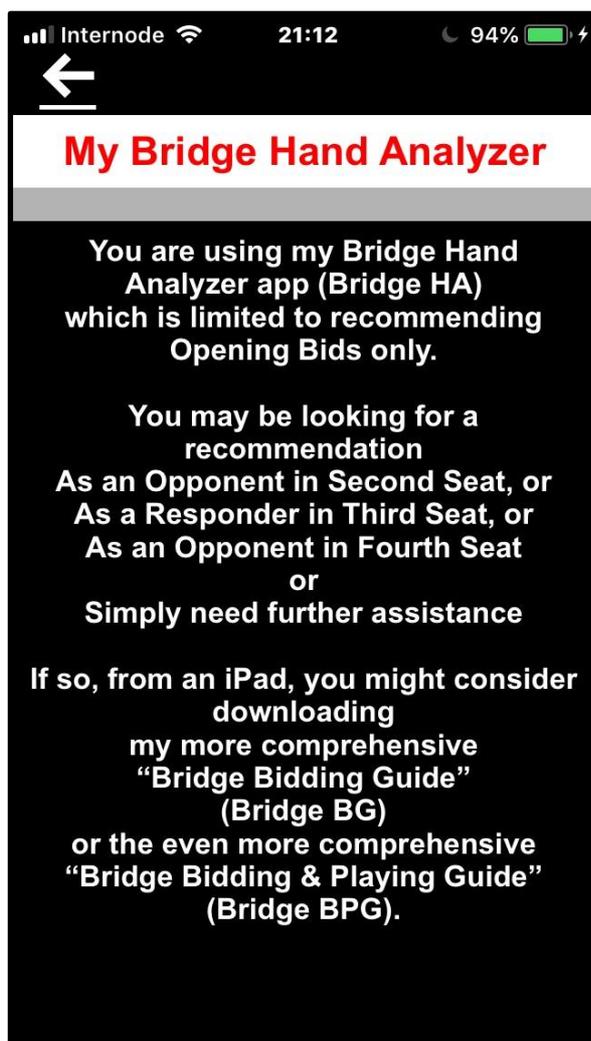
As you can see, the first thing Bridge HA needs to know is whether it is your turn to bid yet. Yes or No?

If you answer No to the question "Is it your turn to bid yet?", the screen will merely refresh. The app is trying to prevent you from bidding out of turn.

If you answer Yes to the question “Is it your turn to bid yet?”, the app then needs to know if someone else has already opened the bidding:



If you answer Yes to the question “Has someone else already opened?” I’m afraid Bridge HA can’t help you, because it can only do opening bids. You will be told the following:



This tells you that you need Bridge BG or Bridge BPG if you want more than what Bridge HA will give you. These apps are available from the Apple App Store for the iPad.

Let’s assume you answer No to the above question “Has someone else already opened?”.

Bridge HA will now want to know which cards you have on your hand. It therefore presents you with the card entry screen on which you can enter your cards.



At this point no cards have been entered yet, which is why all suits are shown as “void” (no cards in suit).



I recommend you hold your cards in your left hand with the iPhone on top of the cards or just below in the palm of your hand, whatever is convenient. It will take you less than 20 seconds to enter all the cards.

Entering a Somewhat Unusual Hand

Let us imagine you have been dealt a hand that contains all cards in the Spade suit. This would be highly unlikely, happening once in a million years, but Bridge HA doesn't care.

So, press the button with a Spade card symbol and follow that up with one press of each of the buttons shown below it: A, K, Q, J, T, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2.

Here they are, all the Spades. The three other suits are listed as "void" (no cards):

The screenshot shows the Bridge Hand Analyzer interface. At the top, a black bar contains a left-pointing arrow and the text "Enter 13 Cards and Press Analyze Button". Below this, the hand is displayed as:

- ♠AKQJT98765432
- ♥void
- ♦void
- ♣void

Below the hand display are four buttons: "Delete Suit", "Delete Hand", and "Delete Card", all with blue text and grey backgrounds. Below these are four buttons for suits: Spade (black), Heart (red), Diamond (orange), and Club (black). Below the suit buttons are two rows of card rank buttons: A, K, Q, J, T and 9, 8, 7, 6, and 5, 4, 3, 2. At the bottom is a large yellow button labeled "Analyze".

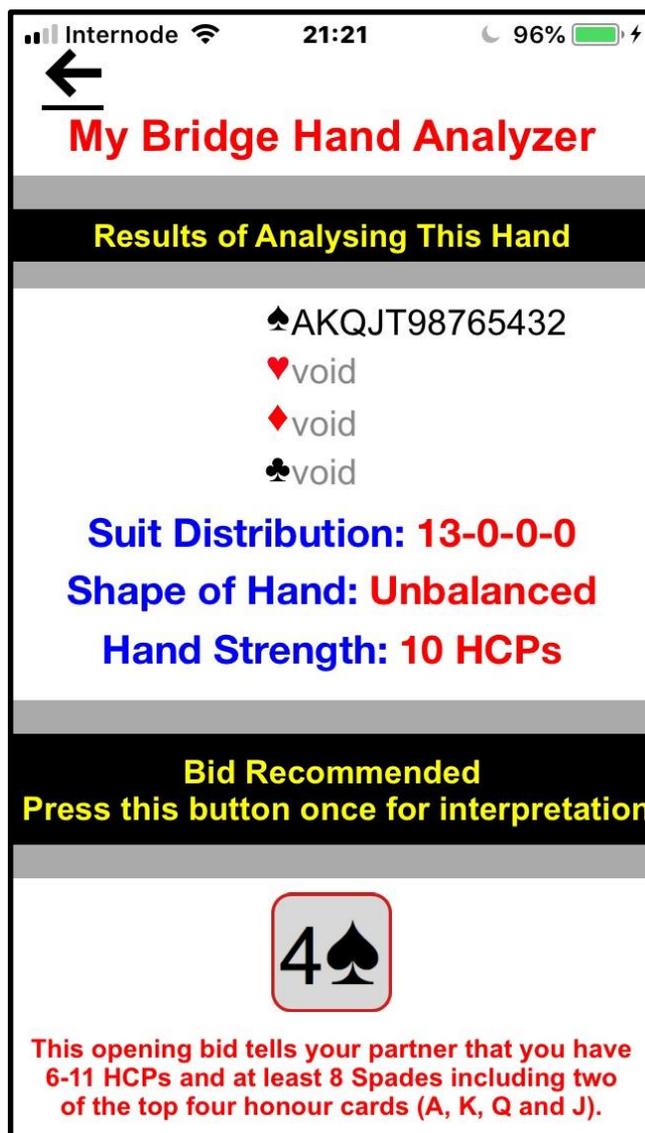
If you paid attention while entering the cards, you will have noticed that the Analyze button remained grey and disabled until you entered the 13th card. Now the Analyze button has come up bright yellow. This enables Bridge HA to analyse the hand.

When you now press the yellow Analyze button you will receive a recommendation for a bid based on that hand.

Just for interest's sake, what opening bid would you make from a hand containing all the Spades?

7S? Sounds reasonable to me.

However, Bridge HA suggests 4S, because that is what it has been programmed to do:



This illustrates a very important point about Bridge HA:

Whilst Bridge HA is capable of recommending an opening bid you do not have to accept any of its recommendations. You are in charge and you do the thinking.

In this case, with all Spades on hand, I would definitely go for a 7S Grand Slam because you would have no trouble winning it, regardless of what card is lead to the first trick.

Sad thing is, being dealt this hand is extremely unlikely. Let's take a look at a more realistic hand.

Entering a Real Hand

Now let us imagine you have been dealt the following hand:

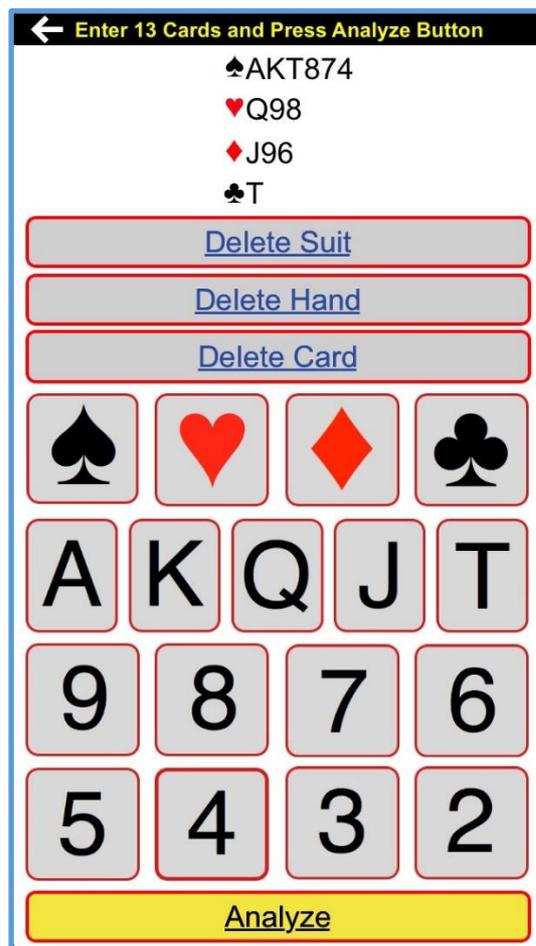


What will Bridge HA make of this hand? Well, let's enter the cards on your hand and see what happens.

Start by pressing the Spade button followed by A, K, T, 8, 7, 4 in that sequence.

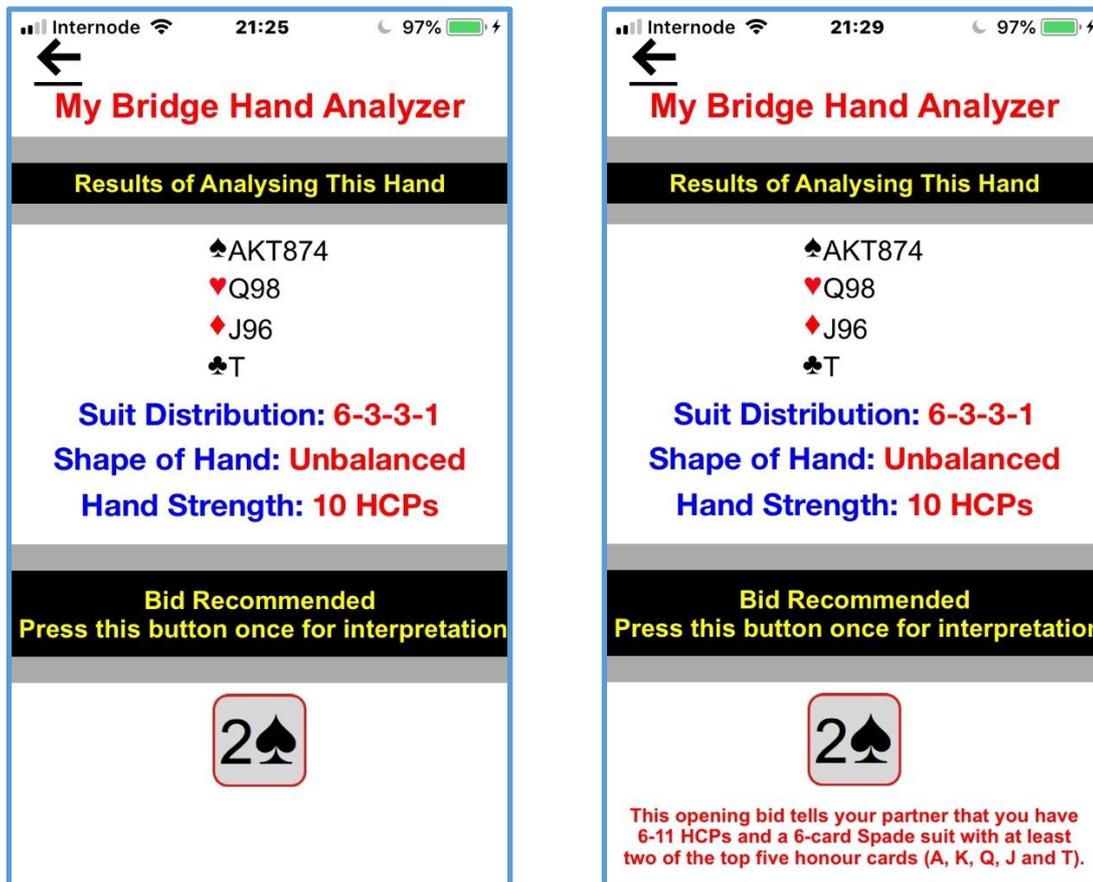
Then press the Heart button followed by Q, 9, 8, then the Diamond button followed by J, 9, 6 and finally the Club button followed by the Ten.

With a bit of practice, you will become quite good at this. It's just like dialing a long phone number.



Now that you have entered 13 cards, you'll know what to do next.

When the 13th card has been entered, pressing the Analyze button will make Bridge HA present the results of the analysis, including the distribution of the suits, the shape of the hand and its strength. Below that, Bridge HA will recommend an opening bid of 2S, also known as a “Weak Two Opening”. And it will show this in a 2S button at the bottom of the screen.



If you press the 2S button once, Bridge HA will interpret the bid for you explaining that this bid will tell 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).

By the way, this recommendation for an opening bid based on this hand is called a “Weak Two” because you are short of points, but with a bit of support from partner the long suit may well lead to a winnable contract.

If you press the 2S button a second time, you will be told that you need the Bridge BG or the Bridge BPG app, if you need more than just opening bids.

Look up Bridge BG and Bridge BPG on the [My Bridge Tools](http://www.mybridgetools.com) website or on your Apple App Store for the iPad.

Improving Bridge HA or Reporting a Problem

I hope you find the Bridge HA app useful. For more information, you might like to visit www.mybridgetools.com.

Should you discover a problem while using Bridge HA I would be most grateful if you could send me a screen capture demonstrating the problem.

In case you have never done this before, here is how you do it on your email-enabled iPhone:

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 in the left bottom corner of the screen and a new image will have been added to your Photos.
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 bottom left 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

Happy Bidding!

Sven Erikssen