



## Digital Learning

It's over three years since our previous review of bridge apps available on electronic devices. The review can still be read on page 16 of: <https://view.pagetiger.com/asorigwougberg/fjtyutyikti5e8>.

In this issue, Laura Porro has revisited the subject and focused on apps which help you learn bridge – either from scratch, or to develop your technique once you have mastered the basics.

### BJ BRIDGE BEGINNER ACOL



BJ Beginner Acol is a mobile-based application to play bridge against the software's artificial intelligence (AI). With a Bluetooth connection, you can also play with and/or against other users.

This app is for users who have an understanding of the mechanics of bidding and play, and therefore it is not suitable for complete beginners. The app's main focus is on bidding and playing. Its teaching input consists of descriptions of the bids made by the players (human and AI alike) and of the bids recommended by the AI. Additionally, the hints provide inferences that can be made from bidding and play, bidding recaps, a list of unseen cards during play and links to a glossary to explain the key words.

BJ Beginner Acol's distinguishing feature is that it offers hand database management functions: users can create, edit, save and load their own hands. On download, the app comes with an existing database,

containing a series of pre-saved deals, including hands from international tournaments, so users can play and compare their own score against the champions. Users can save the hands they come across during the play practice and amend them if they wish to. Additionally, they can create hands from scratch, through the built-in hand editor. Lastly, they can upload deals from an existing .pbn or .lin file and then load them to a table to play them.

### GRAPHICS: 2/5

The card design and colour scheme for the text are not helpful due to the poor contrast created by the colour choices. The screen appears very busy, as it is crowded by too many buttons. The layout of the hand editor makes it difficult to use it smoothly.

### ACCESSIBILITY: 3.5/5

The app's functions are available offline as well as online. The app is available on Android devices as well as iOS and Amazon devices. The app navigation is quite intuitive, but the user experience is not fluid due to the crammed screen.

### WHAT YOU GET: 4/5

All of the app's functionalities are available for free. Some additional functions can only be accessed through the Pro version of the app, which can be purchased for £3.99. For instance, the Pro version allows users to customise their convention card and practise specific bidding conventions.

On the other hand, BJ Beginner Acol is based on the EBED first year student course, with a limited number of conventions.

The BJ app series includes two more apps, in addition to the one reviewed here and the Pro version just mentioned: BJ Bridge Free (2019) and BJ Bridge Standard American 2019. The former moves the learner to Benji Acol and introduces conventions.

### CUSTOMISABILITY: 4/5

BJ Beginner Acol allows users to customise a number of features, such as the speed of card movement's animation, the card selection mode and the speed of progress to the next trick. Users can also choose their preferred background colour and the size of the cards. The most interesting customisation options for learners include: stopping opponents from bidding to practise uncontested auctions; displaying the number of HCP in one's hand; and showing more or less extensive explanations/inferences.

### TEACHING LEVEL: 2/5

The app is intended for those who can already play and focuses on practice and revision. The bidding commentary and hints only describe the bids that have been made and the bid recommended by the AI. In other words, users cannot ask the software to describe what alternative bids would mean.

During play, the app provides comments which make helpful inferences about the number of points across the table and the cards which have not yet been played. However, some of the tips are inaccurate: for instance, when defending, the app does not always suggest the right card to play.

### BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: 2/5

During the auction, the AI's recommendation for what the user should bid is sometimes inaccurate. The AI's bidding is not refined and can land users in the wrong contract (*see publisher's remarks below*).

When it comes to play, the playing tips are rather confusing and the AI's defensive play is below average.

**Overall mark: 2.9**

**App store rating: 4.5/5**

**Google Play rating 4/5**

BJ Beginner Acol's most interesting feature is the hand database. This is a useful functionality, especially because it is available offline and on mobile devices. This can be particularly helpful for teachers on the move.

### Publisher's remarks:

BJ Beginner Acol runs in tandem with the *Bridge for All Foundation level book* published by EBED, and its systems reflect that. Using only simple natural bidding systems means that the best contract will not always be reached.

### BRIDGE BANDIT

Bridge Bandit is a mobile-based application with three main functionalities: learn how to play bridge; practise against the app's artificial intelligence; and play bridge against other users.

The learning functionality consists of seven free lessons, which come with the app when it is downloaded. These lessons cover the basic concepts of bridge bidding and play. Three more lessons are available for purchase on more advanced topics.

The practice mode has five available topics: minibridge; declarer play; defence; slams; and unusual hands (very unbalanced distributions). When users play against other players online, their scores are recorded and saved, and players are ranked on this basis.

### GRAPHICS: 5/5

Bridge Bandit's design is modern and clear. The graphics choices across the app, including cards, text and symbols are pleasant and easy to read.

### ACCESSIBILITY: 4/5

Navigating the app is easy and intuitive. The practice mode is available offline. Games against other players require an internet connection. Lessons are available to use offline after they have been downloaded. The app has two versions: one for Android and one for IOS.

### WHAT YOU GET: 4/5

The functionalities to practise and play online against other users are available free of charge. Most topics in the learning section are also free. Three more advanced topics come for a charge, ranging between around £2 and £3 each.

### CUSTOMISABILITY: 3.5/5

The users' options to customise Bridge Bandit's appearance and behaviour are limited to a choice of colour scheme (which includes the background).

On the other hand, users have a much broader range of options to choose the bidding system amongst the app's default (5-card major based), a natural simple system (5-card majors based), 2/1, Standard American, Acol, Precision and Polish.



*Contl. . .*

Within each system, users can further tweak specific aspects, such as the carding methods, the artificial intelligence's style and conventions.

### TEACHING LEVEL: 3/5

The lessons consist of a recorded voice which takes users through the content. The screen automatically displays relevant content as the virtual teacher explains concepts and techniques.

The lessons are interactive and users can test their understanding by answering questions throughout each lesson. The spoken text is not displayed on the screen and is not available for download. The topics available are limited to the basics and there is a significant gap between the free topics (which cover the basics) and the ones available for purchase (which are advanced).

In practice mode, descriptions of the bids' meanings (both users' and robots') are available during the auction. Once the auction is over it can be reviewed but the bids' meanings are not visible anymore during play.

When defending, the app highlights the meaning of one's own and partner's cards, through icons which appear on the screen, to represent whether the card played showed attitude or count. The idea is good, however the icon's animation is too quick for learners to take its meaning in. Once the animation has disappeared it cannot be retrieved.

Overviews of the bidding systems available in the app can be downloaded. This is a helpful and well designed document.

### BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: 3/5

The artificial intelligence's defence is rather sloppy.

**Overall mark: 3.7**

**App store rating: 3.5/5**

**Google Play rating: 4/5**

The learning approach through interactive audio lessons aims to move away from teaching methods which rely on large amounts of written text. However, Bridge Bandit does not quite meet modern users' need for 'bite size' learning. The explanations are long and the lack of any written materials means learners cannot miss a word: this is not ideal for those who would like to learn 'on the go', for instance while travelling.

Nonetheless, Bridge Bandit has a good structure and content and as such has the potential to become a great learning platform with appropriate future developments.

## BRIDGE BARON

Bridge Baron is a mobile-based application to play bridge and practice. For the purposes of this article, the review focuses on the app's practice functionality which helps users learn and improve their game. Players can choose to practise four specific topics: part scores, games, slams, and no trumps.

Bridge Baron's teaching input consists of bidding tips, bidding reviews and play tips. The app assumes a substantial level of pre-existing bridge knowledge and is thus not recommended for beginners.

### GRAPHICS: 3/5

The cards and text are generally clear. The bidding box graphics are not helpful and makes the bids difficult to read. The overall layout could be more elegant.

### ACCESSIBILITY: 3/5

Bridge Baron is available for Android as well as IOS devices. The practice functionality of the app is available offline, while the online games require an internet connection.

The navigation of the app is not intuitive and the options to move across different parts of the app are limited: for instance, players can leave a deal only at the end of the auction. Additionally, there is no separate screen to review a hand at the end: users need to replay the hand and choose to view all hands to look at the whole deal. There is no double dummy analysis and it is not possible to review how the play went.

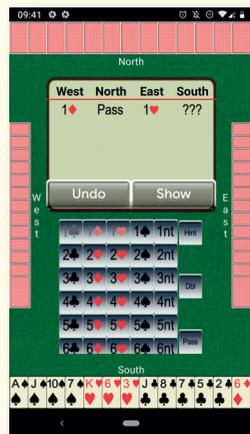
### WHAT YOU GET: 0/5

The app costs £12.99 on the Play Store and £19.99 on the App Store.

### CUSTOMISABILITY: 4.5/5

Players can choose amongst a broad selection of systems, each of which comes with three options depending on the desired level of difficulty (basic, intermediate and advanced), including: SAYC; 2/1; Standard American with strong twos; Standard American with weak twos; Precision; Acol; and French style 5-card major.

Players can also tune the skill level of the



computer's AI up or down, according to what kind of challenge they are looking for.

Moreover, users can modify other aspects of the app, such as who is dealer, who is dealt the best hand, and some of the app's behaviours, such as animations and card selection mode.

### TEACHING LEVEL: 2/5

During bidding and play, users can ask for suggestions on the best course of action. Bidding hints describe the recommended bid, with suit length and points shown by the bid. Conventional bids are described with their name only. It is not possible to visualise an explanation of opponents' or partner's bid as the auction is in progress. The full bidding interpretation, which covers partner's as well as opponents' bids, is available only during the play of the hand.

Play hints highlight the recommended card in a different colour, but do not explain why that card is suggested.

Occasionally the hands do not match the topic chosen (eg suit contracts appear in the no trump section).

### BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: 1/5

The software's bidding is often inaccurate and the hand evaluation is basic. The defensive line chosen by the AI is not always the optimal one. Users can choose to allow the computer to 'cheat', letting it look at all four hands.

**Overall mark: 2.2**

**App store rating: 3/5**

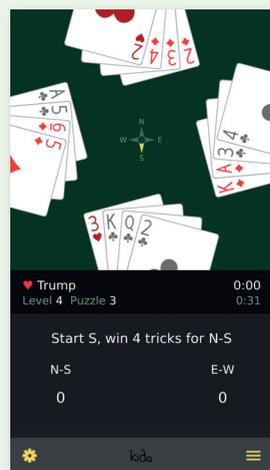
**Google Play rating: 3.9/5**

Bridge Baron's main focus is not about teaching users to play bridge, so the application does not score very well on this front. Learners who would like support to learn more about the various aspects of the game would probably not find enough input from Bridge Baron.



## KIDA

Kida is a mobile-based app which teaches users how to take tricks. It assumes no knowledge of bridge or any other card game and builds gradually from the core concept of card ranking (from the ace down to the two). Users are presented with card combinations they need to solve: all four hands are shown, together with a target to achieve for a partnership (eg NS win three tricks) and on this basis players choose the best line of play, selecting cards from all four hands.



Kida is unique in the range of learning tools currently available, due to its effective learning approach: puzzles get more complicated in such a gradual way, that users do not need to read any explanations or manual. The first combinations have two cards for each player, in only one suit. Then the number of cards and suits increases. As they carry on playing, users are slowly exposed to the main bridge trick taking techniques, from following suit, to ruffing, all the way up to advanced manoeuvres such as uppercuts and squeezes.

This app can be used by any learners. Beginners will benefit from focusing on and practising a specific aspect of the game (taking tricks), and gaining confidence in managing suit combinations. The app helps beginners visualise the four hands and understand how the clockwise sequence of play has an impact on the best course of action. Additionally, improvers can enjoy the more challenging levels and transfer the knowledge they acquire through the app to real hands. Improvers can use the app to support their learning journey as they are introduced to the more advanced playing techniques during the courses they attend. As mentioned above, isolating the trick-taking mechanism from the distractions of bidding can help consolidate one's understanding of a playing technique.

A key target audience of the app is younger learners. This cohort will be drawn in by the attractive design, the short length of each puzzle,

the competitive aspect of comparing one's time with the other users' average and the quick feedback loop. This app can play a key role in showing a younger population how much fun the game can be, aiming to 'hook them' so that they will later want to explore the fuller version of the game.

#### **GRAPHICS: 4.5/5**

The graphics are clear and helpful. The contrast and fonts make it easy to read. Cards have an interesting design.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY: 4/5**

The app navigation is intuitive and few buttons take the users easily around the functions. The whole content is available offline. The software is available on Android devices only.

#### **WHAT YOU GET: 5/5**

All content is free, which consists of six levels with 52 puzzles in each.

#### **CUSTOMISABILITY: 2/5**

Users have limited scope to change the appearance and behaviour of the app. They can turn the app sounds on and off and choose the app language. It is not possible to modify the background colours, card face design, or the selecting/clicking type for the card plays.

#### **TEACHING LEVEL: 5/5**

A very short introduction is available, explaining what tricks are and showing the card ranking. This is the only guidance provided: the teaching emerges from the progressive puzzles. Learning happens gradually, as more cards and suits are introduced, one step at a time.

#### **BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: 5/5**

Users can request a hint, which suggests the first card to play, to get off to the right start of each puzzle. When users have completed a puzzle, the app provides instant feedback as to whether the target was accomplished or not. The app recognises if the user is not playing fair for both sides (eg playing an king under an ace).

#### **Overall mark: 4/5**

#### **App store rating: 4/5**

#### **Google Play rating 4.8/5**

Regardless of your level of experience and knowledge, it is highly recommended to give this a try and keep it on your phone. If you are taking your first steps in bridge, you will enjoy the learning methodology. If you are already a player, you will find it quite addictive and will appreciate how

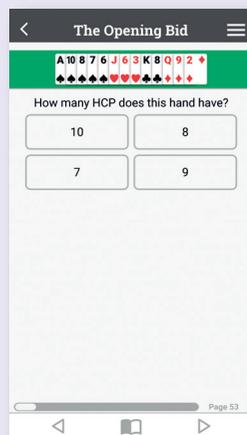
complicated play problems are broken down in a clever way.

#### **Publisher's remarks:**

We are currently developing a second app for a game called Hool which is easy to learn but difficult to master. It is an alternative to MiniBridge which is just a teaching tool, and gives players a real feeling for bridge, making their onward journey effortless. A physical copy of Hool can be downloaded from: [youth.worldbridge.org/category/teaching/hool/](http://youth.worldbridge.org/category/teaching/hool/) The app is coming soon.

#### **LEARN BRIDGE**

Learn Bridge is a mobile-based app to learn how to play bridge from scratch. The learning approach is through a series of interactive lessons. Each chapter contains text accompanied by diagrams with bids and card combinations, which illustrate the concepts. Some diagrams are animated, for instance to show the sequence of card play. Additionally, explanations are accompanied by interactive questions, which users can answer to test their understanding and memory.



This app is suitable for learners at various stages of their journey, from complete beginners through to improvers. The available topics focus on bidding techniques, more than card play. The basic mechanics of card play are covered in the introductory chapter.

#### **GRAPHICS: 4/5**

The layout of the app is clean and clear. The text size and contrast make it easy to read. The diagrams have a good resolution and are easy to see. The animations are easy to follow.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY: 3/5**

The app is easy and intuitive to navigate and all content is available offline. The app is available on iOS as well as Android.

The page navigation within each chapter could be smoother. Users can go back and forth only one page at a time. Under each topic, the list of chapters is displayed, with reading progress clearly

highlighted, but when a chapter is opened it goes back to page 1. This makes returning to where one left off rather cumbersome (*see publisher's remarks below*).

### WHAT YOU GET: 3/5

The app comes with two free lessons included, which take learners up to opener's rebid and responder's rebid (focus on suit auctions rather than NT opening bids). Additional lesson packages are £2.79 each.

### CUSTOMISABILITY: 2/5

The app teaches bidding using a 5-card major and strong NT method. This cannot be changed. It is not possible to change the font size or app colour scheme, except for the colours of the suit symbols.

### TEACHING LEVEL: 5/5

If you are learning the 5-card major system the lessons are clear, written in a pithy, effective style. Emphasis and summaries are used to highlight key concepts. Numerous examples and quizzes illustrate techniques and allow the user to meaningfully interact and test their understanding on the go.

### BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: N/A

**Overall mark: 3.4**

**App store rating: 5/5**

**Google Play rating 4.2/5**

Learn Bridge offers an interesting learning approach, which caters to visual and kinaesthetic learners alike. The explanations, diagrams and demonstrations particularly appeal to the former group of students, while the practical activities will engage the latter. This app represents the natural evolution of traditional 'learning from a book', adapted to a digital world. Most learners in England will be taught Acol and a weak NT, so this would not be useful for practice.

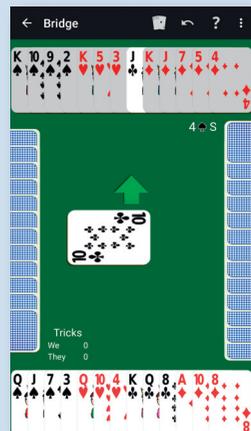
### Publisher's remarks:

The software now returns you to the place where you left in the chapter. Our plans are to write one more bidding lesson, then add more on declarer play and defence.



## NEURALPLAY

NeuralPlay is a mobile-based application to play bridge against the app's software. Users can choose amongst several game options (bid and play, just bid, just play) and scoring methods (matchpoints, rubber, teams). The app also has a deal editor and a deal database, where users can edit, save, share, import and export hands.



A broad range of learners can enjoy NeuralPlay. It is not suitable for complete beginners as it assumes knowledge of the mechanics of the game and the rules of bidding. It is suggested that players engage with the app after around six months of lessons. From that point onwards, learners as well as regular players can enjoy using the app. Those who are still familiarising themselves with bidding can use the 'hint' facility to be reminded of and learn new bids, while those who play more regularly can test their choice against the software's recommended action.

Although it is possible to practise playing and bidding in the app, for those who are looking to learn, the app offers more opportunity to improve one's bidding rather than play.

### GRAPHICS: 4/5

The card design, resolution and contrast are clear. The font is clearly readable.

### ACCESSIBILITY: 4/5

The app is available on android devices. The navigation is intuitive and the screen is clean: the most important buttons are always visible, while less frequently used options are available through a separate menu, which maximises the screen area where the hand is displayed.

Almost all functions are available offline. A sign in and an internet connection are required to compare one's results against other users.

### WHAT YOU GET: 5/5

The whole content and functionality of the app is free. It is possible to pay to remove the ads from the app.

### CUSTOMISABILITY: 5/5

The app offers a broad choice of convention

cards. Some are pre-compiled (SAYC, 2/1, Precision, Acol, 5-card majors-based beginners) and in addition users have the option of defining their own convention card, picking among options such as weak/strong twos, Jacoby, Gerber, defences against NT openings, Blackwood variations and two-suited overcalls.

To focus their learning, players can choose the hand characteristics (balanced, unbalanced, points' distribution across the table), to practise specific hand types and conventions.

Users have several options to customise the appearance and behaviour of the app, including the animations, card graphics, colours, hand display options, card play methods and app layout.

### TEACHING LEVEL: 3.5/5

Bidding hints and explanations are available during the bidding: these are comprehensive and overall accurate. Players can visualise the meanings of all available bids and make their choice, as well as ask for the app's suggestion. Learning happens through reading the meanings of the bids.

During play, users can ask for hints on what to play next, but these are not explained.

### BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: 2/5

The play tips are often wrong, even when users choose the strongest artificial intelligence level. The software's bidding is simple and usually too aggressive. The software's defence is not accurate.

The app has a double dummy solver which shows the double dummy analysis for just the contract that was bid and only with the lead from the actual play (or from the best lead). It is thus not possible to view which other contracts could be made, except for the number of tricks in the contract that has been bid.

### Overall mark: 3.9

### App store rating: not available

### Google Play rating 4.4/5

The users most likely to enjoy using this app are players in the initial stages of their learning journey, who would like to consolidate their bidding practice, and those who would like to try a different bidding system, with step-by-step guidance. Players who have been learning for a few years and more experienced players can still enjoy the practice, but the limited skills of NeuralPlay's artificial intelligence are likely to frustrate these user groups.

### Publisher's remarks:

We are working on expert level bidding and play for more advanced players.

## NO FEAR BRIDGE

No Fear Bridge is a comprehensive website which covers all aspects of the game (bid, play, defence), for a broad range of learners, from those who have never played before through to those who have already attended a few years of lessons.



The website offers a great variety of learning activities, to suit different learning styles, and it includes:

- ❖ weekly bidding and leads quizzes with competitive ladder scoring;
- ❖ declarer play, bidding, defence at any level (from novice to advanced);
- ❖ opening leads practice;
- ❖ declarer play practice; defence and bidding practice; and interactive tutorials (lessons).

Users are able to track their own progress, create their own database of favourite hands on the site and can thus use No Fear Bridge to accompany them into their learning journey over the years.

### GRAPHICS: 4/5

The graphics of the website are simple and clear.

### ACCESSIBILITY: 4/5

No Fear Bridge is a website and therefore available only through an internet connection. It is intuitive to use and navigate. It is possible to access the website both from desktop and from mobile devices. The website does not have a dedicated 'mobile version', which means the structure of the page appears in the same way on large screens as well as small screens. This means that using the website on phones is not as smooth as on a large screen.

### WHAT YOU GET: 3/5

Very little content is available for free. Users can get a free two week trial with full access to all of the interactive content before deciding whether to

purchase the subscription to the full content which costs £54 a year. EBED students qualify for a 25% discount and an extended six week free trial, available through the Student Zone.

### CUSTOMISABILITY:

This is not considered relevant on a website.

### TEACHING LEVEL: 5/5

The explanations are clear, comprehensive and accurate. In learning activities which are scored, users do not just get a 'right or wrong' feedback: the comments are nuanced and take into account all aspects of a user's decision. So for instance, users can get 10/10 points for a completely correct answer and 8/10 for a partly correct answer, all the way down to zero for a completely wrong answer.

Teachers are offered free membership. There is a Teacher Zone with an extensive range of printable resources for teachers (over 2000 hands which are rotatable and can also be exported for dealing machines), plus printable quizzes for classroom use. Teachers should email [help@nofearbridge.co.uk](mailto:help@nofearbridge.co.uk) to be added.

### BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE:

The hands are pre-prepared, so no artificial intelligence is required.

### Overall mark: 4/5

### App store rating: No dedicated app

### Google Play rating: No dedicated app

No Fear Bridge is the best digital learning platform currently available. It is suitable for all levels of learners, from complete beginners to advanced, and it caters for a range of different learning styles. No Fear Bridge's database of hands/exercises/practice activities is vast and ever expanding. As mentioned above, users can save their favourite materials and thus create a personal database within No Fear Bridge, which will accompany them in their learning journey.

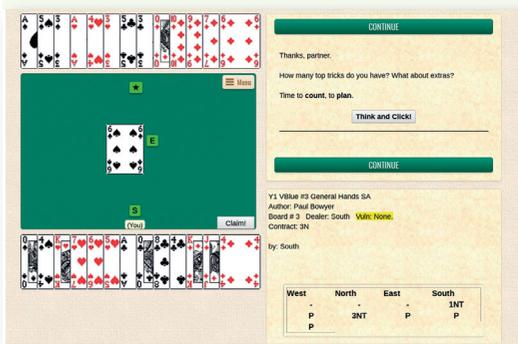
### Publisher's remarks:

Full mobile compatibility is on my To Do list. We do have a large font option for playing hands on mobile phones.

## VUBRIDGE

VuBridge is a website to learn to play bridge. It offers an extensive library of prepared hands, designed by experts. Learners follow the path prepared by the authors, which means that wrong bids or plays are not accepted. Interactive comments through pop up boxes on the screen steer players in the right direction and provide helpful tips. Comment boxes appear on the side of the hand, requiring users to think before bidding or playing a card. This feature is called Think & Click. After users have clicked, the answer is provided so that they can check their understanding and decide the best course of action.

The website is suitable for learners at all levels, including complete beginners.



### GRAPHICS: 2/5

The contrast is not always helpful to improve readability. The resolution of card images is low. The general approach to graphics is not very modern or elegant.

### ACCESSIBILITY: 2.5/5

VuBridge is a website that can be accessed through desktop or mobile devices. It is thus only available via an internet connection.

The navigation of the website is not always intuitive or smooth. On smaller screens, users have to scroll up and down to move between the 'Think and click' area and the play area, which can make the play experience a little fiddly.

### WHAT YOU GET: 2/5

Samples of the activities are available for free. VuBridge offers special deals to EBU students (24 lessons with 20 hands each plus a quiz for £34.95, available for two years). Various subscription options start at £35 per bundle and users can choose amongst a broad selection of topics. Each topic (called 'issue') contains an introduction, a



quiz and practice hands.

### **CUSTOMISABILITY: 2/5**

Users can choose their preferred bidding system between Acol and Standard American.

### **TEACHING LEVEL: 5/5**

The teaching input provided by VuBridge is extensive and thorough. Users can improve their knowledge and understanding of the game through a range of activities, including play practice, quizzes and written explanations. This ensures that several learning styles are catered for. The commentaries provided are a step by step description of each bid and card played, thus providing learners with an excellent level of guidance.

### **BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE:**

The hands are pre-prepared, so no artificial intelligence is required.

### **Overall mark: 2.7**

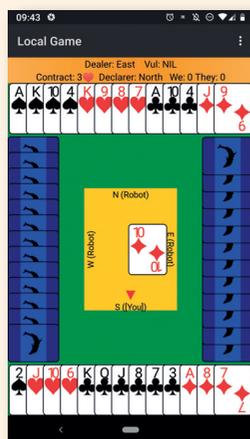
### **App store rating: No dedicated app**

### **Google Play rating: No dedicated app**

VuBridge is an effective way to learn to play bridge and its approach is particularly suited to those who enjoy a high level of hand holding through their learning journey. VuBridge's setup works best on a desktop and as such it is ideal for those who set time aside to sit down for their daily dose of bridge. It is less effective for those who prefer to learn on the move, or would like to absorb information in a bite-size way.

## **WEWEB BRIDGE**

WeWeb Bridge is a mobile-based application, with two main parts: games against the app's software and online competitive games against other users. For the purposes of this review, the focus is on the former functionality, which allows users to learn bridge. This app is suitable for learners who are already familiar with the basics of the game and who have attended around six months of lessons. It is not geared to guide complete beginners.



### **GRAPHICS: 3/5**

The buttons, size of text and resolution are clear. The icons on the buttons are not very elegant and their design is not attractive.

### **ACCESSIBILITY: 2.5/5**

Some features, for instance the solo games against robots, are available offline. Upon creating an account, users can access the online games against other users. The app is fairly easy to navigate although some parts of it are not intuitive. For instance it is not always obvious what function an icon represents. The hints button, which is a key function for learners, is only accessible through a separate menu, which makes the user experience less smooth.

### **WHAT YOU GET: 5/5**

The app, its contents and functionality are wholly available for free.

### **CUSTOMISABILITY: 4/5**

Users can customise several aspects of the app, including some of its behaviours such as sound effects, background colours, and font and card size. There is also a selection of convention cards to choose from: SAYC, Acol, Precision, 2/1 and English modern Acol.

### **TEACHING LEVEL: 2.5/5**

During the auction it is possible to view the meanings of all available bids, which are described in a simplistic way. There is also a function to review the inferences one can make from the bids made so far. The app provides suggestions as to the recommended course of action. The recommendations are generally accurate.

During play it is possible to view the cards that have been played, the cards remaining in the hidden hands and a suggestion of what the robot would play next. The play suggestions are basic and based on general principles (eg counting the number of winners and leading partner's suit), rather than specific to the current situation. At the end, it is possible to review the deal, going through the play as it went and also following the suggestions on how the robot would have played.

### **BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: 2/5**

The software's defence is not accurate and there are no agreed defence mechanisms, such as carding methods.

### **Overall mark: 3.1**

### **App store rating: not available from App Store**

### **Google Play rating 4/5**

WeWeWeb Bridge does not aim to be a learning software and therefore this functionality is only developed up to a point. The app focuses more on enabling people to have games against other users online.

## WIZBRIDGE

WizBridge is a mobile-based app to play minibridge. It offers three types of play mode:

- ❖ Practice - users play with and against the computer, and can undo and view all four hands.
- ❖ Strict - users play with and against the computer without undos or other help.
- ❖ Duplicate - eight users play the same 8-hand set over 90 minutes and their results are compared.



WizBridge is suitable for learners of all ability levels, including complete beginners. It is particularly geared towards players at the initial stages of their learning journey, as it focuses on minibridge.

### GRAPHICS: 3.5/5

The graphics are simple and clear. The colour choices do not always provide the best contrast and this has a negative impact on readability.

### ACCESSIBILITY: 3.5/5

Practice and strict modes are available offline. Duplicates are only available online. The app is overall easy to use and it is intuitive to navigate. WizBridge is available on IOS devices, and has recently been launched on Android too.

### WHAT YOU GET: 3.5/5

All play modes are free. The app comes with a set of pre-installed hands. When users run out they can purchase more hands: a range of options are available depending on the size of the hand bundle being purchased.

### CUSTOMISABILITY: 2/5

There are two colourways.

## TEACHING LEVEL: 4/5

WizBridge+ includes minibridge guides, which explain the mechanics of the game, the scoring, and the main basic concepts such as suit ranks, trumps and card playing techniques. These guides consist of written text, accompanied by diagrams.

During the choice of contract, users are automatically shown suggestions to reconsider their choice, if the software thinks they are making a mistake. These are accurate and helpful. During the play, users can choose amongst a range of help options, which include viewing: the previous trick; the original number of HCP declared by each hand; the number of missing HCP; the missing honours; and the missing cards.

## BRIDGE INTELLIGENCE: 3/5

The artificial intelligence's defence is not always accurate.

## Overall mark: 2.9

## App store rating: 4/5

## Google Play rating: Just launched

WizBridge+ is one of the very few apps that focus on minibridge. It is a useful tool to support learners at the beginning of their journey to become bridge players. This app can be used in two ways: on the one hand, to effectively complement face-to-face sessions; and on the other hand, to guide self-directed learners who prefer to learn on their own.



## NEW PREMISES FOR LEICESTER



Congratulations to Leicestershire's County Bridge Club which moved to wonderful new larger premises in May. It has operated in Leicester for 58 years, and the move will allow it to house city, county and regional events. Gordon Rainsford, the EBU's CEO cut the ribbon, and the club celebrated with an open Swiss pairs the following day.