



Pre-Bridge Games

MinibrIDGE tutor Liz Dale offers tips and ideas to bridge-playing grandparents

AS bridge-playing grandparents, I am sure you have considered, if you have not already done so, passing on your love of playing cards. But it's not always easy. Young people require action, pace and a result. And quickly! Youngsters want an instantly recognisable and playable card game that will keep them occupied. No complicated set up. No impenetrable rules. Easily bored, if these needs are not met, technological games will present an effortless alternative. Oh, and, most importantly, it must be fun!

This is a series of articles covering card-playing games with easy to follow, step-by-step instructions, that will take young people from age 4+ through the steps of recognising numbers 1 – 10, suit rankings and an introduction to scoring through to playing minibrIDGE.

I would very much like to reach out to grandparents to support, encourage and facilitate the card learning process. By teaching your young family members to develop their card-playing skills and card-play etiquette, you are giving them a unique introduction to the skills of a partnership game that is played and enjoyed in homes, schools and clubs throughout the world. Your love and enthusiasm for the game will be much in evidence. What better legacy for your grandchildren could you possibly leave – creating a love of the game in them for life while empowering them with an opportunity to access new friendships all around the world?

Getting Started

Already your 'little people' will be familiar with the themed packs of playing cards, i.e. animal families, etc. These packs are excellent for teaching tiny fingers and small hands how to hold and get the feel of the cards. Quite a daunting task for such tinies. But now it's time to move on to clever little games to get your grand-

children started on to 'proper cards'. You may be wondering why I have removed the kings, queens and jacks from the first two games: it's in order to remove any difficulties that will delay play for a 4-year-old. Only the cards 1 (ace) through to 10 are used for 4-year-olds. No complicated set up. No impenetrable rules. Just an opportunity for you to pass on your enthusiasm and love of cards while at the same time developing your grandchildren's skills of concentration, numbers, memory, recall, and sequence, during short bursts of 'animated' play.

Game No. 1

Suggested age: 4+ years.

Name of game: Concentration.

Time: 10 – 15 minutes for one game.

No. of players: Minimum of two.

Equipment: One pack of proper playing cards (i.e. not themed, not animal, not family, etc). *Remove all kings, queens, and jacks from the pack.*

One table. A chair for each player. (NB: It is usually best for the 'tinies' to kneel on cushions on the chairs, with elbows on the table.)

Pen/pencil and paper for recording the score.

Scoring: The best of three games is suggested, played over three separate playing times. A record should be kept to encourage competition.

Aim of the Game: To locate and find matching pairs of number cards. The player who wins the majority of the cards is the winner.

Shuffle and deal the forty playing cards face down on the table. It doesn't matter whether the cards are laid in rows, or in a higgledy-piggledy fashion, but they *must not touch* one another. Play begins by the first player turning over any two cards face upwards, showing the cards to all other players. If the two cards do not have the same values (say, a two and an eight), then the player turns them over, face downwards once again, positioning them exactly where they were. The next player now takes his/her turn. Play continues until someone 'captures' two cards of the same value, such as two sixes. This player is now allowed to extend his playing turn by turning over another two cards. This player can continue his/her turn as long as he/she locates two matching cards. If a matching pair is not located, it is the turn of the next player. The game continues until all the cards have been won and there are no cards left on the table. The players now count up their winning cards. The player with the most cards is the winner. □

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