
Alberta 55 plus Contract Bridge Rules

General Information

The rules listed in this section shall be the official rules for any **Alberta 55 plus** event. All Alberta 55 plus Rules are located on our web site at: www.alberta55plus.ca. If there is a discrepancy between any printed rules, the version available on our web site shall prevail.

Entry Procedures: Check with your Zone Activity Director for playoff information and date. Contact information is listed on our website at www.alberta55plus.ca

Game Courtesies

Rules are made to be followed by all players to make games happen. But often there are unwritten “rules” or courtesies which will make the game much better with fewer problems for all. Whether the game is a friendly recreational event among friends or part of an important tournament, participants should practice good sportsmanship and respect for their competitors.

Rules for many of the activities that 55 plus play are contained in rules books written by provincial, national or international governing bodies. These rules are often referred to but any adaptations to these rules will be listed within each rule.

Common to all card games, there are a few courtesies:

1. There will be a time limit of 25 minutes per game.
2. Do not pick up a dealt hand and say, “That’s a poor deal.” Or “You’re a bad dealer.”
3. Do not pick up cards as they are dealt. More misdeals are caused by hands moving on the table than any other cause.
4. There should be no lead-directing comments and gestures are not good card manners.
5. No rule book allows the throwing in of hands with “No ace, no face”.
6. Adequate time must be allowed to the opposition to see a trick or hand before it is placed away.

Note: Some localities have rules and games which are played by their own standards. We do not wish to interfere with these “house” situations but encourage all participants to practice the above-listed courtesies.

Dress Code

Avoid the use of strong perfumes, colognes or shaving lotion to prevent an opponent sneezing, being choked up or coughing at the wrong time. To keep Alberta 55 plus activities consistent, where there is no Dress Code Rule it is expected of each participant to reflect the professionalism of themselves and their sport.

Age Groups / Events

All participants must fall within the age group indicated by December 31 of the Event year. All participants in Zone Playoffs must be Active Members.

Age	Events	Participants Advancing to Provincial Games
55+	Open Pairs	4 Participants (2 Pairs)
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER ZONE = 4		

Alberta 55 plus Contract Bridge Rules

1. The provisions of the Laws of Contract Bridge, as published by the **American Contract Bridge League**, and summarized below, shall apply. Alberta 55 plus sanctioned events, Alberta 55 plus Bridge Scoring, as outlined on page 6, will be utilized. These rules can be obtained by searching www.acbl.org or by contacting:

American Contract Bridge League

2990 Airways Blvd.
Memphis, TN 38116-3847
Ph: (901) 332-5586
Fax: (901) 398-7754

2. **Players:** Four, two against two as partners. Partners share equally in every result, and only one score is kept for each side.
3. **Cards:** The 52-card pack. Usually two packs are used; while one pack is being dealt, the dealer's partner shuffles the other pack. Having shuffled it, he sets it down at his right. The cards in each suit rank downward in order: A (high), K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. The suits rank: spades (high), hearts, diamonds, clubs.
4. **Preliminaries:** Before each game, one pack is spread face down on the table. Each player draws a card, but not one of the four cards at either end. The players draw only for highest card to decide who becomes the first dealer and has choice of cards and seats.
For the Alberta 55 Plus Games and associated playoffs, most players will enter with their intended partner.

The shuffle and cut: The shuffled pack is placed at the dealer's left. The dealer transfers it to his right. The player at dealer's right must cut the pack by lifting off a packet and must complete the cut by putting the other packet on top of this one. Each packet must be at least five cards.

5. **Rotation:** The rotation is always clockwise, the turn passing from each player to the player at his left, in dealing, in bidding, and in play.
6. **Dealing:** The dealer distributes the cards one at a time face down, in rotation, beginning with the player on his left, until all have been dealt and each player has received thirteen cards. No player should touch or intentionally look at the face of any card dealt to him until the deal is completed. Conversation should stop once the cards are dealt.
7. **The Auction or Bidding:** When the deal is completed, each player picks up and looks at his hand. Then each player in rotation, beginning with the dealer, may continue to call until the auction closes. A call may be a pass, a bid, a double or a redouble.

Pass: A player who does not wish to make any other call says, "pass". If all four players "pass" in the first round, the hand is not played, and the deal passes on to the next player.

Bid: A bid is an offer to undertake to win a stated number of "odd-tricks" (tricks in excess of six, the first six tricks being called "the book") with a named suit as trump, or with no-trump. *E.g. When a bid of "One club" is made, the declarer is contracting to take seven tricks with clubs being trump.* The lowest possible bid is a bid of one and, since there are thirteen tricks in all, the highest possible bid is seven. The form of a bid is: "One diamond," "One no-trump", "Four spades", etc.

Double: A player in turn may double the last preceding bid. The effect of a double is to increase the scoring values of tricks. A double does not affect the sufficiency of bids; if a three spade bid has been doubled, any player in turn may still overcall it with a bid of three no-trump, or four clubs, or anything higher.

Redouble: A player in turn may redouble the last preceding bid if it was made by himself or his partner, has been doubled by an opponent. The redouble further increases the scoring values, but, like the double, does not affect the sufficiency of bids.

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A double or redouble applies only to the last preceding bid. If a four-club is doubled, and there is a subsequent bid of four hearts, the four heart bid counts as its usual, single, value unless it also is doubled.

Opening the Auction: The auction is said to be opened when any player makes a bid. If all four players “pass” in the first round, or there is a misdeal, the deal is passed out, the cards are thrown in and the next dealer in turn deals. Once the auction has been opened it must continue until it closes and the cards must be played.

Closing the Auction: When a bid, double or redouble is followed by three consecutive passes, the auction is closed. Every card of the suit named in the final bid becomes a trump; or, if the final bid was in no-trump, the cards will be played without a trump suit. Of the side, which made the final bid, the member who first named the suit (or no-trump) specified in that bid becomes the declarer. The number of odd-tricks named in the final bid becomes his contract. The play period commences.

8. **The Play:** The player at declarer’s left selects any card from his hand and places it face up in the centre of the table; that is the “opening lead”. Declarer’s partner then places his hand face up on the table in front of him, grouped in suits with the trumps, if any, to his right; this hand, and declarer’s partner are each called the dummy. Declarer’s partner will take no further part in the play of the cards; declarer will select the plays from the dummy hand as well as from his own, but each in proper turn.

The object of play is to win tricks. A trick consists of four cards, one from the hand of each player in rotation, the first card played to a trick generally being called the lead. A player is required to follow suit to the card led if he can; if he cannot follow suit, he may play any card. A trick not containing any trump is won by the highest card of the suit led. A trick containing any trump is won by highest trump card played in that trick. The hand that wins a trick leads to the next. When a trick is complete (contains four cards) a member of the side that won it takes in the cards, turns them face down, and places them in front of him. One partner takes in all the tricks won by his side. A player may look back at the last trick until he or his partner has led or played to the next; after that, he may not look at any previous trick. Play continues in this way until thirteen tricks have been played.

9. **Scoring:** One player from each side will keep score; and at least one player at the table must keep score.

The contract bridge score sheet is divided by a vertical line in columns headed “we” and “they” and the scorekeeper enters all scores made by his side on the “we” side and all scores made by his opponents on the other side. Midway on the scoresheet there is a horizontal line; scores designated as “trick score” go below the line; all other scores (usually called the “honor score”) go above the line.

Trick Score: If declarer fulfills his contract by winning as many or more odd-tricks than his contract calls for, he scores below the line only for every odd-trick named in the original contract:

SCORE FOR EACH ODD- TRICK BID AND MADE, if trumps were	If the contract was	If the contract was	If the contract was
	<u>Undoubled</u>	<u>Doubled</u>	<u>Redoubled</u>
Spades or Hearts	30	60	120
Diamonds or Clubs	20	40	80
N T, first odd-trick	40	80	160
N T, each add it. odd-trick	30	60	120

If declarer wins more tricks than his contract calls for, their value is scored above the line (see Overtricks, below).

Game: When a side has scored 100 or more points below the line, it has won a game. The scorekeeper draws a horizontal line across the entire sheet, below the score, which ended the game, to signify that another game is beginning. A game may be made in more than one hand e.g. A side may score 60, then its opponents may score 40, then the first side may score 40, giving it 100 points and ending the game. The opponents trick score of 40 does not carry over to the next game, however. Each side begins the next game at zero.

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Vulnerability: A side that has won a game is said to be vulnerable and remains that until the conclusion of the four-hand match. A vulnerable side receives increased bonuses in some cases, and is subject to increased penalties when it does not fulfill its contract:

Overtricks: Any trick won by declarer in excess of his contract is called an overtrick, and is scored above the line to the credit of his side, as follows:

SCORE FOR EACH OVERTRICK (ODD-TRICK MADE BUT NOT BID):

If declarer was **not vulnerable**:

	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
Spades or Hearts	30	100	200
Diamonds or Clubs	20	100	200
No Trump	30	100	200

If declarer was **vulnerable**:

	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
Spades or Hearts	30	200	400
Diamonds or Clubs	20	200	400
No Trump	30	200	400

Double Contract: If declarer makes a doubled contract, with or without overtricks, he receives a 50-point bonus. If he makes a redoubled contract, he receives a 100-point bonus.

Honours: When there is a trump suit, the ace, king, queen, jack and ten of trumps are honours. If a player holds four trump honours in his hand, his side scores 100 above the line; if he holds all five trump honours, his side scores 150 above the line; if he holds all four aces at a no-trump contract, his side scores 150 above the line. The player holding the honours may be declarer, dummy, or defender (opponent of declarer). Honours must be scored before the last card is played in the hand that is being played.

Slams: If declarer fulfills a contract of six odd-tricks (called a little slam, or small slam), his side scores 500 extra points above the line if not vulnerable, and 750 if vulnerable. If declarer fulfills a contract of seven odd-tricks (grand slam), his side scores 1000 extra points above the line if not vulnerable, and 1500 if vulnerable.

Undertrick Penalties: If declarer fails to fulfill his contract – that is if he goes down or is set one or more tricks – his opponents score above the line, as follows:

If the declarer “Goes down” when not vulnerable:

If the Contract was			
	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
First trick	50	100	200
Second and third undertrick	50 each	200 each	400 each
Each additional trick	50 each	300 each	600 each

If the declarer “Goes down” when vulnerable:

If the Contract was			
	Undoubled	Doubled	Redoubled
First trick	100	200	400
Each additional trick	100 each	300 each	600 each

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ALBERTA 55 PLUS Tournament Bridge:

At the Alberta 55 Plus Games and playoffs, ALBERTA 55 PLUS Bridge Scoring (refer to page 6) is utilized, in which premium points are awarded for each game completed during a 4-hand match, and for partial game(s) left on at the end of the match. The actual winning and losing scores for each 4-hand match are recorded during the round robin (or modified round robin) play. When round robin play is completed, the pair accumulating the highest total score during the entire tournament is declared the winner.

12. **Irregularities and Proprieties in Bridge:** There are many situations in contract bridge, which may cause disagreement among players. Refer to the "Irregularities" and "Proprieties" sections of the Laws of Contract Bridge, which outline appropriate action for issues, which may arise.
13. **Sportsmanship:** The use of verbal remarks or body language to convey information is considered cheating and is not good sportsmanship. During tournament play at the Alberta 55 Plus Games or playoffs, the first infraction shall result in a warning by the Director. Each subsequent infraction by the same pair shall result in the loss of 100 points from the score of the offending pair.
14. **Competition Format – Alberta 55 Plus Games** - At the **Alberta 55 Plus Games**, a round robin format shall be played over two days. Each match is over on the completion of four hands. ALBERTA 55 PLUS Contract Bridge scoring and vulnerability will be used. When round robin is completed, the pair accumulating the highest total of scored points during the entire tournament shall be declared the winner.

At Area and Zone playoffs, when time does not allow a complete round robin, a modified round robin shall be played. When round robin or modified round robin is completed, the pair accumulating the highest total score during the entire tournament shall be declared the winner.

At Playoffs: if a two-way tie occurs among those in the top three ranking positions, an additional four hands shall be played to break the tie. If time does not permit, or if more than two teams tied, utilize procedure outlined below for more than two teams tied at Provincial Games.

At the Provincial Games, a single round robin shall be played over two days. When round robin is completed, the pair accumulating the highest total of scored points during the entire tournament shall be declared the winner.

- If after the round robin, two teams have the same total score (among those eligible for medals), an additional four hands shall be played to determine the winner.
- If after the round robin, more than two teams are tied among those eligible for medals, the following tie-breaking procedure will apply.
 - a) If three-way tie exists, go to "who beat who" in round robin (among those tied).

Note: If a two-way tie occurs at any stage of this procedure, an additional four hands shall be played by the two teams still tied to determine the winner.

CONTRACT BRIDGE SCORING

The first side to score 100 points below the line, in one or more hands, wins a game. A team becomes vulnerable after scoring one game, for the remaining hands in the 4-hand match. **PREMIUMS** (ALBERTA 55 PLUS BRIDGE): (Scored above the line by declarer's side)

ALBERTA 55 PLUS Bridge Scoring awards premium points for each game completed during a 4-hand match, and partial game(s) left on at end of match, as follows (note that premium points are not awarded for completing a rubber, i.e. for completing two games):

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Fast Game (i.e. at least 100 points scored below the line in one hand:	500
Slow Game (i.e. 100 points accumulated below the line in more than one hand, unless games has been bid):	300
Partial Game (for having the only "leg on" at end of four hands):	100
(if both pairs have "leg on" at end of four hands):	50/50
For making any DOUBLED contract:	50
For making any REDOUBLED contract:	100

OVERTRICKS:

	<u>Not Vulnerable</u>	<u>Vulnerable</u>
Undoubled, each	Trick Value	Trick Value
Doubled, each	100	200
Redoubled, each	200	400

SLAMS BID AND MADE:

	<u>Not Vulnerable</u>	<u>Vulnerable</u>
Little Slam	500	750
Grand Slam	1000	1500

HONORS:

Four trump honors		100
(If held in one hand)	Five trump honors	150
	Four aces at no trump	150
	(Scored above the line by either side)	

UNDERTRICKS - PENALTY POINTS:

Tricks Down	<u>Not Vulnerable</u>		<u>Vulnerable</u>	
	Undoubled	Doubled	Undoubled	Doubled
1	50	100	100	200
2	100	300	200	500
3	150	500	300	800
4	200	800	400	1100
5	250	1100	500	1400
6	300	1400	600	1700
7	350	1700	700	2000
8	400	2000	800	2300
9	450	2300	900	2600
10	500	2600	1000	2900
11	550	2900	1100	3200
12	600	3200	1200	3500
13	700	3500	1300	3800

If redoubled, multiply doubled value by two

Note: The following two procedures are adhered to at Alberta 55 plus sanctioned events:

1. Penalty for an established Revoke is two tricks from the team that revoked, if two tricks are available.
2. Misdeal or passed out hand: the deal moves on to the next dealer in line.

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Below is a list of possible draw scenarios during Tournament Play:

7 TABLES - 14 PAIRS

Round	Table 1	Table 2	Table 3	Table 4	Table 5	Table 6	Table 7
1	1A-1B	2A-2B	3A-3B	4A-4B	5A-5B	6A-6B	7A-7B
2	1A-2A	2B-6B	3A-5A	4A-5B	4B-7B	6A-1B	7A-3B
3	1A-3B	2A-3A	5B-7B	4A-6B	5A-2B	6A-7A	1B-4B
4	1A-5A	2A-3B	3A-5B	4A-7B	1B-6B	6A-4B	7A-2B
5	1A-3A	2A-5B	3B-7B	4A-1B	5A-6A	2B-4B	7A-6B
6	1A-6A	2A-5A	3A-7A	4A-2B	1B-5B	3B-4B	6B-7B
7	1A-7A	2A-1B	3A-2B	4A-3B	5A-4B	6A-7B	5B-6B
8	1A-4A	2A-6B	3A-7B	1B-2B	5A-7A	6A-3B	5B-4B
9	1A-7B	3B-6B	3A-4B	4A-2A	5A-1B	6A-2B	7A-5B
10	1A-2B	2A-7A	4B-6B	4A-3A	5A-7B	6A-5B	1B-3B
11	1A-4B	2A-6A	3A-6B	4A-5A	2B-7B	3B-5B	7A-1B
12	1A-6B	2A-7B	3A-1B	4A-6A	5A-3B	2B-5B	7A-4B
13	1A-5B	2A-4B	3A-6A	4A-7A	5A-6B	2B-3B	1B-7B

8 TABLES - 16 PAIRS

Round	Table 1	Table 2	Table 3	Table 4	Table 5	Table 6	Table 7	Table 8
1	1A-1B	2A-2B	3A-3B	4A-4B	5A-5B	6A-6B	7A-7B	8A-8B
2	1A-2B	2A-3B	3A-4B	4A-5B	5A-6B	6A-7B	7A-8B	8A-1B
3	1A-3B	2A-4B	3A-5B	4A-6B	5A-7B	6A-8B	7A-1B	8A-2B
4	1A-4B	2A-5B	3A-6B	4A-7B	5A-8B	6A-1B	7A-2B	8A-3B
5	1A-5B	2A-6B	3A-7B	4A-8B	5A-1B	6A-2B	7A-3B	8A-4B
6	1A-6B	2A-7B	3A-8B	4A-1B	5A-2B	6A-3B	7A-4B	8A-5B
7	1A-7B	2A-8B	3A-1B	4A-2B	5A-3B	6A-4B	7A-5B	8A-6B
8	1A-8B	2A-1B	3A-2B	4A-3B	5A-4B	6A-5B	7A-6B	8A-7B
9	1A-2A	1B-2B	3A-4A	3B-4B	5A-8A	6A-7A	5B-8B	6B-7B
10	1A-3A	2A-4A	1B-3B	2B-4B	5A-7A	6A-8A	5B-7B	6B-8B
11	1A-4A	2A-5A	3A-6A	1B-4B	2B-5B	3B-6B	7A-8A	7B-8B
12	1A-5A	2A-6A	3A-7A	4A-8A	1B-5B	2B-6B	3B-7B	4B-8B
13	1A-6A	2A-7A	3A-8A	4A-5A	1B-6B	2B-7B	3B-8B	4B-5B
14	1A-7A	2A-8A	3A-5A	4A-6A	1B-7B	2B-8B	3B-5B	4B-6B
15	1A-8A	2A-3A	1B-8B	4A-7A	5A-6A	2B-3B	4B-7B	5B-6B