

Scoring in Duplicate Bridge

Have you ever wondered what your 55% means at the end of a Bridge Session?
Also, if you want to improve your 45% you get each week – what are you doing wrong?

Here is a document that explains how raw scores are used to calculate points from each game and how those points are used to calculate your percentage.

Then you can look at the individual board results to see what common mistakes you are making, which if fixed would improve your overall percentage result.

Who are you compared to in a game of duplicate Bridge?

If you are sitting NS, you are compared with all other NS pairs – “your pool”

If you are sitting EW, you are compared with all other EW pairs – “your pool”

It is not the size of the contract that matters. What matters is you need to beat other competitors in your pool for that board.

For example, if there are 9 tables ie, 9 NS pairs and 9 EW pairs, you will be compared to the other 8 in your pool.

As each board is played, the **raw score** for each board is recorded in the Bridgemate and sent to the laptop scoring program.

Examples of Raw scores:

- 4H NV making 10 = 420
- 4H V making 10 = 620
- 1D V making 7 = 70
- 2H V making 6 = -50

A working example from Board 1 for Thursday 14th March, Section B, NBBC

Step 1 – list the scores for each Board.

At the end of the session, the raw scores are listed for each board. You can see this board was played by NS pairs 1 thru 9, and EW pairs 1 thru 9. The popular contract was 4S. For the NS pairs to beat their pool opponents, they had to bid to 4S, and they had to get extra tricks. If a NS pair only bid 2S (didn't calculate HCP correctly or didn't bid to correct level using limit bids) they would have done poorly. The hand played very well in NT (top board by NS4).

Board 1						
NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
1	1	4S N	2	480		
2	3	4H S	2	480		
3	5	4S N	2	480		
4	7	3NT S	4	520		
5	9	4S N	2	480		
6	2	4S N	2	480		
7	4	4S N	2	480		
8	6	4S N	2	480		
9	8	4S N	3	510		

Step 2 – rank the scores for each Board.

For each board the raw scores are ranked from top to bottom. Here is the same Board, ranked. You can see the top score was 520 points, achieved by NS pair 4, against EW 7. They went 3NT, played by South, and they got 13 tricks. The 4 in the result column represents the number of tricks won, above the contract. In this case the contract is 9, and they got another 4 which makes 13 tricks.

NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
4	7	3NT S	4	520		
9	8	4S N	3	510		
1	1	4S N	2	480		
2	3	4H S	2	480		
3	5	4S N	2	480		
5	9	4S N	2	480		
6	2	4S N	2	480		
7	4	4S N	2	480		
8	6	4S N	2	480		

Step 3 – awarding points for the rank

There are 9 pairs NS and 9 pairs EW. Therefore, each NS pair is compared to the other 8 NS pairs.

- You get 2 points for each pair in your pool you beat
- You get 1 point for each pair in your pool with whom you tie

The calculations for our example are:

- top board beats the other 8 competitors, you get 16 points (8x2)
- second top beats 7 other competitors. you get 14 points (7x2)
- equal third board, ties with 6 other competitors each gets 6 points (6x1)

NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
4	7	3NT S	4	520	16	
9	8	4S N	3	510	14	
1	1	4S N	2	480	6	
2	3	4H S	2	480	6	
3	5	4S N	2	480	6	
5	9	4S N	2	480	6	
6	2	4S N	2	480	6	
7	4	4S N	2	480	6	
8	6	4S N	2	480	6	

This is for both NS & EW, regardless of who is declarer or defenders.

Do not complain “we have had terrible hands all day” – all your pool players have had the same boards. Make the most of what you have been given:

- Declarers - bid to right level, make the contract & get extra tricks, steal the game contract from the opposition
- Defenders - signal to partner, maximise your tricks, bring your opposition down, especially if they are VUL

It is not the size of the contract that matters.

You do not get the 4H, NV = 420 points that the contract was worth.
You get 1 pt for each pair your tie, and 2 pts for each pair you beat.

If the contract is 4H NV 420, it is likely most of your pool found that contract too and now to beat them, you need to find an extra trick (4H, NV making 11 = 450) to get top of pool “best board”. The pairs that don't bid correctly (2H, 3H) won't get the game bonus and will rank much lower. Every trick matters, both as declarers and in defence.

Percentages

Now for Percentages. In the above example, with 9 pairs in the section, the maximum points you can get for each board is $2 \times 8 = 16$ when you beat outright every other pair in your pool.

If you got 16 points for every board in the session, and there are 18 boards, then you would have a maximum of $16 \times 18 = 288$ points for the session.

Add up all your points and divide by the maximum, represented as a percentage.

For NS 4, the results for each board were:

Board	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Tot
Score	16	10	10	10	14	13	16	4	13	3	8	13	6	0	16	11	15	10	188

$$188 / 288 = 65.28\%$$

You got 188 points out of a maximum 288. That is 65% of your available points.

Improving your score

Can I do better? Where did I go wrong?

In the above example of NS4, look at boards 8 and 10, 14.

Board	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Tot
Score	16	10	10	10	14	13	16	4	13	3	8	13	6	0	16	11	15	10	188

On these boards the points were 4, 3 and 0 respectively. 0 = bottom board.

What went wrong?

Board 8						
NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
6	8	3NT S	2	460	16	0
1	7	3NT E	1	-430	12	4
7	1	3NT E	1	-430	12	4
8	3	3NT E	1	-430	12	4
2	9	3NT E	2	-460	4	12
3	2	3NT W	2	-460	4	12
4	4	3NT E	2	-460	4	12
5	6	3NT E	2	-460	4	12
9	5	3NT E	2	-460	4	12

Contract definitely was 3NT by EW, except for top board – 3NT by South.

I suggest someone did not check their Bridgemate score when it was entered! Woops!

So you did not bid badly. You let them get 2 extra tricks (along with 5 other pairs) so not badly played. 3 other pairs limited them to 1 extra trick – was it the lead or better defence?

Board 10						
NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
8	2	2H N	=	110	16	0
1	6	3D W	1	-130	10	6
2	8	4D W	=	-130	10	6
3	1	2D W	2	-130	10	6
6	7	2D W	2	-130	10	6
7	9	4D W	=	-130	10	6
4	3	2D W	3	-150	3	13
9	4	3D W	2	-150	3	13
5	5	2S S	-2	-200	0	16

Contract was 2, 3 or 4D (part-score) by West. 5 EW pairs got 10 tricks.

You let your opposition get 11 tricks therefore you ranked lower than anyone else who restricted them 10. Work on your defence!

Board 14						
NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
3	8	4H W	-2	100	16	0
1	4	3H E	-1	50	11	5
2	6	4H E	-1	50	11	5
8	9	3H W	-1	50	11	5
9	2	4H E	-1	50	11	5
5	3	2H E	=	-110	6	10
6	5	2NT E	=	-120	3	13
7	7	2NT E	=	-120	3	13
4	1	2H E	1	-140	0	16

Looks like a Hearts contract by EW. Looks like 8 or 9 tricks achievable.

Top board was in a 4H / 2 down results. Either NS pushed them to a game contract, OR they bid badly by themselves.

Equal 2nd pairs all bid too high (3H or 4H) and didn't get the contract.

You let them bid 2H and they got 1 extra trick. It is the poorest result of the pool. Maybe interference bidding would have pushed them up? Better defence would have moved you up the points ladder.

Maybe they were great players – check where EW 1 came in the overall results (yes,...TOP of EW pool). So it was just a combination of you playing this board against the best EW pairs in the competition.

More examples of calculation of points

Some More Examples, showing calculation of points, and showing how for EW, the ranking is in reverse – the top ranked EW pair will be the ones who played the bottom ranked NS pair.

These examples are all taken from Thursday 14th March, Section B at NBBC.

All results – for the last 3 weeks – are posted to the [NBBC website Results Page](#) after each session.

Board 2

The contract was definitely EW for this board. How well did NS defend?

NS 7 took EW down – Good work! Top board, 16 points.

Other 4S contracts make it, so NS 7 definitely defended well.

Maybe also the opening lead made a difference?

NBBC does not record hand records or opening leads.

Board 2						
NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
7	4	4S W	-1	50	16	0
2	3	2C E	2	-130	14	2
1	1	5C E	=	-400	10	6
4	7	5C E	=	-400	10	6
8	6	3NT E	=	-400	10	6
3	5	4S W	=	-420	4	12
5	9	4S W	=	-420	4	12
9	8	4S W	=	-420	4	12
6	2	3NT W	1	-430	0	16

Board 4

Contracts were Spades by NS & Hearts by EW.

The calculations are the same – rank the scores, then award points.

Did you win the auction? Did you bid to the right level? Did you get your contract?

If you were in defence, did you get as many tricks as possible?

Top board was NS 6, who doubled the 4H contract, and brought them down by 2 tricks. They get a raw score of 500 (2 tricks, V, doubled). They may have pushed them higher, OR they just didn't calculate their HCP and went too high...

NS defended well / had a good opening lead and kept them to 8 tricks.

Board 4						
NS	EW	Contract	Result	Score	Points NS	Points EW
6	1	4HX E	-2	500	16	0
1	9	2S S	3	200	13	3
7	3	3S S	2	200	13	3
4	6	2S S	2	170	10	6
2	2	1S S	2	140	7	9
5	8	3S S	=	140	7	9
9	7	3H E	-1	100	4	12
3	4	2H E	=	-110	2	14
8	5	3H E	=	-140	0	16

Look at the following docs for indepth scoring details:

- [Scoring Sheet1](#) on the NBBC website for all contract score values, and
- [Scoring Sheet2](#) on the NBBC website for an indepth calculation of those scores