Plymouth Bridge Club

Connectivity issues playing Bridge Online

The main problem people seem to be having with playing bridge in the online environment relate to:

> 1) Familiarity with the computer equipment,
> 2) Ensuring there is compatibility between the home equipment and the on-line platform.
> 3) Securing a stable internet connection.

The purpose of these notes is to address ways that these problems may be overcome.

1. Familiarity

The key to this is having the courage to give it a go. Everyone struggles with new systems. If you are finding it difficult to find your way round do not be afraid to ask. There is no such thing as a daft question!! If you do not have a friend from the club who can help contact Charles or Steve and we will ring you to see if we can help.

2. Computer Equipment

It is important to have the right Computer and computer software if you are to play bridge on-line. As a rule of thumb the more up to date your equipment is the better. The following table indicates which equipment is good.

Can Use	Can't use
· Windows laptop · Windows tablet · Windows desktop · MacBook or other Apple laptop · iPad (from 2015 or newer) · iMac or other Apple desktop · Chromebook · Android tablet · Modern Smart phone for BBO	· Smartphone for Real Bridge · iPads, older than 2015.

You must also use the appropriate web browser (you are probably using one of them already). The following table tells you which browsers you can and cannot use.

Can Use	Can't use
Edge, Chrome, Firefox, Safari. The logo must look like one of these – **exactly** as below. If it looks different, you are using an out of date version. You **cannot** use the combination of iPad and Chrome.	Internet Explorer (notice the gold band) The old EDGE (see shape of the e)

3. Connecting to the Internet

Having a stable internet connection is important so that you are disconnected during games as infrequently as possible. Short disconnections happen to most people and it is usually possible to reconnect quickly and log back in.

The faster your internet connection is the better and you should be aiming to get download and upload speeds of 20mbs or more per second. You can easily get your land line tested by your telephone company to find out what you currently get.

They will also advise you what you might be able to do to increase your internet speed. Superfast and Fiber Broadband connections are preferable to old copper wire telephone lines.

Sometimes you can improve your connectivity by ensuring you sit close to the internet router so that wi-fi signals do not have to travel through walls. You may be able to resolve this by connecting you computer/device direct to your hub using an Ethernet cable.

In some areas (particular outside cities) it is not possible to get high speeds through your land line. An alternative is to receive your internet signal through a mobile network currently 4G (although soon to be 5G). Again it is worth contacting a mobile phone provider to find out what strength the mobile phone signal is in your area and what they can offer in the way of free standing wi-fi modems and computer dongles.

Conclusion

Upgrading equipment has cost implications that may not be possible for some members. However we are going to be playing bridge on-line for the foreseeable future and many people are saying that even after the pandemic on-line bridge is likely to continue to be a major part of the future of Tournament Bridge.