

The NGS – A very brief introduction

The National Grading Scheme provides a respectable measure of an individual's expected results when playing Duplicate Bridge; it is easy to understand and reflects changes (both up and down) in an individual's recent results. The NGS is complementary to and independent of the Master Points Scheme. The NGS has been in operation since April 2010.

NGS Grades

The NGS grade for an individual is based on the last 2000 boards (around 80 sessions, but nothing over three years' old) they have played, which can be with any partner. Grades are updated whenever new results are received.

A player's grade is designed to estimate the percentage score they would achieve on average, if partnering another player of the same grade, in a field of average national strength.

While the grade does reflect a player's ability, it is also influenced by playing style – with the more focused players rating higher than the more relaxed players. Across the year, variations of +/-2% are normal due to the inherent randomness in most results sets.

Grades are grouped into 13 playing card bands, ranging from Ace (highest) to Two (entry level). Each band covers a 2% range of grade values, with the Eight band spanning 49-51%.

Calculating the Grade

When the results for an event are processed, an expected score is calculated for every pair, based on the two players' grades, and on the average strength of the players they are competing against. The difference between this expected score and the actual result determines a player's "session grade" for that session.

A player's current grade is a function of their session grades from recent events, with older sessions contributing progressively less. Non-match-pointed events are converted to equivalent match-point percentages for grading purposes.

Which Events are Graded?

The NGS includes all events for which sufficient comparisons are available, and for which the results are in a suitable form for processing – and this means just about all pairs events, plus multiple teams events and some league matches, but not knockout events.

Partnership Grades

For each partnership you play in, the NGS will also calculate a partnership grade, based on boards played with that partner in the last three years. Some players may like to track this as well as their individual grade.

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Will my grade go up or down if I play with a weaker or stronger partner? Either could happen, depending on whether or not the partnership exceeds expectations (which will be lower with a weaker partner, and higher with a stronger partner).

Will my grade go up or down if I play in a weaker or stronger game? Either could happen, depending on whether or not the partnership exceeds expectations (which will be lower in a stronger game, higher in a weaker game).

Why has my grade gone down after I had an above par session? This is usually the result of a delay to, or correction of, earlier processing. In MyEBU you can click on the header of the NGS column to sort entries in order of processing dates