On Line Blob User Manual

Last Updated : 25th January 2021

Glossary
Session - a session of Blob = a Sunday night
Game - a game of Blob - long one or a shorty. Usually 2 or 3 games in a session.
Hand - the hands in the game. 1 to 7 to 1 in the long game = 13 hands.
Trick - each trick in the hand. Hand 7 no trumps has 7 tricks.

Use the green buttons to control the game.

Login
This was going to be a database login but I couldn't get it to work and is actually not necessary.
Just click on the name you want to play as.
A new player must be set up in the players table in the database.
Once a player is selected it is flagged as playing and all player related data is driven from this (score sheet, hands, player order etc.)
This login name is passed through to all the other pages so you have to login for each session even if the flag is still set.

Logout All
Removes all players (sets the playing flag to 0). Do this before starting a new session.

New Session
Get everything ready for a Sunday night Blob session.
- Set a random playing order
- Reset the score sheet

New Game
Setup the next game, short or long.
- Calls the steup_game stored procedure
- Update the game with the next hand to deal and play
- Add the game to to the score sheet

1st Jack
Simulates dealing the shuffled deck and highlighting first jack (scores) and second jack (deals).
The dealer is updated by the second jack.
(Setting the dealer was removed from the setup game)

Score
- Scoring is now automated and driven from the bids and the tricks won.

Deal
Shuffle the deck into a random order and deal the cards to each player playing.
- Calls the shuffle stored procedure
- Deletes the shuffled deck and re-creates a random ordered deck from the cards
- Delete the last hand
- Delete the last trick

- Set the trick count for the players to zero
- Call the deal stored procedure for each player
- Create a hand for each player for the current game from the shuffled deck. It actually deals every seventh card, it should really be every x card where x is the number of people playing. But it just adds a bit more random.

New Trick

Sets up the next trick to be played.
- Update the player tricks won count.
  Note: you'll also need to do this for the last trick in the hand to see the correct totals.
- Delete the last trick

Hand

The main page for playing the game

Tricks Won

Blind - changes from Y to N when the player clicks the 'Click to Show Hand' button.
Bid - the numbers of tricks bid by each player for this hand. It's set by the row of buttons under the table.
Won - the number of tricks won by each player in this hand.

Note: you need to do 'New Trick' for the last trick of the hand to make sure the last trick shows.

Bids

Click the button for your bid on this hand. This will update the bid row above. If you bid blind then the bid is double the tricks in this hand.
The number at the right of the bids line is the total bid for this hand and will go red if this equals the number of cards in the hand.

Note: there is no validation on the bidding.

Player's Hand

The current hand dealt.
Click a card in the hand to play it. The card is added to the trick and removed from the hand.

Trick

The current trick with the winning card highlighted.
The page refreshes every 3 seconds so there may be a slight delay after each card is played before it shows.
Click a card in the trick to 'unplay' it. The card is removed from the trick and put back into the hand it came from.

Score Totals

The running score for each game.

Score Sheet

The scores for each hand that add up to the totals above.
Note this is not a running score as we do in the pub but the individual scores for each hand.
The current leaders of the game are highlighted in green.

Tricks

The history of the tricks played in each hand in case there is any argument that someone played out of turn or played a wrong card. This is updated by the 'New Trick' and reset by the 'Score'.

Sequence to Control the Game

Logout All
Login - each player choose your name
Setup the session (once only)
Setup the Game - once for each new game
1st Jack - once per game to choose dealer and scorer.
Shuffle and Deal - once per hand. Players take it in turns based on the player order in the tables.
New Trick - after everyone has played their card for the current trick. Don't forget the last trick in the hand to update the trick totals.
Score - after each hand. Number of tricks won if correct or -1 if not.
Hand - players will stay on this page unless doing one of the above. The hand is hidden until the 'Click to Show Hand' button is pressed. This allows for blind bidding.
There is now (v5.0) some control over the playing sequence e.g. you can't deal, start a new trick or score out of sequence with the game.

Known Issues / Errors

SQL errors

Usually because you haven't logged in so the queries will fail.
Double clicking plays a card twice. Not an issue usually but if it's the winning card then it causes a SQL error. Fixed.
Playing the next card before the 'New Trick' puts the card in the old trick instead of the new one. Fixed.
Player can play more than 1 card per trick (as above). Fixed.

Database

Tables

cards - the 52 cards in the deck and a pointer to the corresponding image file
cards_shuffled - the shuffled deck. Based on a random number
game - controls the current game - hand size, trumps etc
hand - the players' cards for the current hand
players - the list of players, play order and if a player is playing in this session. If you need a new player, add them here
score - the score card for the session
trick - the cards in the current trick
game_control - controls the sequence of the game
tricks_played - history of the tricks played in each hand.

Stored Procedures

deal - deal the next hand
setup_game - set up the next game - mainly the resetting the game and adding to the score card
shuffle - shuffle the cards table and add to the cards_shuffled table.

Error Messages

"You need to be admin to do this"

Certain actions can only be performed by an admin user e.g new session or new game. Admin is set in the database table blob.players.

"IT'S NOT TIME FOR A NEW SESSION"

Blob.game_control.game.sequence must be 1 for new session. game_sequence is set to 1 by logout_all.

"IT'S NOT TIME TO DEAL"

Blob.game_control.game.sequence must be 4 to deal. Set by New Game

"IS IT YOUR DEAL IS IT?"

Dealer must match the user pressing the button.

"IT'S NOT TIME FOR A NEW TRICK"

Blob.game_control.game.sequence must be 5 (set by Shuffle & Deal) and all cards must be played for the trick (cards played = numbers of players).

"IT'S NOT TIME TO SCORE; not all tricks have been played - press New Trick?"

Blob.game_control.game.sequence must be 5 and all tricks played (tricks won = hand size). This can also happen if two people click the "New Trick" button at the same time. To fix this you must correct blob.players.tricks_won to match what actually happened. Generally the winner of the last trick played will need tricks_won reduced by one.

Game Control

Table blob.game_control.game_sequence sets what functions can be used when in the game.

Function	Input game_sequence	Sets game_sequence to
Logout All (logout_all.php)		1
New Session (setup_session.php)	1	2
New Game (setup_game.php)		4
Shuffle & Deal (deal.php)	4	5
Score (score.php)	5	4