

Using Bridgемate III and Bridgемate II simultaneously

Summary

With Bridgемate Control Software (BCS) version 4.1.17 or later, you can use both Bridgемate III and Bridgемate II devices in the same bridge session. This is especially useful when you don't have enough devices of one type to equip all tables. BCS allows both systems to enter and exchange board results and player names while your scoring program manages the data as usual.

Note: This article applies to Bridgемate Control Software version 4. It does not apply to version 5, which is currently in limited test release.

How it works

Bridgемate III and Bridgемate II are technically different systems, using separate protocols for communication between Bridgемate and server. As a result, a Bridgемate III cannot communicate directly with a Bridgемate II server and vice versa.

However, BCS makes it possible to run both systems side by side using one computer. Once set up, they share a single score (.bws) file created by the scoring program. This enables board results and player names to be synchronized between Bridgемate systems, so you can assign any device type to any table.

Getting started

Begin by installing Bridgемate Control Software 4.1.17 or later. Then, connect the Bridgемate III server and Bridgемate II server to separate USB ports on your computer. Since both systems use separate communication protocols, no specific channel configuration is necessary. You can use the default channel on both systems (channel 0).

Assigning Bridgемates to tables

You can distribute Bridgемate III and Bridgемate II devices however you like. For example:

- Use Bridgемate III in some sections and Bridgемate II in others.
- Split them across all sections equally.
- Mix device types within the same section.

You can also replace devices mid-session (even swapping one type for another), and all previously entered data will continue seamlessly.

Configuring the session in your scoring program

Once the devices are in place and both servers connected, start your scoring program and create your session as usual. Some scoring programs offer built-in support for using both systems simultaneously. If yours does, activate that setting so it launches both systems automatically. Check the manual of your scoring program or consult its author for more information.

If your scoring software doesn't support this, you can still manage both systems from within Bridgемate Control Software as explained below.

Starting both systems

After starting Bridgемate from your scoring program for this session, Bridgемate Control Software opens and first launches the Bridgемate III system. It loads all session data (table numbers, player names, hand records, etc.) into the Bridgемate III server.

To activate the Bridgemate II system open it from BCS under menu "Session" and choose the option "Run Bridgemate II concurrently". This opens another BCS window for the Bridgemate II system. Now both systems are active, each in its own BCS window, and both have access to all session data.

Each window clearly labels which system it's connected to, so you can manage both easily throughout the session.

Exchanging board results and names

Both systems rely on the shared score file created by your scoring program. Whenever a player enters a result or player number into the Bridgemate, that data is sent to the connected server, written into the score file, and made available to the other Bridgemate system automatically.

Initially, both BCS instances will only show the scores received from their own connected Bridgemate system. To see all board results from both systems, press "Reset filter" to reload the complete list.

Updating the movement

If the movement changes during setup or play—e.g. if players are added or removed—make those changes in the scoring program. The scoring program pushes the updated movement into the score file, and both BCS systems will reflect the changes automatically in a few seconds.

Processing board results

Your scoring program processes data (board results, player numbers, hand records) from both Bridgemate systems in the same way it normally would. No special settings are needed once both systems are active.

Troubleshooting

One of the two BCS windows is accidentally closed. If you close one of the BCS windows unexpectedly, it's best to close the other one as well and restart the Bridgemate program from the scoring program. This will restore both systems and preserve all collected scores.

⚠ Do not use the "Restart Bridgemate" function in your scoring program once the session has started. This resets all data and restarts the session at round 1!

A Bridgemate needs to be replaced. When replacing a Bridgemate at a table (e.g. due to low battery), you can replace it with either type of device. Because the score file is shared, the new device will resume seamlessly—regardless of whether it's a Bridgemate II or Bridgemate III.

Consult the device-specific manuals for more on swapping Bridgemates