

FOR THE NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK.....

Three common bridge errors and Solutions to Avoid them!

1. **Playing too fast:** Many errors, such as winning the opening lead in your hand when you should have won it in the dummy, can be prevented by just slowing down. If you are the declarer, make a plan. So if you're planning to take an immediate finesse for the king of trumps by leading the queen from dummy, try to win the first trick in dummy!
2. **Cashing tricks, especially aces, too early.** Planning ahead is good for defenders, too. Aces should capture kings and queens, not 2s and 2s. When the dummy, on your left, tables a suit such as K-J-5-4, decide ahead of time that when declarer leads toward that suit, you will duck smoothly. You will lose your ace once in a while, but when your partner has the queen, she will score it most of the time. Try to establish extra tricks, not just cash the ones you were dealt.
3. **Trump mismanagement:**
 - a) Getting your winners ruffed because you didn't pull trumps. Solution: If your hand or the dummy is going to be full of good tricks after you knock out one of the opponent's high cards, then you should usually pull trumps so your winners won't be ruffed.
 - b) Pulling too many trumps. Solution: When you're planning a crossruff, or simply need to ruff losers in your hand or dummy, don't pull trumps, or at least not enough to thwart your plan. *Excerpted from Bridge Bulletin, July 2007. "Fault Signs" by Mary Smith*

Back to the Basics—it's not just for school children:

Fundamental Principles of Winning Bridge

1. Bridge is at least 75% to 80% bidding - **however:**
2. All bidding derives from an understanding of declarer play
3. In descending order, the important criteria for bidding are:
 - a) Long suits
 - b) Trump fits
 - c) High Cards

The most powerful hands have high cards concentrated in the long suits.
4. Hands rarely stay the same in value during the bidding sequence. Reevaluate your hand during the bidding.
5. There is something magical about a 4-4 major suit fit – and the bidding should reflect an emphasis on finding one.
6. Given a choice of options, playing a hand in a minor suit, should be the last.
7. When possible in declarer play, the stronger hand should be concealed.
8. Players should strive to make descriptive bids. A descriptive bid is one that communicates both strength and distribution within a relatively narrow range.
9. The partner of the first descriptive bidder is almost always the Captain.
10. There are three types of bids – those that give information, those that ask questions, and those that give commands.
11. The Captain generally makes bids that ask questions and give commands.

Outstanding Card Percentages:

Accurately predicting how outstanding cards in the opponents' hands are likely to break can greatly assist you in playing the hand. Expect an odd number outstanding to divide as evenly as possible and an even number to divide unevenly. You may want to save this guide.

OUTSTANDING CARDS	POSSIBLE HOLDING	PERCENTAGE
2	1-1	52%
	2-0	48%
3	2-1	78%
	3-0	22%
4	3-1	49.7%
	2-2	40.7%
	4-0	9.6%
5	3-2	67.8%
	4-1	28.3%
	5-0	3.9%
6	4-2	48.5%
	3-3	35.5%
	5-1	14.5%
	6-0	1.5%
7	4-3	62.2%
	5-2	30.5%
	6-1	6.8%
	7-0	.05%
8	5-3	47.1%
	4-4	32.7%
	6-2	17.1%
	7-1	2.9%
	8-0	.02%

Defense--you do it half the time

Recommendations for Selecting an Opening Lead:

(Keep in mind, choose the suit first and then choose which card in that suit to lead.)

1. If partner bid in the auction, lead his suit. The only acceptable reason for not doing so is said to be a void or unconsciousness. Partners have been known to call for a defibrillator when their suit is not led.
2. Lead an unbid suit. With a choice of unbid suits, tend to lead the longer one against a notrump contract. Against a suit contract, consider the relative strength of the suits when choosing: Q J 10 7 rather than K 9 7 6 2 or A 9 7 6, for instance.
3. If you do lead a suit the opponents have bid, it should be either a singleton or from an overwhelmingly good holding such as A K J x or better.

Director, Please

Neither the dummy nor the defenders may call attention to previous tricks which partner has **incorrectly** signified as won or lost. Each defender and the declarer is responsible for keeping track of tricks won or lost. You may call attention to the trick just completed if partner has it turned wrong. Procedural penalties may be assessed for improperly calling partner's attention. After the hand is over, the correct number of tricks won or lost may be ascertained. During the play, neither the dummy nor the defenders may call attention to the number of tricks currently needed to defeat or fulfill the contract. Do not say things like "just one (two) more trick(s) partner".

Bridge Slang

Telephone number – A penalty in the four digits: "I went for a telephone number" means you got caught for minus 1100 or 1400.

Tap – When on defense, to lead a suit that the declarer is void in so as to reduce the declarer's trumps. If you continually "tap" declarer every time you are on lead you are employing a "forcing defense".

Please send comments regarding this newsletter to jryan9620@sbcglobal.net. If you would like to be added to the mailing list just give ACBL your e-mail address and you will get it automatically.

See you at the tables

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