

HOW MUCH DO YOU LIKE YOUR HAND?



Hand Evaluation

If the truth be told, Aces are somewhat underrated. 10's are underrated. We give ten's no points at all. Maybe we should??

Queens and Jacks are overrated. Experts call them Quacks!

Upgrade your hands that have Aces and 10's. Downgrade your hands that have Queens and Jacks.

DOWNGRADE hands that have **SHORT HONOURS**, unless partner has bid that suit.

e.g.

AK doubleton will only take two tricks. AK762 will sometimes take as many as 5 tricks.

Doubletons: KQ KJ QJ Q3 J4

Singletons: K - Q - J...these are not good cards.

You should always count distribution (unless bidding NT) but should constantly adjust your point count based on whether partner bids suits you like or do not like. Does she raise your suit? Your hand increases in value. Does she bid suits you are short in (have singletons or voids?), in which case your hand goes down in value.

Which hand do you like best?

- 1) KJ652
42
Q10762
A
- 2) A8732
QJ
108432
K
- 3) Q10652
54
AJ843
K
- 4) AQ764
54
KJ1065
5

Answers: 4) is best. 1) is second best 3) is pretty bad 2) is the worst!

Which hand is better?

- | | | |
|-------|----|--------|
| 5) | OR | 6) |
| AQJ | | AQJ432 |
| 32 | | 432 |
| 10987 | | 10987 |
| 5432 | | ---- |

If your partner opened 1NT, on 5) you should pass. On 6) you would get to game in Spades.

Your hand is way better when your honours are located in your long suits, NOT in your short suits.

TAKE MORE TRICKS

North (Dummy)

D J32

D K

South (Declarer)

D A54

The lead of the King by West promises that West also has the Q. (East did not bid this suit.) This is carved in stone, regardless of whether the contract is NT or a suit contract. You **MUST** assume this.

So many less experienced players, sitting South now think: "I will win the D Ace and that is all the tricks I can win in that suit." **WRONG!**

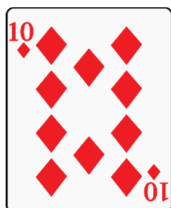
You must win the Ace and then draw trump (if it is a trump suit contract) but when the time is right, S must now lead a small D towards the D J in dummy. If W plays the D Q, the J in dummy is high and if he ducks, Declarer wins the D J in dummy. Always lead from the weaker side of the suit towards the stronger.

Only one more trick, you say? Have you ever been down one?

D KJ8

D 10

D A32



West leads the D 10 against a 3NT contract. If West has the D 9 also, which he will often have for this lead, Declarer must cover the D 10 lead with the J in dummy. If E plays the Q, Declarer wins the Ace. Later, you should lead the D 2 towards the 8 in dummy in order to get a third trick in the suit.

One more:

D J32

D 9

D AK8

When W leads the D 9, it is always Top Of Nothing. W does not have the 10 or the Q. With Q764, he would have led the 4. With Q74, he would have led the 4: Bottom Of Something. B.O.S.T.O.N.

Assume that the 9 is top of nothing. Declarer must play the D J from dummy, East will play the D Q. S will win the Ace. LATER on, declarer will lead the D 2 from dummy and if E plays small, Declarer will play the D 8, knowing that E has the D 10.

It is easier to notice the Aces, Kings, Queens and Jacks. It is harder to pay tribute to the 10's and 9's and consider that they too can win tricks. The bridge Gods never deal us enough high cards so we have to make do with lesser ones and train ourselves to take tricks with these seemingly insignificant cards. Your telephone will be ringing!



MORE CONVENTIONS, MORE PRACTICE

by Barbara Seagram & David Bird

Excerpt on Inverted Minors

Following the runaway success of Practice Makes Perfect, bridge teachers asked the authors to produce a similar companion book to 25 More Bridge Conventions You Should Know.

And here it is -- a brief summary of each of those 25 **MORE** conventions at the start of each chapter, followed then by example hands that can be dealt out and used to apply your new knowledge. Available at Lee's and at our School of Bridge. \$19.95 + tax = \$20.00.

Here is an excerpt from the Chapter on Inverted Minors:

Traditional limit raises (such as 1D - 3D) work well enough but they can leave you with a bidding problem. Suppose partner opens 1D and you hold:

S A106
 H 52
 D AQ1064
 C A95

You cannot raise to 3D because partner might pass. Nor can you bid 3NT with such weak hearts. A useful convention provides a solution. You change around the meaning of the 2D and 3D responses to 1D and also the 2C and 3C responses to 1C. On the above hand, you would bid 2D in response to 1D. This will show 10 or more points. It is not a limit raise because it is unlimited and could be even 18 points. Subsequent bids by either player will show stoppers for No Trump.

NOTE: You would not make an inverted minor bid if you had a 4 card or longer major. You always prefer to show that major.

YOU	PARTNER	YOU	PARTNER
43	KQ8	1D	2D
AK	102	2H	2S
KJ9763	AQ542	3NT	Pass
AJ4	862		

Your 2H shows a H stopper. Partner's 2S bid shows a S stopper but no C stopper, since if he had a C stopper, he would have next bid 2NT instead of 2S or 3NT if he had 13 or more HCP and both C and S stopped. When you hear of the spade stopper, you are happy to bid 3NT. If you were weaker, you would have bid 2NT only.

YOU	PARTNER	YOU	PARTNER
A2	K84	1D	2D
984	52	2S	3D
AJ102	KQ763	Pass	
QJ84	K76		

Your 2S bid denies a H stopper (as you show your stoppers up the ladder), so partner cannot contemplate a NT contract. Because his hand is minimum for a 2D response, he continues with a non-forcing 3D. You are minimum also so the bidding ends there.

Since opening bids of 1C and 1D may be made on 3 card suits, you will need 5 card support to start with an immediate (inverted) raise. With 4 card support, you will bid 1Nt or 2NT (11-12 HCP and no 4 card major) or 3NT (13-15 HCP and no 4 card major).

Note that 1C - 3C now will show 2-6 points including distribution. It is weak and preemptive.

	AQ7	
	75	
	K653	
	KQ52	
J43		K9852
Q10432		K96
4		Q107
J973		106
	106	
N	AJ8	
E	AJ982	
S	A84	
W		
1D P 2D P		
2S P 3N All Pass		

The Bidding: South makes an inverted Diamond raise, showing at least the values for a limit raise to 3D. What should North rebid? He bids 2S, denying a H stopper but showing a S stopper. This is just what S wanted to hear and he jumps to 3NT.

The Play: West leads the H 3 to East's King. What is your plan in 3NT?

You have 5 top tricks outside the D suit, so four D tricks will be enough for game. You win the first round of Hearts with the Ace, retaining your H J8 as a stopper if W wins the lead. You then cross to D K and lead a second D, finessing the D J into the safe hand.

If this were to lose to a doubleton DQ with West, the Hearts are still protected. If W leads a H, you get an extra trick. You will have 9 tricks on any return (10 tricks if he persists with playing Hearts). As it happens, the D finesse wins and you will make at least one overtrick.

BIDDING QUIZ

1.

S 4
H AJ1072
D AKJ
C A543

You are the dealer with the hand to the left. You open 1H and partner responds 1S.

Your rebid is?

2.

S AKJ6
H 4
D A3
C AQJ752

You are the dealer with the hand to the left. You open 1C and partner responds 1H.

Your rebid is?

3.

S A842
H A3
D AQJ87
C K3

You are the dealer with the hand to the left. You open 1D and partner responds 1S.

Your rebid is?

4.

S AQ1084
H K4
D KJ3
C AJ3

You are the dealer with the hand to the left. You open 1S and partner responds 1NT.

Your rebid is?

1. 2C. This shows 13 or more points and 5 H and at least 4 C. This bid is unlimited (because it is a new suit) so you could have 16 or 17 points also). Don't even think of bidding any number of NT on your first rebid when you have a singleton in partner's suit. This will promise a balanced hand. While YOU may be balanced, your hand is not!

2. 2S. A traditional jump shift by opener showing 18 or more points including distribution.

3. 4S. This is NOT a shut-out bid. It promises 19 or more points and 4 card support for partner's Spades. IF responder were to have 13 points or more, he should now add his points to opener's and hear the "SOUND of slam!" He would now move on to bidding to slam in Spades.

4. 2NT. IF you were opener with a balanced hand and only a minimum hand (12-14), playing Standard, you would pass. If you were playing Two Over One and had a minimum balanced hand, then if partner responded 1NT, it would be forcing. As opener you would have to bid again (2C).

If you were opener with 15-17 HCP balanced, you would have OPENED 1NT.

Thus, the rebid by the opener of 2NT in this scenario

1S -1NT

2NT shows 18-19 HCP balanced. Too good to open 1NT and not good enough to open 2NT.

DISCARDING



The term discard does not refer to any old signal you give when following suit. A discard is what you throw away when you CANNOT follow suit. You will attempt to communicate certain information to partner when defending. To discard is when you cannot follow suit to the suit that declarer has led (we are only discussing defenders' discards). If you are discarding, you will be playing a card in another suit.....but not a trump.

When you are unable to follow suit and either cannot or will not trump in, you must perform throw away a card. This is commonly called a discard.

It's always best to remember that while keeping partner informed or clued in with special kinds of discards, declarer has the advantage of seeing them also. But also remember that the opponents are entitled to know what discarding methods you use. When asked you must explain your methods. Most of you would simply reply (if asked) that you play "standard leads and carding".

Attitude discards are the simplest system of signaling. If you use standard signals (which is what most people use), a high card in the suit discarded encourages that suit and a low card discourages it. Note that it is only the first discard in a suit that we have to pay attention to. Any further discards in the same suit are usually neutral and pass no message.

So what can we tell partner by our first discard? That we have an interest in a particular suit, usually because we hold an honour in that suit, ideally the ace or the king. This is not a command to partner to lead this suit; it may or may not be sensible to do so. That depends on many things. But you are helping partner to unravel some of the mysteries of the jigsaw puzzle that is your hand.

How do we get that message across? Some people don't bother at all. In this case, partner is blindfolded, in a very dark forest and no guiding light...you are not helping her to know what to do next. Why keep partner in the dark? Help her so that your side can take as many tricks on defense as possible.

Why bother?

"If only you had led me a spade, partner...." or "You could have given me a ruff in diamonds...." How often have you heard those words, or something very like them, drift across the bridge room during play?

Well, of course, it would be nice if partners were always clairvoyant, but they never are. The ones who seem to be are almost certainly using signals. This probably gains them on average at least one extra defensive trick on every hand on which they are defenders. That is a huge amount, especially in duplicate bridge.

You can show by your discard, the suit you would prefer partner to lead.

The simplest discard system of all is to discard a high card in a suit you want led. This must be the first discard you make because if you are forced to make a number of discards you tend to throw away small cards whenever possible.

Discarding a low card as your first discard, suggests that you have no interest in that suit.

Sometimes, especially against No Trump contracts, it would be wiser to not discard a high card in a suit you DO wish led as by so doing, you may waste a trick. Thus, you should often choose to discard cards in suits you do NOT wish led. This way, partner will be able to figure out what you DO wish led.

Let's look at an example:

		J105	
		Q65	
		A76	
		K654	
A98 <u>6</u> 43			-----
432			AKJ9
J102			9543
8news1			J10732
S	N	KQ72	
1NT	3NT	1087	
		KQ8	
		AQ9	

At trick one of spade suit by partner, east has no Spades and wishes to tell partner to lead a heart. If he discards the 9 of hearts, West will indeed lead a heart to East. BUT then East will have squandered a trick in hearts by wasting the 9 Hearts.

Instead, especially because this is No Trumps, East should discard the 2 Diamonds. (She could discard first the 2 Clubs, but since it is a black card on west's black card, then West might not notice...better to discard the 2 diamonds!)

Declarer wins the first trick with K Spades and leads another spade as it is imperative that she drive out the Ace Spades in order to make her contract. West wins with the Ace and East now has an opportunity for yet another discard. East must discard the 2 Clubs now. Now the picture is complete. East has said to partner: "Do not lead a diamond. Do not lead a club." It would be insanity for West to lead another spade. This leaves West with no choice but to pick the leftover suit to lead: West should lead a heart. Look what happens now...East will score 4 heart tricks as well as West scoring the Ace Spades. Five tricks. Down one!

Thus versus No Trumps, a negative discard is often the best strategy, saving our high good cards for defeating the contract.