

Defensive Carding

The key to good defense is good signaling. There are 3 major defensive signals:

- 1) Count (high-low=even number)
- 2) Suit Preference (low to low, high to high)
- 3) Attitude (high=encouraging, low=discouraging)

1) Count

Count is given when declarer (or dummy) leads the suit.

(Sometimes we give count when partner leads a high one and we want a ruff).

When declarer leads a spade, in the examples below, West follows suit up the line with an odd number, but plays hi-lo with an even number of cards.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ KQJ10</p> <p>♥ 432</p> <p>♦ 432</p> <p>♣ 432</p>		<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ KQJ10</p> <p>♥ 432</p> <p>♦ 432</p> <p>♣ 432</p>	
<p>WEST</p> <p>♠ 842</p>	<p>EAST</p> <p>♠ A965</p>	<p>WEST</p> <p>♠ 83</p>	<p>EAST</p> <p>♠ A965</p>
<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ 73</p>		<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ 742</p>	

West plays the ♠2 to show an odd number (up the line).

West plays the ♠8 then ♠3 to show an even

2) Suit Preference

This is used when you give a signal in a suit you are playing to indicate strength in a different suit! These signals are usually used when giving partner a ruff (to indicate your re-entry). When giving partner a ruff, play a low spot card to show the lowest side suit. Play a high spot card to show the highest side suit.

<p>NORTH ♠ A875 ♥ 10964 ♦ KJ8 ♣ KQ</p>			<p>NORTH ♠ A875 ♥ 10964 ♦ KJ8 ♣ KQ</p>		
<p>WEST ♠ 642 ♥ <u>5</u> ♦ 10975 ♣ 98765</p>	<p>EAST ♠ 3 ♥ <u>A</u>8732 ♦ A32 ♣ J1043</p>	<p>East returns the ♥ 8 to show the <i>highest</i> side suit (diamonds)</p>	<p>WEST ♠ 642 ♥ <u>5</u> ♦ 10975 ♣ J9765</p>	<p>EAST ♠ 3 ♥ <u>A</u>873<u>2</u> ♦ 532 ♣ A1043</p>	<p>East returns the ♥ 2 to show the <i>lowest</i> side suit (clubs)</p>
<p>SOUTH ♠ KQJ109 ♥ KQJ ♦ Q64 ♣ A2</p>			<p>SOUTH ♠ KQJ109 ♥ KQJ ♦ AQ4 ♣ 82</p>		

This signal is also used when “clearing” a suit on defense against notrump. Say you lead from K9842 and hit partner’s ace. He returns the suit to your king and you play back the 9, dummy and declarer playing their last card. The 9 is suit-preference.

3) Attitude

Attitude is given when:

- A) Partner leads a suit (for the first time).
- B) We make our first discard.

Signal with anything from a 7 to a 10 to say you like it. Low cards (like 2-5) mean you don’t like it.

From ♠9873, play the 9 to say you like it, the 3 to say you don’t like it.