

Defensive Signaling

Attitude Signals

- **When following suit:** Partner leads a suit. If you like the suit partner has led, play *the highest card you can spare* in that suit. If you don't like the suit or don't want it continued, play your lowest card in that suit.
- **When discarding:** If partner or an opponent leads a suit and you need to discard on that suit, take the opportunity to tell partner which suit you want led if s/he gets the opportunity. Discard a high heart, for example, to tell partner to lead hearts or a low heart if you have no interest in that suit.

Count Signals

Count signals help partner figure out your distribution - and that of the opponents. When a suit is led, to show an even number of cards in the suit, play high-low. To show an odd number of cards in the suit, play low-high. For example, the ♠K is led. With ♠10762, play the 6 first to tell partner you have an even number of spades. With ♠1072, play the 2 first to show you started with an odd number of spades.

Suit Preference Signals

- **When giving partner a ruff:** Partner leads what looks like a singleton and you have A862 in the suit. You take the ace. Which card do you lead for partner to ruff so s/he knows how to get back to you? If you play the 8, you're telling partner to come back to you in the highest-ranking remaining suit (other than trump). If you play the 2, you're telling partner to come back to you in the lowest-ranking remaining suit.
- **When setting up a long suit against opponent's notrump contract:** For example, you lead fourth highest from K10982 of hearts. Partner wins the Ace and returns the 3, you win the king and knock out declarer's Queen. Which heart do you lead to clear the suit if you have the Ace of spades? If you have the Ace of clubs?

Tips:

- Don't make defensive signals with cards above a ten.
- Don't make defensive signals with cards that could potentially take a trick.
- Don't expect to always have exactly the card you need to signal accurately. Just do your best.
- Always pay attention to your partner's defensive signals!!