

PLAY & DEFENCE TIP No. 1

Play of the Hand: Drawing Trumps

Suit Contracts - Drawing Trumps

With unbalanced hands it is usually right to play in a suit contract.

Draw trumps

In a suit contract it is usually correct to **DRAW TRUMPS** before you play anything else.

The usual principles of card play apply:

Contract 4♠ - Lead ♥K

♠ 10986
♥ A4
♦ AK6
♣ A652

♠ AKQJ
♥ 632
♦ Q532
♣ K3

Win with ♥A and draw trumps first by playing ♠A, ♠K and ♠QS. If you play a diamond first, one of the opponents might be able to ruff with a small trump. Play diamonds when you have drawn trumps.

Stop drawing trumps when your opponents have none left

– carrying on with the above example

♠ 6
♥ 4
♦ AK6
♣ A652

♠ J
♥ 32
♦ Q532
♣ K3

You have drawn all the outstanding trumps and these are the cards you have left.

If you play the ♠J, you will have none left. Now you will lose two more heart tricks because you can't ruff the second one.

If the only trump outstanding is the best one – don't draw it

Contract 4♠ by East - Lead ♣A

♠ A963
♥ AQJ42
♦ KJ3
♣ 3

♠ K742
♥ K5
♦ Q942
♣ 1062

South leads the ♣A and then ♣K. Trump that and play ♠A and ♠K.

LEAVE ♠Q OUTSTANDING

Start playing your longest suit, which is hearts – (remember to play the ♥K first) the player with the ♠Q can trump at any time but you are safe.

If you had played a 3rd round of trumps this would have been the position

– using the same hand as above

♠ –
♥ AQJ42
♦ KJ3
♣ –

♠ 7
♥ K5
♦ Q942
♣ 10

Now, you will lose another club and you will go 1 down by losing a trump, the ♦A, ♣A and another ♣.

If you had left the last trump out when you started playing hearts, you wouldn't lose another ♣ trick as there would have been a trump left in your hand.