

The Blackwood Convention

After you and partner have agreed on a trump suit, a bid of 4NT is the Blackwood Convention, which asks partner to tell you how many aces he holds. Partner responds:

- 5♣ = None or all four aces
- 5♦ = One ace
- 5♥ = Two aces
- 5♠ = Three aces

Responses

- If **two aces** are missing -- "sign off" in 5 of your suit. If your agreed trump suit is clubs or diamonds and you want to sign off in 5NT, bid 5♠. This tells partner to bid 5NT to play.
- If **only one ace** is missing -- you can bid six of your suit or 6NT.
- If your side holds **all four aces** -- and if you think you may have the power to take all the tricks -- you can try for a grand slam by bidding 5NT to ask for kings. Partner will respond at the 6-level (using the same steps as above) to show the number of kings.

Roman Key-Card Blackwood

What is Roman Key-Card (RKC) Blackwood? A convention to ask for five important keycards: four aces and the king of trump. Use this convention after you have agreed to a suit and want to explore slam. To use RKC bid 4NT and your partner will respond as follows:

- 5♣ -- 0 or 3 key cards (aces and king of trump)
- 5♦ -- 1 or 4 key cards
- 5♥ -- 2 or 5 key cards, but no queen of trumps
- 5♠ -- 2 or 5 key cards WITH the queen of trumps

Finding Outside Kings – If you have all the aces and king of trump the 4NT bidder can now bid 5NT to ask about the number of kings your partner holds. Two ways to play the response:

- Number of Kings: 6♣ (no outside kings), 6♦ (1 king), 6♥ (2 kings), 6♠ (3 kings).
- Specific Kings: bid suit of the first King you have.

Finding the Trump Queen

- If responder has 2 key cards, their bid of 5♠ also shows the trump queen.
- You can also get this information after a 5♣ or 5♦ response by bidding the cheapest step (5♦ over a 5♣ response, 5♥ over 5♦). This only works if the cheapest step is NOT 5 of your trump suit.
Example: If hearts is the trump suit, 4NT-5♦ (1 or 4 Keycards)-5♥ is to play not a queen asking bid.

Blackwood Convention Worksheet

What would you respond with these hands after a 4NT Blackwood bid?

Your Hand	Your Bid
1. ♠A73, ♥K8732, ♦A2, ♣1096	
2. ♠AK3, ♥KJ732, ♦92, ♣K96	
3. ♠ K10732, ♥KQ2, ♦K2, ♣K62	
4. ♠ A107532, ♥A102, ♦A2, ♣A6	

Roman Key-Card (RKC) Blackwood Convention Worksheet

What would you respond with these hands after a 4NT RKC bid where Hearts are trumps?

Your Hand	# of Keycards	Your Bid
1. ♠A73, ♥K8732, ♦A2, ♣1096		
2. ♠AK3, ♥KJ732, ♦92, ♣K96		
3. ♠ A10732, ♥AQ82, ♦92, ♣92		