

First Discards & Showing Count Against Declarers Side Suits

What is the First Discard?

When you are out of the suit led for the first time in the hand and have a chance to make a free discard.

What is Standard Carding for First Discards?

Standard Defensive Carding is the playing of a higher card (usually 7,8,9,10) to show you like a suit or a lower card (usually 2,3,4,5) to show you do not.

Ex. Opponents are drawing trump and you are already out of the suit. You have values in spades holding AQ82. What do play?

Answer: Play the 8 to encourage your partner to switch to spades when they get in.

Sometimes you have to make due - from AQ532 discard the 5 (your highest remaining card) to show you like that suit.

What about the second discard?

Additional discards are not signals for partner, they are just discards.

Discarding an Honor (A, K, Q, J)

Discarding an honor shows the top of a long sequence and denies a higher ranking honor. From KQJ102 discard the K to tell partner you do not have the Ace but you do have a running suit.

Giving Count For Partner When Declarer has a Running Suit

Suppose you are defending a 3NT contract and see ♦KQJ1098 on the table with no outside entry in dummy. Declarer plays a low card from hand and your partner likely has the Ace. You hold ♦72, which card do you play? What does your partner need to know for optimal defense?

- The answer is that it is really important to give count in this kind of situation so that partner knows how long to hold up taking his ace. You should play the ♦7 – highest from an even number of cards. If you held ♦742 you must play the ♦2 to show an odd number.

It is good practice to give immediate count when declarer is playing a suit and you do not have a holding that can take tricks in the suit. This helps partner to get a picture of who has what.