

52 FACTS OF BRIDGE LIFE

Good Advice To Give Your Partner—Handout 4

By Eddie Kantar

Tips 1-47 are on the first 3 handouts in this series. These handouts can be found at <http://richmondbridge.net/lesson>

Tips 41-52 are playing tips.

48. At a suit contract holding A-x-x facing x-x-x and the suit is led, it is usually right to win the second round of the suit.

If one of the opponents has a doubleton, you cut the communications between the two hands. It is also right to duck when dummy has x-x and you have A-x-x-(x). Ducking allows you to keep control of the suit. Do the same when dummy has A-x-x-(x) and you have x-x. Take the second trick with the ace. This assumes you have no place to put these losers.

49. Play the cards you are known to hold from the lead and third hand's play.

Say the queen is led and dummy has x-x-x-x. You, the declarer, have the K-J doubleton. When third hand plays the ace, the king and jack are equals; however, third hand knows you have the king from the lead of the queen, but doesn't know you have the jack. If you play the king under the ace, the jack remains a mystery card. The opening leader also knows you have the king from partner's play of the ace. Get rid of that king! Remember, you are not costing yourself a trick when you make these plays because you have an equal to the card you are unloading in either your hand or dummy. Say the jack is led, dummy has 9-x-x-x, and you have Q-10 doubleton. When third hand plays the king, drop the queen. Why? The queen is a card they both know you hold. Third hand knows it from the lead of the jack and the opening leader knows it from the play of the king. You might as well show them your hand if you don't play that queen!

50. When fortunate enough to have a powerful trump suit and being forced to ruff, tend not to ruff with your lowest trump. That tiny trump might be your only way to get to dummy.

51. When drawing trumps try to keep a flexible entry position after trumps are drawn.

Ideally you want to be able to enter dummy in the trump suit and also be able to enter your hand with a trump. Say you have the K-Q-J-4-3-2 and dummy has the A-10-5. If you play the ace and king, you have an entry to dummy with the 10 and you can get back to your hand by overtaking the 10. If you play the K-Q, you block the trump suit. You can get to dummy with the ace, but you can't get back to your hand with a trump.

52. If you have a number of equal honors and you want second hand to cover the first honor, lead your highest equal honor. If you don't want second hand to cover, lead your second highest equal honor. It works!

Say you have the Q-J-10-9-x of trump and dummy has the K-x-x. If there is a danger of a ruff, lead the jack. If second hand has the ace, he may duck thinking partner has the queen and the ruff may be lost. Say dummy has the A-Q-x-x without a side suit entry and you have J-10 doubleton. If you need three tricks in the suit, lead the 10. Second hand, holding the king, is apt to play low thinking partner may have the jack. You can then lead to the queen for three tricks. If second hand covers, the suit is blocked and you can take only two tricks.

Bonus Tips 53-58

53. When dummy is expected to have a long strong suit at a suit contract and there are two unbid suits, lead from the stronger. However, if one of the suits is headed by the ace, lead from the other. If the two unbid suits look like: K-J-x-x and K-x-x-x, lead from the K-J-x-x suit. If the two suits are A-J-x-x and Q-x-x-x, lead from the queen suit.

54. If you can see that there are no possible defensive tricks coming from the side suits, give declarer a ruff and a sluff. It often promotes a defensive trump trick.

55. When declarer bids two suits, particularly if the first suit is a major, a 'tentative count' is available. Using that tentative count along with partner's opening lead often allows you to get a complete count on declarer's hand at trick one!

Example:

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
2♦	3♦
3NT	Pass

Declarer is presumed to have five hearts and four diamonds. If partner's lead (♣2, say) gives you a count in that suit, you will have a count on the hand at trick one!

56. Defenders take tricks with their lower or lowest equal. If you can take a trick with a jack or the queen, take it with the jack. Taking it with the queen denies the jack and can screw partner up.

57. After partner has described his hand and you know what the final contract should be, bid it! The one who knows, goes! Say partner opens 1NT (15-17) and you have 18 HCP points, balanced. There are least 33 points between the two hands so bid 6NT! If leaping so high scares you, go to a mirror and say 6NT out loud. Do it!

58. Best Bonus tip of all: **DON'T BID THE SAME VALUES TWICE. DON'T PLAY WITH SOMEONE YOU DON'T LIKE. DON'T SCREAM AT YOUR PARTNER AND DON'T FORGET TO USE THESE TIPS UNLESS YOU WANT TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE STRUGGLING TO GET TO FIRST BASE....AMEN**