

DEFENSE

SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNAL The 3rd Priority

Bridge Lab

with the Monroes

The suit preference signal is the simplest and most elegant of all the suit signals, yet the average player has more trouble with it than with any other.

Eddie Kantar

Defense Objective: Work with partner to defeat the contract. Consider what information partner is likely to need, then choose the signal to send that message.

STANDARD DEFENSE SIGNALS

Winning tricks in the #1 priority. Don't signal with a card that you may need later.

1st Priority ATTITUDE	When Partner's card is winning the trick, tell partner if you have interest in having the suit continued. A high card is encouraging, and a low card is discouraging. Attitude also applies to discards when you are unable to follow suit during the play.
2nd Priority COUNT	When Declarer is leading a suit, tell partner how many cards you hold in the suit. Low-High shows an ODD number of cards in a suit. High-Low shows an EVEN number of cards in a suit.
3rd Priority SUIT PREFERENCE	When it's clear that neither Attitude nor Count signals apply.

SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNAL

A card played in one suit to show attitude or preference toward another suit.

1. Partner leads a suit and Dummy is short in that suit, Partner will need to switch to another suit. The card you play indicates your preference of suits.
2. Giving partner a ruff. The card led indicates the suit for Partner to return.

FIRST	Identify the Two "Obvious Suits" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliminate the trump suit.• Eliminate the suit led. The two remaining suits are the choices – "Obvious Suits" – that apply.
SECOND	Choose the Card <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A LOW CARD in the suit led shows a preference for the lower ranking of the two Obvious Suits.• A HIGH CARD in the suit led shows preference for the Higher Ranking of the two Obvious Suits.

Bridge With The Monroes

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FOR EXPERIENCED PARTNERSHIPS – BY AGREEMENT!

TRUMP SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNAL

When Declarer draws trump, do the cards you play have a meaning?

Empower those trump cards and speak to partner. Declarer often draws trump right away, so the trump suit is your earliest opportunity show partner which suit you prefer.

If your trump cards are of no consequence, and presuming you have a choice of which card to play, you can play the cards in an order to show preference in side suits.

- Playing a low trump first shows a preference for the lower-ranking side suit.
- Playing a high trump first shows a preference for the higher-ranking side suit.
- If hearts are trumps, for example, and you play the 10 from 10-6-2 when declarer plays the ♥A, it shows that you like spades.



CONVENTION CARD Defensive Carding (click here): Check the box under **Other Carding** to indicate that your partnership has agreed to play Trump Suit Preference. Online list in your Player Profile.

LARRY COHEN BRIDGE QUIZ - SIGNALS

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SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNAL

The **Suit Preference Signal** is the third priority, and is used only when it is clear that neither "attitude" nor "count" apply. A low card in the suit led shows preference for the lower ranking of two "obvious" suits, and a high card shows preference for the higher ranking of the two "obvious" suits.

Obvious Suits. Identify the two obvious suits by eliminating the trump suit and the suit led. The two remaining suits are the choices for which to show preference.

South Deals

	♠ K 10 8 3		
	♥ J 10 6 3		
	♦ 4		
	♣ K 10 6 2		
♠ 9 5 4	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A Q 6 2	
♥ 8 4		♥ A	
♦ A K 10 8 5		♦ J 9 7 3 2	
♣ 9 5 4		♣ 8 7 3	
	♠ J 7		
	♥ K Q 9 7 5 2		
	♦ Q 6		
	♣ A Q J		
7			
7 11			
15			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Pass	3 ♥ ¹	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			

1. With a 4-card fit for hearts plus "Dummy Points" for the singleton, North makes an invitational jump raise. Not Forcing.

CONTRACT: 4 ♥ by South **LEAD:** ♦ A, Top of Sequence

After winning the ♦ A, Partner must decide what to do at trick two. East's job is to send a useful message to Partner to help with the decision, and chooses the card to play at trick one by applying the priorities. With a singleton diamond in Dummy, an Attitude Signal encouraging or discouraging continuation of the suit doesn't make much sense, so the first priority is eliminated. Similarly, the second priority, Count Signal, isn't going to be of much value. Since it is clear that neither Attitude nor Count will be useful information to help with the defense, the focus is on the third priority, Suit Preference Signal.

What message do we want to send? With a distinct preference for a switch to spades, East plays the ♦ J at trick one -- a high card showing preference for the higher ranking of the two obvious suits.

Transition. Exchange East's ♠ AQ for South's ♠ J7. Exchange East's ♣ 87 for South's ♣ AQ. In this layout, East plays the ♦ 2 at trick one -- a low card showing preference for a switch to clubs, the lower ranking of the two obvious suits.

Suit Preference Signals

East Wants a ♠ Returned

Board 1

South Deals

	♠ K 9 4		
	♥ A J 7 6		
	♦ K J 8 6		
	♣ 7 4		
♠ J 7 5 2		♠ A 8 3	
♥ 9 5 2		♥ 10 3	
♦ 2		♦ A 10 7 5 3	
♣ J 8 6 3 2		♣ Q 10 5	
	♠ Q 10 6		
	♥ K Q 8 4		
	♦ Q 9 4		
	♣ A K 9		

West North East South

Pass 2 ♣¹ Pass 1 N

Pass 4 ♥ All pass 2 ♥

1. 4-card Major, 8+ Points

Contract: 4 ♥ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♦ 2, Singleton, East wins ♦ A
Losers: 2-♠, 1-♦, 1-♣ = 4.

Play: East takes the ♦ A and plays the high ♦ 10 (suit preference signal) for a ♠ return and another ruff. South planned to draw trump and ruff a ♣ in dummy.

East Wants a ♠ Led

Board 2

South Deals

	♠ K 10 8 3		
	♥ Q 10 6 3		
	♦ 4		
	♣ K 10 6 2		
♠ 9 5 4		♠ A Q 6 2	
♥ 8 4		♥ A	
♦ A K 10 8 5		♦ J 9 7 3 2	
♣ 9 5 4		♣ 8 7 3	
	♠ J 7		
	♥ K J 9 7 5 2		
	♦ Q 6		
	♣ A Q J		

West North East South

Pass 3 ♥¹ Pass 1 ♥

All pass 4 ♥

1. 4-♥s, 11-12 Support Points

Contract: 4 ♥ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♦ A, Ace/King, East plays ♦ J
Losers: 2-♠, 1-♥, 2-♦ = 5.

Play: East plays high ♦ J, requesting a ♠ lead. East wins the ♠ Q, the ♠ A and the ♥ A to set the contract. South planned to discard a ♠ on dummy's ♣ and ruff a ♦.

West Wants a ♦ Returned

Board 3

South Deals

	♠ Q 8 6		
	♥ Q 8 7		
	♦ A K Q J 10		
	♣ 6 5		
♠ A K J 7 4		♠ 9 3	
♥ 6 5 4		♥ 3	
♦ —		♦ 8 7 6 5 3 2	
♣ K Q 10 8 4		♣ 9 7 3 2	
	♠ 10 5 2		
	♥ A K J 10 9 2		
	♦ 9 4		
	♣ A J		

West North East South

1 ♠¹ 2 ♦ Pass 1 ♥

3 ♣ 4 ♥ All pass 2 ♥

1. 5+♠s, 7-17 Points

Contract: 4 ♥ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♠ A, Ace/King, East plays ♠ 9
Losers: 3-♠, 1-♣ = 4.

Play: West wins the ♠ AK and leads the high ♠ J for a ♦ return and a ruff. South planned to discard a ♣ on a ♦.

East Wants a ♥ Led

Board 4

North Deals

	♠ K 10 9 3		
	♥ Q 2		
	♦ K 6 4		
	♣ K Q J 5		
♠ 7 6		♠ 5 2	
♥ K J 10 9 8 3		♥ A 7	
♦ Q J 9 3		♦ 8 7 5 2	
♣ A		♣ 10 8 6 4 3	
	♠ A Q J 8 4		
	♥ 6 5 4		
	♦ A 10		
	♣ 9 7 2		

West North East South

2 ♥ 1 ♣ Pass 1 ♠

All pass 2 ♠¹ Pass 4 ♠

1. 4-♠s, 13-16 Points

Contract: 4 ♠ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♣ A, Singleton, East plays ♣ 10
Losers: 3-♥, 1-♣ = 4.

Play: East's ♣ 10 requests a ♥ return. West plays the ♥ 3, East wins the ♥ A and plays a ♣. West ruffs and wins the ♥ K. South planned to ruff a ♥.