

Signals

Defence is 50% of the game. It is important that partners have a clear signal for attitude, discard and count. Traditional signaling is high encourage on partner's lead (attitude) and High low for count (indicating even). However more advanced partnerships now days use UDCA (Upside Down Count and Attitude). This is mainly because using a high card to encourage is considered a waste of card. So a typical modern signaling will be:

Attitude: Low encourage on partner's lead (usually indicating we have the missing honor or like partner to continue)

Count (Reverse): low-high = even, high-low = odd

Discards: Odd/even

- odd = like this particular suit
- Even = Suit preference (McKenny), low card showing preference for the other low rank suit while high card showing preference for the higher rank suit

In most partnerships, when partner leads Ace, we show attitude. If partner leads King we show Count

Upside Down Count & Attitude (UDCA) signals

This is a superior signaling used by many experienced players as often it is easier for partner to read your signals and you don't have to "waste" high cards in suits you like.

- When signaling **attitude** (*your preference or lack off for suit played*), a low card is encouraging and a high card is discouraging
- When signaling **count** (*tell partner if you have odd or even number of cards in the suit*), low-high shows even count and high-low shows odd count

When to give what signal & why

When your partner leads a suit for the **first time** (whether against a Suit or No Trump contract) and the **card led is an honor**, you should give **attitude** signal (low to encourage and high to discourage).

Possible reasons why you may want to encourage your partner:

- You may be short of that suit and likely to trump a subsequent round
- You may have an honor and ability to take a subsequent trick in the suit (Qxx)
- You may want to force declare to trump to shorten trump cards in declarer or dummy's hand, to promote a trump trick for your team later

When you are out of a suit and discarding for the first time, decide which suit you prefer for partner to lead (should he gain the lead) and signal by odd/even signal.

When declarer first leads a suit (either from his hand or dummy), each defender should give count signal (low-high for even & high-low for odd). Defending partners will use this information to calculate how many cards declarer has and to manage this suit. This is crucial when declarer is trying to establish a long suit in dummy's hand and there are not other entries in dummy's hand.

When declarer drawing trumps, use suit preference signal in the trump suit itself.

When you are following suit to your partner's lead and you can't beat card played by dummy:

- Give count signal in No Trump contract
- Give attitude signal in Suit contract

When following suit to partner's lead and it is clear to both of you that it is useless to continue that suit (for example dummy has a singleton or void or partner just played the ace and dummy has the king); ã give suit preference signal (low card for preference for below and higher card for preference for above suit)

When leading a suit that you know will be trumped by your partner; ã give suit preference signal (low card for preference for below and higher card for preference for above suit). This helps partner to re-enter your hand to give him another ruff.

When partner leads King in a No Trump contract; ã give attitude signal

Notes

- Ø Situations that has priority over giving count signal
 - Winning tricks
 - 2nd hand low (if you as defender are the 2nd player to play, you should usually play low or duck when you have an honor card)
 - 3rd hand high (if you as defender are the 3rd player to play, you have to make your best effort to win that trick)
 - Splitting honors
- Ø When defender can ruff one of declarer's side suit winners, this is good for defense even if declarer is in a position to over ruff.
- Ø Signal count if your attitude towards a suit is already known

Revolving Discard/Suit Preference

*Tell partner to **play specific suit***

This is another method (alternative to odds/even discussed above) for discarding and telling partner what suit to lead when obtaining lead.

In this method we have 2 choices for asking for a particular suit.

Consider suits in a clock face, rotating clockwise: Club at 12 o'clock, Diamond at 3 o'clock, Heart at 6 o'clock and Spade at 9 o'clock.

- A low discard indicates interest in the suit directly before/below (anticlockwise) and
- A high discard signals preference for the suit after/above (clockwise)

In a suit contract, the trump suit is skipped in reading the signal.