

Trump Management

Basic Rules:

- Draw trump as soon as you can afford to (immediately if possible)
 - A bad trump suit is not a good reason if you have good outside cards
 - Being unsure which way to play trump is also not a good reason
- If there is one trump outstanding & it is high, don't draw it unless:
 - The defense can ruff in at an inconvenient time (making it impossible for you to cash your winners)
 - This is usually when you want to run a long suit with no outside entries
 - You have the same number of tricks whether you draw it or not
- Don't voluntarily ruff in the hand with longer trump unless you have a very good reason to do so
 - The longer trump are tricks anyway
 - You may lose control of the hand when trump break badly
- Don't let the opponents denude you of trump
 - Don't draw so many trump that this is a risk
 - Consider pitching a loser rather than ruffing in the hand with longer trump
 - This happens most frequently when playing a 4-3 fit or when trump split badly
- Draw as many trump as you can afford to before using trump in the hand with shorter trump
 - If you need to delay drawing trump, but can draw some trump first, do so
 - This will reduce the chance of an opponent's ruff
- Cash all of your outside winners before starting a cross-ruff
 - If you cross-ruff first, opponents may be able to ruff your winners since they may be able to discard losers while you're cross-ruffing

Reasons to Delay Drawing Trump:

- Need to ruff losers in the hand with shorter trump
 - Make sure you can't afford to draw trump (or some trump) first
 - Consider setting up a long suit for discards instead
 - If you can afford to ruff high to prevent an overruff, do so
 - If you're doing this for overtricks, make sure an overruff won't endanger your contract
- Need to discard a loser (or losers) before drawing trump
- Need entries to lead another suit (usually for a finesse)
- Need entries to set up and run a long suit

Reason to Not Draw Trump:

- Need to use all your trump individually to make the contract via a cross-ruff