

# Trump Management

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# Notes About Hands Shown

- Neither bidding nor low spot cards are shown
- Assume the opening lead is as shown even if there might be a better lead for the defense
- In many hands, if trump or some other suit splits badly, the contract can't be made – but the play shown is the best chance
- I first show just declarer & dummy because that's all you see when you plan the play
- South is always declarer

# Basic Rules

## Draw trump as soon as you can afford to

- Draw them immediately unless you have a good reason not to
- An awful trump suit is NOT a good reason if you have good outside cards

♠ xxxx  
♥ KQxx  
♦ xx  
♣ AKx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♦Q

♠ KQ9  
♥ Jx  
♦ QJ10xx  
♣ xxx

♠ AJ  
♥ 109xxx  
♦ xx  
♣ xxxx

♠ 10xxx  
♥ Ax  
♦ AKxx  
♣ QJx

- Looking at South, you have no losers outside of trump (1♦ goes on 3rd♥ & 1♦ can be ruffed)
- You can afford to lose 3 trump but not 4, so draw trump immediately (if they're not 3-2, you can't make)

# Basic Rules, Continued

**If there is one trump outstanding & it is high, don't draw it:**

- You waste 2 of your trump for one of theirs

**UNLESS:**

- If you don't draw it, the defense can take it at an inconvenient time
  - Preventing you from cashing all your winners
  - Usually when you want run a long suit with no outside entries
- You have the same number of tricks whether you draw it or not

# Leave Lone Master Trump Outstanding

♠ Axxx  
♥ AKxx  
♦ xx  
♣ Qxx

Contract: 6♠, Opening Lead: ♣J

♠ Q10x  
♥ Jxx  
♦ Q10xx  
♣ J109

♠ Jx  
♥ Q10xx  
♦ Jxx  
♣ xxxx

♠ Kxxx  
♥ xx  
♦ AKxx  
♣ AKx

- You have 9 winners (3♣s & 2 in each other suit including trump) so you need 3 more trump tricks
- If you draw all the trump, you will only have 1 trump in each hand – so 2 tricks, not 3
- Draw 2 rounds of trump then cash winners then cross-ruff remaining ♦s & ♥s (2 in each suit)
- Defenders can ruff whenever they want with winning trump, but that's their only trick

# Leave Lone Master Trump Outstanding

♠ Axxx  
♥ AKxx  
♦ xx  
♣ Qxx

Contract: 6♠, Opening Lead: ♣J

♠ Q10x  
♥ Jxx  
♦ Q10xx  
♣ J109

♠ xx  
♥ Q10xx  
♦ Jxx  
♣ xxxx

♠ KJxx  
♥ xx  
♦ AKxx  
♣ Akx

- You have a tempting finesse
- If it loses and a trump comes back, you will only have 1 trump in each hand – so 2 tricks, not 3
- Down you go

# Leave Lone Master Trump Outstanding

Contract: 6♠, Opening Lead: ♣J

♠ AJxx  
♥ AKxx  
♦ xx  
♣ Qxx

♠ Q10x  
♥ Jxx  
♦ Q10xx  
♣ J109

♠ xx  
♥ Q10xx  
♦ Jxx  
♣ xxxx

♠ Kxxx  
♥ xx  
♦ AKxx  
♣ Akx

- Your tempting finesse wins
- You draw the last trump so no trump loser, but you have only 1 trump left in each hand
- Instead of taking 5 trump tricks (A, K & 3 ruffs) you take 5 trump tricks (A,K, J & 2 trump)
- You have risked your contract for no gain

# Leave Master Trump Outstanding – Timing

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♥Q

♠ xxxx  
♥ Kx  
♦ AKxx  
♣ Axx

♠ K109  
♥ QJ10xx  
♦ xx  
♣ xxx

♠ QJ  
♥ xx  
♦ QJxxx  
♣ QJxx

♠ Axxx  
♥ Axxx  
♦ xx  
♣ Kxx

- You have 7 winners (2 in each outside suit + 1 trump) so you need 3 more trump tricks
- If you play A then lose a trump, defense will play another trump & you'll have only 2 trump left, not 3
- LOSE 1 round of trump, win return, play ♠A then cash winners then cross-ruff remaining ♦s & ♥s
- Defenders can ruff whenever they want with winning trump, but that's their only trick

# Don't Leave Master Outstanding If It Can Hurt You

♠ xx  
♥ xxx  
♦ Qxx  
♣ KQJ10x

♠ xx  
♥ KJx  
♦ J10xxx  
♣ xxx

♠ QJ10  
♥ Q10xx  
♦ AKxx  
♣ xx

♠ AK9xxx  
♥ Axx  
♦ x  
♣ Axx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♦J  
- 1<sup>st</sup> trick won by defenders  
- ♦ continuation ruffed by you

- You plan to pitch heart losers on long clubs
- If you draw 2 rounds of trump, leaving the master trump outstanding they'll ruff your 3<sup>rd</sup> club and you have no re-entry to dummy
- So draw all the trump before running the clubs

# Reasons to Delay Drawing Trump

# Need to Ruff Losers in Short-Trump Hand

You need to ruff losers from the long-trump hand with trump from the other hand **that won't be possible if you draw trump**

- Make sure you can't afford to draw 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 you won't endanger your contract if you get overruffed

# Ruff Loser Before Drawing Trump

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♣Q

	♠ Q10x	
	♥ xx	
	♦ Axxx	
	♣ xxxx	
♠ xxx		♠ xx
♥ KJ9x		♥ A10xx
♦ 9x		♦ J10xx
♣ QJ10x		♣ Kxx
	♠ AKJ9x	
	♥ Qxx	
	♦ KQx	
	♣ Ax	

- Looking at South, you have 4 losers: 3♥ s & 1♣ so you need to make a ♥ loser disappear
  - Could play for a 3-3 ♦ break, but that's against the odds
  - Better play is to ruff a ♥ in dummy
- If you draw trump, you won't be able to ruff a losing heart
- You have to lose 2♥ s before you can ruff so you need to play hearts immediately lest opponents switch to trump

# Discard a Loser Before Losing a Trump

♠ KQ9  
♥ Axx  
♦ Q10xx  
♣ QJx

Contract: 5♦, Opening Lead: ♣10  
-1<sup>st</sup> trick: ♣10-Q-K-A

♠ Jxxx  
♥ 10xx  
♦ Ax  
♣ 1098x

♠ A109xx  
♥ Jxxx  
♦ x  
♣ Kxx

♠ x  
♥ KQx  
♦ KJ9xxx  
♣ Axx

- You have 3 losers in your hand: 1♠, 1♦, 1♣ Can pitch a ♣ on a high spade, but must play spades immediately
- If draw trump 1<sup>st</sup> (losing A♦): ♣ return knocks out 2<sup>nd</sup> ♣ stopper, so when you lose A♠ they can cash a ♣

# Basic Rules, Continued

**Draw as many trump as you can afford to before using trump in the short-trump hand**

- This will reduce the chance of an opponent's ruff

# Need Trump Entries to Lead Another Suit

Contract: 6♠, Opening Lead: ♣K

♠ J9x  
♥ xxx  
♦ xxxx  
♣ xxx

♠ xxx  
♥ xxxx  
♦ x  
♣ KQxxx

♠ xx  
♥ Jxx  
♦ Kxxxx  
♣ J10x

♠ AKQ10x  
♥ AKQ  
♦ AQJ  
♣ Ax

- You have 1 sure loser (♣) & 1 possible loser (♦)
- Can make if ♦K is onside - but need to finesse it twice so need 2 entries to dummy
- Draw 1 round of trump with high one from hand to protect against singleton diamond, then use dummy's trump entries to finesse diamonds twice

# Need Entries to Set Up & Run a Long Suit

♠ J9x  
♥ AKxxx  
♦ xxx  
♣ xx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♣K

♠ x  
♥ J10xx  
♦ Jxx  
♣ KQxxx

♠ xxx  
♥ Q9  
♦ KQxx  
♣ AJxx

♠ AKQ10xx  
♥ xx  
♦ Axx  
♣ xx

- By the time you get in, you've lost 2♣s & they've switched to a diamond
- You have 2 diamond losers unless you can discard one on a long heart so must set up hearts
  - If hearts are no worse than 4-2, and trump no worse than 3-1, you can do this, but you need 2 entries to dummy outside of the hearts (1 to ruff & 1 to cash 5<sup>th</sup>) – only available entries are trump
- Draw 1 round of trump with the A, then start hearts, ruffing high in hand and using the J & 9 as dummy entries

# Basic Rules, Continued

**Don't voluntarily ruff in the long-trump hand unless you have a REALLY good reason to do so**

- The long trump are tricks anyway
- Shortening your long trump risks losing control when trump break badly or you no longer have enough trump to stop opponent's long suit

**Avoid letting the defense denude you of trump**

- Don't draw so many trump that this is a risk
- Consider pitching a loser instead of ruffing in the long-trump hand

# Avoid Letting Defense Denude You of Trump

♠ AQ9  
♥ AQx  
♦ xxx  
♣ Axxx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♦K  
- 1<sup>st</sup> trick won by West  
- ♦ continuation ruffed

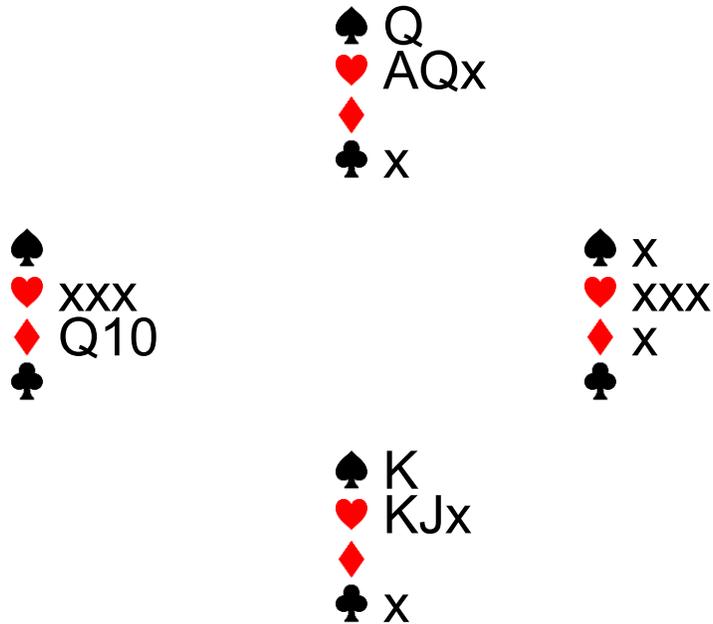
♠ xx  
♥ xxx  
♦ KQ10xx  
♣ QJx

♠ xxx  
♥ xxxx  
♦ Axxx  
♣ K10

♠ KJ108x  
♥ KJx  
♦ J  
♣ xxxx

- You have 9 winners: 5♠s, 3♥s, 1♣ so need 1 more club trick (they'd better be 3-2)
- Opponents will get in twice more (with clubs) and will lead ♦s at every opportunity, so you need to be able to ruff 2 more diamonds (you've already ruffed 1 – so a total of 3 ruffs).
- If you draw 3 rounds of trump, you won't have a trump to ruff the 4<sup>th</sup> ♦ so draw only 2 rounds (leaving 1 in dummy & 2 in hand) then play ♣A & a ♣
- Ruff the diamond return and play your 3<sup>rd</sup> club (see next slide)

# With 5 Cards Left



- You were forced to ruff ♦s at trick 2 & after your 1<sup>st</sup> ♣ loser (that's 2 of your 5 ♠s), and another ♦ is coming back now after your 2<sup>nd</sup> ♣ loser
- You can ruff in either hand, go to the other hand with a heart, draw the last trump and claim
- If you had drawn 3 rounds of trump, you would have had no trump left to ruff this 4<sup>th</sup> ♦

# Pitch a Loser Instead of Ruffing to Maintain Control

♠ xxx  
♥ Kxx  
♦ AK10xx  
♣ Qx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♥Q  
- 1<sup>st</sup> trick won by W  
- ♥ continuation ruffed by you

♠ 10xxx  
♥ QJ10x  
♦ xx  
♣ J109

♠ x  
♥ A9xxx  
♦ Qxx  
♣ Kxxx

♠ AKQJx  
♥ x  
♦ J9x  
♣ Axxx

- You have 5 potential losers (1♥, 1♦ & 3♣s) so you need pitch club losers on diamonds
- If trump split 3-2 or the diamond finesse is on, you have no problems
- Draw 2 rounds of trump – if they split, no problem...but suppose they don't (4-1)
- If you finish drawing trump (you'll have none left) & if ♦ finesse loses, you're in deep trouble
- So...take ♦ finesse now, while you still have 2 trump in hand & 1 in dummy (see next slide)

# Pitch a Loser Instead of Ruffing to Maintain Control

♠ x  
♥ K  
♦ AK10x  
♣ Qx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♥Q  
- 1<sup>st</sup> trick won by W  
- ♥ continuation ruffed by you

♠ 10x  
♥ 10x  
♦ x  
♣ J109

♠  
♥ A9x  
♦ xx  
♣ Kxx

♠ QJ  
♥  
♦ 9x  
♣ Axxx

- East is now on lead after winning the ♦Q. You have lost 2 tricks (1♥ & 1♦)
- When a ♥ comes back, pitch a ♣ (you can afford to lose one more trick & if you ruff, you'll have fewer trump than West)
- (see next slide)

# Pitch a Loser Instead of Ruffing to Maintain Control

♠ x  
♥  
♦ AK10x  
♣ Qx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♥Q  
- 1<sup>st</sup> trick won by W  
- ♥ continuation ruffed by you

♠ 10x  
♥ 10  
♦ x  
♣ J109

♠  
♥ 9x  
♦ xx  
♣ Kxx

♠ QJ  
♥  
♦ 9x  
♣ Axx

- You can now ruff the next heart in dummy, come to hand with ♣A, draw trump and run ♦s

# Reason to Not Draw Trump – Cross Ruff

- You need to use all of your trump individually

## Basic Rules, Continued:

- Always cash all outside winners before starting cross ruff
  - Otherwise, opponents will have pitched their losers while you are cross-ruffing and will be able to ruff your winners

# Need to Use Trump Individually (Cross-Ruff)

♠ AJ108  
♥ AJxxx  
♦ xxx  
♣ x

Contract: 6♠, Opening Lead: ♣K

♠ xx  
♥ K10  
♦ Q10xx  
♣ KQ10xx

♠ xxx  
♥ Qxxxx  
♦ Jxx  
♣ xx

♠ KQ97  
♥ x  
♦ AKx  
♣ AJxxx

- There are 4 tricks outside of trump: 1♥, 2♦s, 1♣ so you need 8 trump tricks
- Cash side winners (♣A then ♦AK & ♥A then cross-ruff remaining clubs & hearts (4 in each suit))
- BEWARE: if you don't cash side winners first you will get ruffed at the end because defenders will have pitched their losers and will be able to trump your winners

# Dummy Reversal

## Ruff in Long Hand, Draw Trump in Short Hand

♠ AKQ  
♥ Axxx  
♦ Kxx  
♣ Axx

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♣K

♠ 8xx  
♥ x  
♦ Qxxx  
♣ KQJxx

♠ xx  
♥ KQJxxxx  
♦ xxx  
♣ x

♠ J109xx  
♥ x  
♦ Axx  
♣ xxxx

- If you draw trump, you have only 9 tricks (5♠ s, 1♥, 2♦ s, 1♣ )
- Only way to get a 10<sup>th</sup> trick is by getting 6 trump tricks instead of 5
- Ruff 3♥ s in the long hand and use the short hand to draw trump
  - Win A♣, cash ♥A, ruff a ♥ high to avoid possible overruff
  - Low ♠ to dummy, ruff a ♥ high; Low ♠ to dummy, ruff last ♥ high
  - Small ♦ to dummy, draw last trump, go to ♦A, lose last 3 tricks