

Bridge Mistakes to Avoid

Counting Distribution Points

- These are extra points counted for shortage in non-trump suits
- DO NOT count them if you are the opener (Long Trump Hand)!
- In Responder's hand (Short Trump Hand), DO count them
- Refer to Arun's Bidding Document for reasons
- Additional Info – Perfectly OK to count Distribution points if you know FOR SURE that your partner holds 4 or more Trumps

Showing support with 3 Cards

- ONLY bid support when you KNOW FOR SURE that partner has 5 or more Cards!
- DO NOT DO THIS if partner may only have 4!
- Very often made mistake: 1C-1S-2S with only 3 Spades!
- If bidding goes 1C-1S-2S, responder WILL assume opener has 4 Spades, and WILL ADD Distribution Points to his High Card Points!

Overcalling with only 4 Cards

- DO NOT overcall with only 4 Cards in a suit! If you don't have opening points, PASS. With Opening Points, Double (for Takeout)
- DO NOT respond with a new 4 card suit if there is an interfering bid of a suit by opponent. Use Double instead (Negative Double)
- CAN respond with a new 4 card suit if interfering bid by opponent is a Double (for Takeout)

Responding/Overcalling with fewer points than needed

- With suit opening, partner should always respond with 6+ points, and always pass with less than 6 points (even pass 1C opening with zero Clubs!) Opener can have 13-21 points.
- With NT opening by partner, always pass with 7 points or less and a balanced hand. Do not transfer and pass unless singleton or void! 1 level contract is better than 2.
- Do not respond or overcall at 2 level without 11+ points!

Incorrect point indication in support

- Indicate correct range of points when supporting partner suit
- 1S-2S indicates 6-10 points
- 1S-3S indicates 11-12 points
- 1S-4S indicates 13-15 points
- 1C-1S-4S indicates 19+ points for opener AND 4 spades!

Not bidding long suit properly

- Do not always bid long suit hands like a "Preempt"
- Opening 3S or 4S can be confusing to partner with lots of points
- How many points should he assume? May overbid or miss slam
- If you use "Counting Length and Bonus" method, you will deal with this problem automatically
- Otherwise you have to use alternate methods such as evaluating number of tricks
- Some players jump shift when responding with 6-7 cards. Can be very confusing to partner! Is it 17+ points? 13+? 10+? 6+?

Unknown Captaincy

- You pass Captaincy to partner in all following situations
 - When you open 1NT
 - When you open 2C with 22-24 points
 - When you open a weak preempt bid
 - After you respond with a jump shift with 17-19 points
- Captain decides the level of contract and suit or NT
- After passing captaincy, you just answer questions from partner and obey instructions/commands

Understanding use of Trump Suit

- Trump suit's use is to prevent opponents from slamming you in a suit you have no control over
- You don't need to have high trump cards. But you DO NEED to have them in sufficient numbers!
- Your tricks can come from high cards in other suits once trumps are pulled out

Using Trump Suit

- Carefully Check if trumps in "Short Trump Hand" (usually dummy) have specific use in ruffing losers
- If yes, DO NOT draw trumps first. Take care of losers first.
- If not, DO draw at least 2 rounds of trumps before playing any of your high cards. Be paranoid – opponents can quickly start cross-ruffing!
- Ruffing in long trump hand does not get you extra tricks!
- Corollary – As defenders, your safe return is usually to make Declarer ruff in the long trump hand!

Maintain Entries!

- One of the common mistakes is to not pay attention to entries
- Even if you establish that long suit in dummy, if there is no entry you cannot cash them!
- Don't play high cards without thinking of entries!
- Corollary – As Defenders, try to kill entries to Dummy if there is a threatening long suit there!