

BRIDGE TECHNIQUE SERIES

SAFETY PLAYS



David Bird • Marc Smith

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What is a Safety Play?

You may think it is stating the obvious to say that declarer's aim is to make enough tricks to fulfill his contract. Yes, but it's surprising how often players put this objective at risk, quite unnecessarily.

A 'safety play' is precisely what the name implies. In some cases, it simply reduces the chances of going down. In other cases, it provides what is known as a 'sure tricks line of play' — that is to say, it guarantees your contract. If you want to draw a comparison, think of a safety play in terms of buying insurance. You don't have to spend the money, and most of the time, nothing bad happens anyway. But for a small premium, you can guard against a catastrophe.

When you perform a safety play within a single suit, you aim to handle your honors in such a way that you can overcome the worst possible distribution of the opponents' cards. This may involve the sacrifice of a trick that would have come your way, had the opponents' cards been favorably placed. No matter. Maximizing your contract's chance of success is the main aim at rubber bridge or IMP scoring.

What would your reaction be if someone asked you the correct way to play this suit?

♥ K 10 6 5 3



♥ A 9 4 2

INTERMEDIATE

The **Bridge Technique Series** is designed to take the reader through the most important aspects of card-play technique at bridge. Each book of the series focuses on a different topic, and wherever possible the tactics and strategy are considered from the point of view of both declarer and defenders.

SAFETY PLAYS

Safety plays are card-play techniques that are used to maximize your chances of making a certain number of tricks, often by giving up a trick that did not necessarily have to be lost. In essence, these plays are used to ‘take insurance’ against an extremely unlucky lie of the opponents’ cards. This book explains how to work out safety plays in a suit in isolation as well in the context of the whole deal.



DAVID BIRD has authored more than forty previous books, including the well-known ‘St Titus Abbey’ series and several co-authored with Terence Reese. He writes two newspaper columns in the UK, and his work appears regularly in numerous bridge magazines in the UK and the US.



MARC SMITH's previous books include *Countdown to Winning Bridge* (1999, with Tim Bourke) and *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know* (1999 American Bridge Teachers Association Book of the Year, with Barbara Seagram). He is a regular contributor to a number of bridge magazines.



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