

Bridge Cardplay: An Easy Guide

DRAWING TRUMPS

David Bird & Marc Smith

Text © 2021 David Bird & Marc Smith
Cover Image © iStock.com/stock_art

All rights reserved.

Honors eBooks is an imprint of Master Point Press. All contents, editing and design (excluding cover design) are the sole responsibility of the authors.

Master Point Press
214 Merton St. Suite 205
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M4S 1A6
(647) 956-4933

info@masterpointpress.com

www.masterpointpress.com
www.bridgeblogging.com
www.teachbridge.com
www.ebooksbridge.com

ISBN: 978-1-77140-336-8

Cover Design: Olena S. Sullivan/New Mediatrix

1 2 3 4 5 6 24 23 22 21

Contents

1. Drawing trumps immediately.....	4
Quiz.....	9
2. When you need to take ruffs.....	12
Quiz.....	17
3. When you need to take discards.....	20
Quiz.....	25
4. Establishing a suit before drawing trumps.....	28
Quiz.....	33
5. Techniques when drawing trumps.....	36
Quiz.....	41
6. Using entries in the trump suit.....	44
Quiz.....	49

1. Drawing trumps immediately

The general rule is to draw trumps straight away if you can see enough tricks to make your contract. Remember that whilst you can make extra tricks by ruffing, the defenders are also allowed to ruff your winners.

A greedy declarer might pay a heavy price on this deal:

	♠ A 8 7 3											
	♥ A 7 4											
	♦ K 8 6 2											
	♣ A 3											
♠ 6 4 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 100px; height: 100px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 5	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ 10		♥ J 9 8 6 5 2										
♦ J 9 5 4		♦ A 10 3										
♣ Q J 7 4 2		♣ 9 5										
	♠ K Q J 9											
	♥ K Q 3											
	♦ Q 7											
	♣ K 10 8 6											

West	North	East	South
			1NT
pass	2♣	pass	2♠
pass	4♠	all pass	

West leads the ♥10 against your game, and perhaps your first thought is that partner should have bid more. It seems that you may lose just one trick, to the ♦A. Why aren't you in slam?

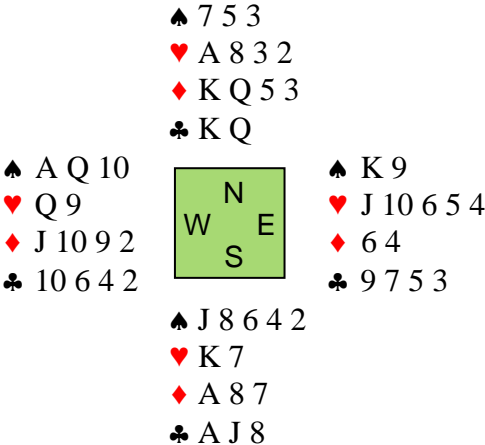
You should put such thoughts out of your mind and concentrate on ensuring at least ten tricks. This is no time to rehearse a post mortem on the auction.

The original declarer planned to ruff two clubs in dummy. He won the heart lead in hand, cashed the ♠K, and continued with a club to the ace and a second club to his king. When he ruffed a losing club with the ♠7, the roof fell in.

East overruffed with the ♠10 and returned a heart. The declarer was probably thinking: ‘I can still make eleven tricks’, as he played the ♥Q, intending to ruff his last club with dummy’s ♠A. Things did not go quite as planned. West ruffed the ♥Q, played a diamond to his partner’s ace, and received another heart ruff to put the game one down.

You can imagine dummy frowning and asking why declarer had not drawn trumps. There was no good answer to this question.

Sometimes your trump suit is not as robust as you might like:



West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	1♠
pass	2♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

West leads the ♦J. How should you play?

Inexperienced players tend to be afraid of attacking a weak trump suit, like the spades here. On deals like this, though, it is imperative to draw trumps as quickly as possible. When you lead a round of trumps, you will take two high trumps away from the defenders. If you play two rounds of trumps on this deal, the defenders will score three trump tricks and nothing else. Start messing around, cashing some winners first, and

Quiz Hands

1.

♠ A 8 7 5
♥ 6 3
♦ A 8 6 2
♣ A K 3

♠K led



♠ 2
♥ A Q J 10 9 8
♦ J 9 4
♣ 10 4 2

You open with a weak 2♥ and partner raises to game. How will you play after the ♠K is led?

2.

♠ 4 2
♥ Q 9 6 4
♦ 8 6 4
♣ K J 6 2

♦J led



♠ A K Q J 5
♥ A K J 10
♦ K Q
♣ A 7

You bid to 6♥ and West leads the ♦J to his partner's ace, East returning a diamond. You win and cash the ♥AK, but East discards on the second round. How will you continue?

Answer to Quiz Hand 1

	♠ A 8 7 5											
	♥ 6 3											
	♦ A 8 6 2											
	♣ A K 3											
♠ K Q J 4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 9 6 3	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ 4		♥ K 7 5 2										
♦ Q 10 7 5		♦ K 3										
♣ J 8 6 5		♣ Q 9 7										
	♠ 2											
	♥ A Q J 10 9 8											
	♦ J 9 4											
	♣ 10 4 2											

West	North	East	South
pass	4♥	all pass	2♥

West leads the ♠K and dummy goes down with four side-suit winners. Your intention is to draw trumps straightaway, but it is always useful to have a fallback plan if something goes wrong.

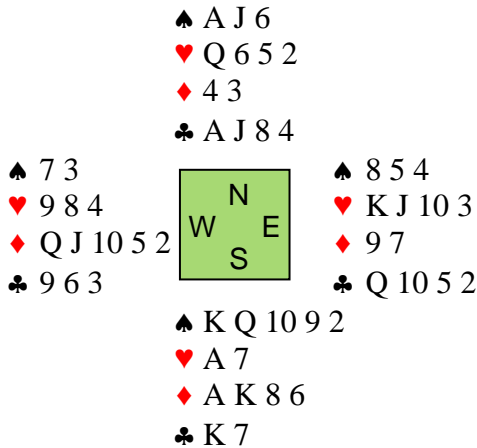
You play a trump to the queen, and fate seems to be on your side when the finesse works. Adding six trump tricks to your four side-suit winners will give you the game. When you return to dummy with a high club and lead a trump to the jack, West discards a club. Dummy has no trumps left, so you cannot take another finesse in the suit. Do you see how you can still score six trump tricks?

You cross to the ♦A and ruff a spade with the ♥8. You then return to dummy with the remaining high club and ruff another spade with the ♥9. You have now scored four trump tricks in addition to dummy's four winners. Your next move is to exit in one the minors. The defenders can cash three winners, but will then have to give you the last two tricks with your remaining ♥A10, sitting over East's king.

2.

When you need to take ruffs

There are many reasons why it could be wrong to draw trumps immediately. For example, you may need to ruff one or more losers in the dummy. This will not be possible if dummy has no trumps left!



West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	pass	1 ♠
pass	2 ♠	pass	4NT
pass	5 ♥	pass	6 ♠
all pass			

West leads the ♦Q. How will give yourself the best chance?

Suppose you win the diamond lead and make the mistake of drawing trumps in three rounds. You will have only ten top tricks and need to find a lucky position in both hearts and clubs to rescue yourself. Justice will be done when you go down, probably two down as the cards lie.

What was your first priority after winning with the ♦A. It wasn't to draw trumps; it was to make a plan for the contract. You started with

BRIDGE CARDPLAY EASY GUIDE series

1. Finessing
2. Ruffing losers
3. Discarding losers
4. Drawing trumps
5. Establishing long suits
6. Holding up a stopper
7. No-trump contracts
8. Suit contracts
9. Entries
10. Playing safely

Whether you are just setting out to discover the wonderful game of bridge, or have played for some time, your success will be limited without a sound understanding of the basic techniques of cardplay.

In this series, two of the game's top writers explain clearly the various cardplay skills that you will need. Every booklet contains six chapters – each ending with a short Quiz.

The topics covered in this third book, on Drawing Trumps, are:

- Drawing trumps immediately
- When you need to take ruffs
- When you need to take discards
- Establishing a suit before drawing trumps
- Techniques when drawing trumps
- Using entries in the trump suit



DAVID BIRD (Southampton, UK) is the world's most prolific bridge writer, with over 150 bridge books to his name. Known for the clarity of his writing and explanations, he has won the American Bridge Teachers' Association Book of the Year Award a record nine times. His celebrated humorous fiction series, featuring the cantankerous Abbot, has run for over 45 years.



MARC SMITH (Southampton, UK) is the author, with Barbara Seagram, of the world's best-selling bridge book in the past sixty years, *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*. He has written many other bridge books and played successfully in several international championships. He is a popular online bridge teacher, conducting classes at all levels of play.



AN HONORS eBook FROM
MASTER POINT PRESS