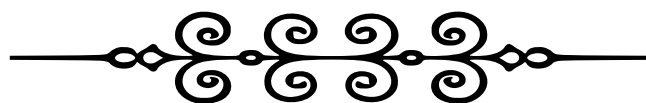




Handy Guide for Novice Players

Updated 27.05.24



1. ONLY BLUE AND GREEN SYSTEMS ARE PERMITTED IN NOVICE EVENTS

- ♠ Please talk to a Director if you have any concerns about the classification of a system. Green e.g., Standard American, Acol.
- ♠ All one-level opening bids are natural and non-forcing.
- ♠ An opening bid of 1♣ 1♦ 1♥ or 1♠ must show at least 3 cards in the suit bid. Exceptions: Hands with 4♠ 4♥ 3♦ 2♣ or 4♠ 3♥ 4♦ 2♣ or 3♠ 4♥ 4♦ 2♣ may be opened 1♣. Only those shapes may be opened 1♣ which must still not force partner to respond.
- ♠ An opening bid of 1♣ showing 2+ clubs and which forces partner to respond even if holding fewer than 6 HCP makes a system Red.
- ♠ 1NT should be balanced or semi-balanced. Semi-balanced means a hand with no more than two shortages with those shortages not being fewer than two cards e.g., ♠KQ4 ♥AK ♦K2 ♣J98642. This does not preclude individual assessment of some hands e.g., a hand with a singleton honour or a weak longer suit. The subsequent bidding methods should not be able to identify such hands. Blue e.g., Strong Club/Strong Diamond and Precision, must satisfy all of the following:
 - ♠ 1♣ or 1♦ is artificial, forcing and always strong ("Strong" means 13+. Agreement is often 15+ or 16+)
 - ♠ 1♥ and 1♠ are natural
 - ♠ 1NT is non-conventional
 - ♠ The one-level opening in the other minor may be artificial with various possibilities not covered by other opening bids

For both Green and Blue Systems, the agreement must be that one-level opening bids show at least 8 HCP.

Opening 2♦ (or 2♣) to show a hand with either a weak 2♥ or a weak 2♠ is acceptable as part of all systems even though no definite suit is shown. Any number of strong options may be added to the weak option.

As part of this agreement, 2♥, 2♠ and 2NT are often two suited and as such would require an alert. Such calls are OK providing at least four cards are being shown in at least one known suit.

Brown Sticker Conventions and Treatments are not permitted in novice events. Brown Sticker is a complex area, often involving bids that show two or more suits without identifying at least one 4+ holding.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Responder announces immediately partner opens 1♣ or 1NT.

Green Systems - The number of clubs shown by partner's 1♣ opening bid. Say "2+, 3+ or 4+."

Blue Systems - Say "Strong" together with the minimum HCP e.g., "Strong 16+". 1♣ is not alerted even when artificial

Green & Blue Systems - The HCP shown by partner's 1NT opening e.g., 12-14, 15-17, 16-18. Just announce the point range. Do not mention the possibility of holding a five-card major. This should have been advised / discovered before the round started.

The only calls that are announced are 1♣ opening bids and natural 1NT opening bids. Nothing else.

3. PRE- ALERTS

Before commencing play you should acquaint your opponents of your basic system, length of one level openings, strength and style of your 1NT opening. Also mention now any unusual features of your bidding and play agreements.

4. ALERTS DURING THE AUCTION

These notify your opponents that your partner's call has a special meaning. Say the word "alert" and circle your partner's call. Do not give an explanation unless an opponent asks for one.

Alert:

- ✓ Conventional passes and conventional bids (unless self-alerting or announced) up to and including 3NT
- ✓ Conventional opening bids above 3NT

Do Not Alert:

- ✓ 2♣ in the specific sequence 1NT (Pass) 2♣
- ✓ Bids in a denomination already bid or shown by an opponent
- ✓ Calls above 3NT unless a conventional opening bid
- ✓ Doubles and Redoubles

These calls are considered to be self-alerting.

5. DELAYED ALERTS

At the end of the auction, before the opening lead is faced, the declaring side (only) should draw attention to any unusual features of their auction particularly unusual self-alerting calls.

This is done by putting a small + in the appropriate square of the bidding pad.

Do not give an explanation unless asked.

Particularly if a lot of +'s are necessary, it may be easier to say, to the player who is to make the opening lead, something like, "Would you like an explanation of our auction? It has a number of self-alerting calls,"

6. PREVENTING IRREGULARITIES

Any player, including dummy, may attempt to prevent another player committing an irregularity but dummy is subject to dummy's rights and limitations.

7. HOW TO BE A GOOD DUMMY

When displaying the dummy, make sure all 13 cards are visible. An adjusted score may be necessary if the opponents are damaged because a card was hidden.

Concentrate on the play of the hand because:

- ✓ Declarer will find it easier to play the hand if dummy is attentive.
- ✓ At the end of play dummy may point out a revoke.
- ✓ Dummy may try to prevent any irregularity. Once an irregularity has already happened, dummy must say and do nothing until play has been completed.
- ✓ If declarer has failed to follow suit dummy may ask if he has revoked e.g. "Having none?" or "No spades partner?" (Note that declarer and defenders *are not* required to say, "Having none," when ruffing or discarding.) A defender should not say this because it draws partner's attention to his void.
- ✓ Dummy may tell any player that his most recently quitted trick is pointing the wrong way. This right ends for dummy (and for the other players) when his side has led or played to the next trick.
- ✓ Dummy may give information, in the Director's presence, as to fact or law.

8. WAYS TO AVOID BEING A BAD DUMMY

Dummy May Not:

- ✓ Play a card from the dummy unless told to do so by declarer.
- ✓ Suggest a card be played by moving a hand towards it.
- ✓ Ask a defender if he has revoked.
- ✓ Call attention to an irregularity before the hand is finished.
- ✓ Call for the Director during play unless another player has already drawn attention to an irregularity.
- ✓ Look at a defender's hand while play is in progress.
- ✓ Leave his seat to watch declarer playing the hand.
- ✓ Leave his seat needlessly.

9. CLAIMS AND CONCESSIONS

A claim should be accompanied by a clear statement as to how the remaining tricks will be won and/or lost. After a claim, or concession, play is suspended. An *opponent* of the player who claimed or conceded may request that play continues. If all four players agree to play on then play may continue. The table result is then final. Otherwise, Call the Director. The Director will adjudicate as to the validity of the claim or concession.

10. UNAUTHORISED INFORMATION

What Do I Do If:

- ✓ Partner pulls a face, gestures, comments, thinks for a long time etc any of which might suggest to me something about his hand or call?
To accidentally create or receive unauthorised information is not an infraction. Make sure that your calls are based only on your hand and your system. Calls must not be based on UI.
- ✓ I learn something about a board I am yet to play or see cards belonging to an opponent before the auction begins?
Call the Director straight away. There are a number of things the Director may allow to happen.
- ✓ I think an opponent's call may have been influenced by UI?

It is usually best to wait until the hand has been completed. Then, if you think you may have been damaged, Call the Director. It is OK to draw attention to an opponent's unauthorised information sooner, perhaps by telling your opponents that you may wish to call the Director later. If there is any disagreement as to whether unauthorised information has been created, call the Director straight away.

11. ASSORTED Q&A

What Do I Do If:

- ✓ Partner does not alert my bid when I think he should have.
- ✓ I think partner has explained one of my calls incorrectly.
*In both cases, during the auction, do and say nothing. Give no indication that anything is wrong. If you expect to be dummy or declarer, Call the Director after the auction has ended
If you are to be a defender, say and do nothing until the hand has been played out, then Call the Director.*
- ✓ I realise that I have failed to alert.
- ✓ I realise I have given a wrong explanation.
In both cases, your minimum obligation is to Call the Director before the opening lead is faced. You may call sooner.
- ✓ I am asked to explain partner's call but I have forgotten our agreement.
Call the Director. This is a very specific situation. You and your partner have an agreement but you have forgotten what the agreement is and cannot explain it when asked to do so.
- ✓ I have revoked and neither I nor my partner has led or played to the following trick?
There is no obligation to draw attention to a revoke but you must not attempt to conceal it.
- ✓ Someone draws attention to an irregularity.
Call the Director. If you allow your opponents to make rulings, and they are wrong, any errors are not going to be in your favour ;-)
- ✓ I have made a wrong call according to our system. I have mis-bid.
This is not an infraction. It is important to do nothing that could alert partner to your call being non-systemic. Your opponents are not entitled to be told about mis-bids. They are entitled to an accurate description of the system you and partner have agreed to play.
- ✓ I want to know something about the opponent's auction or signalling agreements?
Ask at your turn to call or at your turn to play a card. You may ask about specific calls but this may create UI for partner. Often a more general enquiry is best e.g. "Would you explain your auction please?" After the opening lead has been placed face down, declarer and the other defender may ask about the auction.

12. FACED OPENING LEAD BY WRONG DEFENDER

These can be very damaging to the defence and can almost be eliminated by always making the opening lead face down and waiting until partner confirms that he is happy for the card to be faced (because he has no questions). *Call the Director.*

The presumed declarer has several options:

- ✓ Accepting the lead and being declarer or dummy.
- ✓ Declining the lead and having lead restrictions applied.

13. SOME RANDOM DO'S AND DON'TS

Do:

- Have fun
- Call the Director if you have any concerns about something happening at your table
- Count your cards before you look at them
- Make your opening lead face down and wait until partner confirms that he has no questions before you turn it face up
- Turn off phones, iPads etc during sessions
- Raise a hand when calling the Director
- Hand one copy of your system card to each opponent before starting to play.

Don't:

- Be talked out of calling the Director if you think it is the right thing to do
- Discuss results in a loud voice while the session is in progress
- Look at your own system card after taking your cards from a board and before returning them at the end of play. An exception is that presumed dummy and presumed declarer may look at their system cards after the end of the auction and before the opening lead is faced, perhaps to check if they have given correct information.

14. SCORING ERRORS AFTER SESSION HAS ENDED

All scores must be entered correctly. All four players are held responsible for incorrect or incomplete data. Check scores before leaving the table. If an incorrect score appears in the results, find your opponents, if possible, and have them sign the correction.

Then talk to Toni Bardon, the lady wearing a black shirt and stationed outside the scoring hub.

Messages about errors may be sent to: **0456 587 765 - TEXT ONLY**

15. PERSONNEL

Directors. Always ready to help you.

Chief Director. The person to talk to when you are unhappy with a ruling.

Review Consultant. A friendly second opinion on the merits of requesting the review of a ruling.

Reviewer. The person who reviews a director's ruling to see whether correct procedure was followed.

Recorder. Listens to sensitive matters not really the province of the director. Discourtesy is a breach of the laws. The director should be called when attention is drawn to discourtesy.

Caddies. Call, "Caddy", when you need a board. They are also the first people to see for stationery and lost and found property.

Congress Secretary / Administration Desk. Everything else.

16. LOST SYSTEM CARDS

Look in the box near the congress office.