



Suit Preference Signals



1. Normally on defense, you and your partner employ attitude signals to indicate whether you like the suit being played or not.
2. However, there are situations when a shift to a different suit is called for. In these situations, it may be possible to help partner know which of the other suits to shift to.
3. One common example occurs when dummy has a singleton in the suit in which partner has led the ace. It seems clear that partner should change suits. For example, against 4 Spades, partner leads the ace of hearts:

	<u>North</u>	
	♠ 9 8 7 3	
	♥ 4	
<u>West</u>	♦ A 7 4 2	<u>East (You)</u>
♠ 6 5	♣ A Q 5 3	♠ 4 2
♥ A K 8 5		♥ J 9 6 3 2
♦ K 9 6 3	<u>South</u>	♦ J 10 5
♣ J 10 7	♠ A K Q J 10	♣ K 9 8
	♥ Q 10 7	
	♦ Q 8	
	♣ 6 4 2	

It appears that partner should not continue with a second high heart. A shift to a different suit is called for. Can you help partner make an effective shift? Yes, you would prefer that partner shift to a club, not a diamond. So play the two of hearts at trick one, asking partner to shift to the lower-ranking of the two other suits.

4. You may also agree that when dummy is displaying the king-doubleton and partner has led the ace in that suit, a shift is called for.

5. Giving a Ruff:

- The other common situation where a suit preference signal is employed is when you are giving partner a ruff.
- When you are “sending” a card for your partner to ruff, the *size* of the card can send a message:
 - A high card asks her to return to your hand by playing the higher side suit
 - A low card requests a return of the lower side suit.

Example: Contract: 4 H. Partner leads the three of diamonds and you win with the ace. What card should you play next?

	<u>North</u>	
	♠ K 10 5	
	♥ K 9 5 2	
	♦ K 10 8 4	
	♣ J 3	
<u>West</u>		<u>East (You)</u>
♠ J 6 4 3		♠ A 9 7 2
♥ 8 7 4		♥ 3
♦ 3	<u>South</u>	♦ A 9 7 5 2
♣ 10 9 7 5 2	♠ Q 8	♣ Q 8 6
	♥ A Q J 10 6	
	♦ Q J 6	
	♣ A K 4	

You strongly suspect that partner has led a singleton diamond. It seems she will ruff if you play another diamond. The relative size of the diamond that you play at trick two can tell partner what suit to play after ruffing. Play the highest diamond spot card, the 9, to indicate that you want her to come back to you with a spade. You'll win the ace and play another diamond for a second ruff. You will defeat the contract.

Board 1a

West Deals
N-S Vul

♠ A K 10 8 4
♥ 9 5 3
♦ —
♣ K J 6 5 4

♠ Q J 5
♥ A Q J 10 6 2
♦ A J 6 5
♣ —



♠ 7 6 2
♥ K 8 7
♦ K 10 9 4
♣ A 10 9

11
15 10
4

♠ 9 3
♥ 4
♦ Q 8 7 3 2
♣ Q 8 7 3 2

4 ♥ by West

Board 2a

South Deals
None Vul

♠ J 9 3 2
♥ 10 9
♦ K Q J 9 5
♣ 6 2

♠ 7 4
♥ Q 7 6 4 3
♦ A
♣ Q 9 8 5 4



♠ A 6
♥ K J 8 5
♦ 8 6 4 3 2
♣ J 7

7
8 9
16

♠ K Q 10 8 5
♥ A 2
♦ 10 7
♣ A K 10 3

4 ♠ by South