

Discards

- This talk will discuss methods for defensive discarding and some tips on which ones to make

Auction (no one vulnerable):

(1H)-2S-(2NT)-p

(4H) – all pass

Partner leads the ace of spades (ace from ace/king):

♠ QJ76

♥ 94

♦ KJ85

♣ KJT

♠ 2

♥ 8532

♦ AQT2

♣ 9843

- The ace holds, and partner continues with the king.
- What do you discard to get partner to switch to a diamond?

Auction (no one vulnerable):

(1H)-2S-(2NT)-p

(4H) – all pass

Partner leads the ace of spades (ace from ace/king):

♠ QJ76

♥ 94

♦ KJ85

♣ KJT

♠ 2

♥ 8532

♦ AQT2

♣ 9843

1. STANDARD DISCARDS:

- On your first discard, a high discard in a suit (8,9,10) says you *like* that suit
- On your first discard, a low discard in a suit (2,3,4) says you *don't like* that suit
- Middle discards (5,6,7) send a neutral message, but look at the visible spots as sometimes these can be encouraging or discouraging as well

What card should a player playing standard discards throw on the king of spades?

Experienced MIT pair that plays standard discards:

Nathan Glasser/Paul Wendt

Auction (no one vulnerable):

(1H)-2S-(2NT)-p

(4H) – all pass

Partner leads the ace of spades (ace from ace/king):

♠ QJ76

♥ 94

♦ KJ85

♣ KJT

♠ 2

♥ 8532

♦ AQT2

♣ 9843

2. UPSIDE DOWN DISCARDS

- Playing “upside-down” means that you use the opposite strategy as you do in standard
- If you want to encourage in a suit, you play a *low* card in that suit (2, 3, 4)
- If you want to discourage in a suit, you play a *high* card in that suit (8, 9, 10)
- Middle cards tend to be neutral but watch the spots (5, 6, 7)

What card would you play playing “upside down discards?”

- Upside down advocates point out that in standard, they would have to play the ♦T to encourage. That may cost a trick later as the eight will set up in dummy.

MIT experienced pairs that play “upside-down discards”:

Pam Miller/Jim Rasmussen
Steve Willner/Brad Mampe

Auction (no one vulnerable):

(1H)-2S-(2NT)-p
(4H) – all pass

Partner leads the ace of spades (ace from ace/king):

♠ QJ76
♥ 94
♦ KJ85
♣ KJT

♠ 2
♥ 8532
♦ AQT2
♣ 9843

3. LAVINTHAL DISCARDS

- Lavinthal discards use a different strategy than standard or upside down
- In Lavinthal, the first card you discard indicates *you don't want a switch to that suit*
- The rank of the card played then gives suit preference for which suit you want partner to switch to
- A *high* spot indicates a switch to the *higher* of the two remaining suits
- A *low* spot indicates a switch to the lower of the two remaining suits
- In general, the most important message is that you don't want the suit you have played.
- Neutral messages are much tougher to send playing Lavinthal.

What card would you discard if you were playing Lavinthal discards?

MIT experienced pairs that play Lavinthal discards:

Jeff Scott/Steve McDevitt
Gloria Tsoi/Brian Duran

Auction (no one vulnerable):

(1H)-2S-(2NT)-p
(4H) – all pass

Partner leads the ace of spades (ace from ace/king):

♠ QJ76
♥ 94
♦ KJ85
♣ KJT

♠ 2
♥ 8532
♦ AQT2
♣ 9843

4. ODD/EVEN DISCARDS

- Playing odd/even discards, you use the integer quality of the card to send messages
- Playing an *odd* card (3, 5, 7, 9) *encourages* in that suit
- Playing an *even* card (T, 8, 6, 4, 2) *discourages* in that suit
 - A high even card asks for the higher of the other two suits
 - A low even card asks for the lower of the other two suits
- Neutral messages are really hard to send playing odd/even
- Advocates like that this way gives the most options to demand a specific shift

Which card would you discard playing odd/even discards?

MIT experienced pairs that play odd/even:

Barry Margolin/James Jones (against suits only)

Rob Hasserjian/Roger Li

What does our second discard mean since the first one sends a signal?

- Almost always, this card is used to give count in the suit played
- It is good practice to give “present count” in most situations (high from even, low from odd)
 - If I play a suit with 5 cards left, I play my lowest spot
 - If I play a suit with 4 cards left, I played my second lowest spot

What does it mean when we discard an honor (A, K, Q or J)?

- Discarding an honor tends to show an honor sequence that is so solid, you can afford to drop an honor
- Always drop the highest of equals when discarding an honor to send the clearest message.

Partner starts the defense to 3NT by leading two high spades:

♠ 8 ♥QJT983 ♦ T752 ♣ 83

The right heart discard at trick 2 is the ♥Q. This tells partner that you have a solid sequence, and denies having the king.

Steve’s Tip #1: If dummy is on your right, when in doubt, keep parity with dummy.

Steve’s Tip #2: If declarer is on your right, when in doubt, pitch what declarer does.

Steve’s Tip #3: Remember the auction!

1S-2D
2NT-3NT

65
T432
QJT
T432

You lead the diamond queen. Dummy's shape is 2-3-5-3. You figure out later that declarer is either 5-4-1-3 or 5-3-1-4. Which is more likely? Which suit do you keep?