

Discarding by defenders to signal strength (or weakness)

Everyone knows that a discarded high card is a positive message to partner. Thus a discard of the 9 Hearts would suggest that the discarder holds something good in Hearts.

e.g in 4Sp -Partner leads the Ace spades and you would discard the 9 Hrts here

(dummy)	
876	
876	
AK64	(you)
765	void
	AKQ93
	10932
	J983

That's not a particularly likely hand for you to have of course!

Were your hearts less robust you would have to make a decision whether to ask for a heart or not.

e.g in 4Sp -Partner leads the Ace spades and you would discard ?

(dummy)	
876	
8762	
AK4	(you)
765	void
	A93
	Q932
	J98432

well ? Lets look at each suit in turn.

Hearts ? You would expect your Ace to make anyway and there is no particular need to tell partner to lead a heart *if you only expect to make the Ace*. BUT if you had reason to believe that your partner held the King hearts, then it would be a very good idea to ask partner to lead a heart !
{ we will come back to the ways you might know partner does hold the K hearts but an obvious clue would be if partner had bid the heart suit at some point }
In general if you only hold the Ace of a suit and have no reason to suspect that partner might hold honours in that same suit then you shouldn't signal for that suit.

Diamonds ? Certainly there is no immediate trick to be got in diamonds but in time your Queen will make *if* partner can be persuaded to lead the suit a couple of times. The discard of the 9 diamonds would send the message you held a potential trick in diamonds.

Clubs ? You are not going to make a trick in clubs and a low club is the obvious discard.