

Suppose the opponents are in a suit contract -should you as a defender still hold up an Ace ?

Well ... yes is the answer BUT to be aware that if you hold the Ace up too many times it might get trumped ! e.g contract 4Sp

(dummy)		
	AQ6	
	Q76	
	KQJ109	(you)
	43	J97
		K95
		A43
		J952

Partner leads the K clubs and declarer wins the trick with the Ace.
 Declarer draws three rounds of trumps and then leads a diamond.
 Over to you ! Do you win the Ace or duck.? And if you did duck and the Q diamonds is led, same question , do you win or duck that one ?

Well it seems a guess and if it is a guess then sometimes you will guess wrong !
 Certainly the declarer wants the Ace out of the way but when you decide to take it is as I say a matter of guess work. That is , it will be a guess unless you learn about *distributional signals*.

	(dummy)	
	AQ6	
	Q7	
(partner)	KQJ1096	(you)
32	43	J97
J843		K95
82		A43
KQ1087		J952

Same start as above and then declarer plays a diamond. Your partner plays the 8;
 this play of the 8 looks rather like the start of a hi-lo { a signal we already use in a different context }; the 8 suggests partner has an even number of cards in the suit. ie 2 or 4*
 Now , if partner has two cards in the suit , then declarer in turn must have three cards.
 You should hold up the Ace diamonds for three rounds. *NB it is impossible that partner has 4 cards

And if this had been the hand :

	(dummy)		On the lead of a diamond from declarer partner would play the 2 ; this low card would show that they did not have a doubleton in the suit and had an <u>odd number</u> of cards in diamonds ie 3 or 5. Well it has to be 3 which in turn means declarer has precisely 2 cards in the suit. You should hold up the Ace for two rounds only.
	AQ6		
	Q7		
(partner)	KQJ1096	(you)	
32	43	J97	
J84		K95	
872		A43	
KQ107		J952	

What, more signals to learn ?, you cry . And when do I use distributional signals anyway ?
 You use them as a defender whenever you think your partner will benefit from knowing how many cards you have in a suit. Whenever there is a long suit would be a good time as we have seen. Or leave partner to guess if you prefer.....