



## The Crossruff

When we play with a trump suit we count our losers. If there are too many we look for ways to reduce them.

We also have to count **winners**.

If there are not enough winners outside the trump suit we may have to make all our trump separately.

### A Typical Crossruff

♠ A863			
♥ KJ105			
♦ A865			
♣ 6			
♠ KQJ7	N	♠ 10942	
♥ 4	W	♥ 8732	
♦ J974	E	♦ Q10	
♣ KJ43	S	♣ 1095	
♠ 5			
♥ AQ96			
♦ K32			
♣ AQ872			

South plays in 6♥. West leads ♠K, taken with dummy's ♠A

Losers in the South hand are: 0 spades, 0 hearts, 1 diamond and 4 clubs

There is nothing to be done about the diamond loser, so to make 12 tricks declarer needs to ruff 4 clubs in dummy

Counting winners, there are 1 spade, 2 diamonds and 1 club, so he needs 8 trump tricks

To make all his trump separately South must score ♥5 and ♥6 early, before a defender can overruff.

Also, he must cash ♦AK before East has the chance to discard a diamond

The play goes: ♠A, ♣A, club ruff with ♥5, spade ruff with ♥6, ♦AK

Now declarer **crossruffs** clubs and spades till he runs out of trump.

That makes 12 tricks: East makes trick 13 with a trump, after having to **underruff** three times

### Typical features of a crossruff

1. Shortages in both hands: a singleton or void in both declarer's hand and dummy
2. No side suit good enough to develop for extra tricks
3. A solid trump suit so that opponents are unlikely to be able to overruff

### Crossruff Technique

Crossruffing is a simple concept, but there are many pitfalls.

Ruffing in both hands means that you will soon have fewer trump than one opponent.

There is a danger of losing **trump control**

If there is an alternative line which allows you to draw trump it is better to go for that.

If you can take some ruffs in one hand, then draw trump in the other, it is better to go for that.

When you can find no other way to make the contract:

1. Try to play the hand through in your head before starting on a crossruff.
2. If you have to give up the lead before the crossruff will work, opponents may play a round of trump.  
**Concede any inevitable losers early**, before drawing as many rounds of trump as you can afford
3. **Cash your outside winners before you start crossruffing.**  
Otherwise defenders may discard enough cards in that suit to ruff your winners

### Partial Crossruffing

When you have a 4-4 fit it is often a good idea to draw two rounds of trump, cash winners and then crossruff your four remaining trump. That way an opponent cannot draw two of your trump with 1 of his - he just makes one overruff. With 4-4 fits like this:

1) ♠A943

♠K652

Cash ♠A and ♠K.

Then crossruff

2) ♠A874

♠9653

Duck a round of trump, then

cash ♠A, then crossruff

3) ♠K754

♠Q983

Lead low to ♠K(or ♠Q). If they win ♠A

cash ♠Q(or ♠K) before crossruffing.

If ♠K(or ♠Q) scores start crossruffing.

### Defending Against a Crossruff

The best defence against a crossruff is to lead trump at every opportunity.

If declarer in a 4-4 fit ducks a trick without drawing trump seize the chance to play a round of trump.

Similarly if you get the chance to overruff take the trick and play a trump.

Maybe that will leave him a trick short.