

FINCH DISCARD SIGNAL SYSTEM (EBU registered 1981 by Vivienne Finch)

Simply exclude the suit you are discarding, and the suit led, which leaves just 2 suits.

Suits are ranked alphabetically CDHS, as in bidding, ♣♦♥♠, an **even** card showing preference for the **higher** of the two remaining suits, and an **odd** card for the lower.

An easy way to remember this is **EVEN=HIGHER** of the other 2 suits, both have 4 letters; **ODD=LOWER**, both have 3 letters; or **HELO** = (**HIGHER** Even **LOWER** Odd).

For example, when a ♣ is led and you can't follow suit; if you want ♥s then you can discard **EITHER** an **even** ♠ requesting the **higher** of the other 2 suits (viz. ♦s and ♥s); **OR**, an **odd** ♦, preferring the **lower** of the other 2 suits (viz. ♥s and ♠s).

The advantages are that you can mostly use low, medium and unimportant cards to signal with, and you can, express your desire for the lead of a suit in which you are VOID, choose to signal from either of 2 suits, and get to keep a precious card, a potential trick-winner, in the suit that you want led back to you.

Experienced partners are able to signal a suit preference on partner's opening lead of an honour (AKQJ10). Although you're following suit, an EVEN card still requests the **HIGHER** of the other 2 suits (this time ignoring both the **led and trump** suits), and an ODD card the **LOWER** of the other 2 suits). If say ♥s are **trumps** and your partner leads the ♦A, an odd ♦ shows a wish for a ♣, and an even ♦ says please lead me a ♠.

However if you hold a doubleton, you Peter (High-Low, play your higher, then your lower card) hoping for a ruff, as your partner will now know you had a doubleton, and will realise your first card played was in fact probably not a preference signal after all.

A further enhancement can be utilised. When your partner eventually leads your requested suit, they can also indicate their own suit preference. Taking the above example with ♥s as **trumps**, your partner leads the ♦A, your odd ♦ asked for a ♣. Then, if they lead an even ♣ they might want ♠s, whereas an odd ♣, could mean a ♥.

Yet another refinement can be the signal given when leading into a situation, where partner is going to ruff (typically after a doubleton). For instance, when holding ♠AK72 opposite partner's 85, the 3rd lead of the EVEN ♠2, may indicate a request for a ♦ return, **HIGHER** of other 2 suits (with ♥ **trumps**), the ODD ♠7 maybe for ♣s.

Suit preferences can additionally be signalled by which trump is used to ruff. For instance on (partner's) ♦ lead, when holding trumps ♥965 and no ♦s, the EVEN ♥6 could call for a ♠ return (the **HIGHER** of other 2 suits), and similarly either the ODD ♥9, or the ODD ♥5 might invite ♣s.

In the event of partner's lead being covered or trumped by the 2nd player, one can still establish another suit preference, with the remaining odd/even cards in that suit.

The final sophistication available, is on your (opening) lead to show your real desired suit, for example, when opposition are in say ♦s and you've NO ♥s, the lead of an ODD ♣ or EVEN ♠ requests ♥s, whereas an EVEN ♣ is for ♠s, and ODD ♠ for ♣s. This may very well be highly advantageous when leading to partner's indicated suit.

Of course this system, as with any system, needs you to have the appropriate cards, which unfortunately is not always the case. Occasionally you might be left with only odd cards, but bear in mind that a Jack is an odd card (and a Queen is an even card).

SUIT LED	Want	♣	Want	♦	Want	♥	Want	♠
♣	-	-	Odd	♥	Odd	♠	Even	♥
♦	Odd	♥	Odd	♠	Even	♣	Even	♥
♥	Odd	♦	Odd	♠	Even	♣	Even	♥
♠	Odd	♦	Odd	♥	Even	♣	Even	♥

The Finch Discard Signalling System was EBU registered in 1981 by Vivienne Finch.

It's far superior to any discard system currently in use worldwide.

It's used in various places around the United Kingdom, but as it's not 'mainstream' it never gets mentioned in publications or websites.

The Finch Discard Signalling System is in fact the simplest "real" discard system, and is undoubtedly the most efficient and effective of them all.

It does NOT, needlessly use High cards, force you to waste a card from the very suit you're requesting, neither does it have any colour prejudice or need you to guess whether 5s, 6s and 7s are low, medium or high, and nor does it make you old and Doddery or demand your brain to be constantly Revolving.

It does however, give you the ability to show a void, a choice of 2 suits with which to signal, can also request trumps, and it can be utilised with the opening lead, and can also tell partner that you have nothing to offer in the way of assistance, by signalling an implausible suit.

The only thing it can't do, is show a like or dislike for the suit being discarded, but as you can readily indicate your required suit, the word discard can finally be taken literally.

During the course of play many opportunities are presented for the Finch Discard Signalling system.

	FINCH	McKenney	Revolving	DODDs	Italian	Odd/Even	He-Ld
Fairly Simple	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Doesn't use the suit wanted	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
2 ways to signal all preferences	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
Can signal any of other 3 suits	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Can signal NO interest	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Can request a void suit	✓	✓	✓	2/3	✓	✗	✗
System allows ignoring trumps	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Signal new suit if honour led	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Responder can also request	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Works when suit is trumped	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Can use when trumping	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Doesn't use HIGH cards	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Doesn't use LOW cards	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Doesn't use MEDIUM cards	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Doesn't use diff. EVEN cards	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Doesn't REVOLVE	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Doesn't use COLOURS	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓