



2017 Laws of Duplicate Bridge

Summary of Significant changes

Summary list of significant changes

- Law 12, Director's Discretionary Powers
- **Law 15, Wrong board or hand**
- Law 16, Authorized and unauthorized information
- Law 20, Review and explanation of calls
- **Law 23, Comparable call**
- **Law 25, Legal and illegal changes of call**
- **Law 26, Call withdrawn, lead restrictions**
- Law 27, Insufficient bid
- **Law 30, Pass out of rotation**
- **Law 31, Bid out of rotation**
- **Law 32, Double or redouble out of rotation**
- Law 40, Partnership understandings
- Law 45, Card played
- Law 46, Incomplete or invalid designation of a card played from dummy
- Law 50, Disposition of penalty card
- Law 57, Premature lead or play
- Law 64, Procedure after establishment of a revoke
- **Law 68, Claim or concession of tricks**
- Law 72, General principles
- Law 73, Communication, tempo & deception
- Law 75, Mistaken explanation or mistaken call
- Law 79, Tricks won
- Law 86, Team play

Law 12, Director's Discretionary Powers

C. Awarding an Adjusted Score

1. (b) The director in awarding an assigned adjusted score should seek to recover as nearly as possible the probable outcome of the board had the infraction not occurred.
2. (b) When the Director chooses to award an artificial adjusted score of average plus or average minus at IMP play, that score is plus 3 IMPs or minus 3 IMPs respectively. Subject to approval by the Regulating Authority, this may be varied by the Tournament Organizer as provided for by Laws 78D, 86B3 and (d) hereunder.
2. (d) The Regulating Authority may provide for circumstances where a contestant fails to obtain a result on multiple boards during the same session. The scores assigned for each subsequent board may be varied by regulation from those prescribed in (a) and (b) above.

Law 15, Wrong board or hand (1 of 2)

A. Cards from Wrong Board

1. A call is cancelled (**together with any subsequent call**) if it is made by a player holding cards that he has picked up from a wrong board.
2. **(a) If the offender's partner has subsequently called, the Director shall award an adjusted score.**
(b) Otherwise, after looking at the correct hand the offender calls again and the auction continues normally from that point.
(c) Law 16C applies to any call withdrawn or cancelled.
3. **If the offender subsequently repeats his call on the board from which he mistakenly drew his cards the Director may allow that board to be played normally, but the Director shall award an adjusted score when offender's call differs* from his original cancelled call.**
4. A procedural penalty (Law 90) may be assessed in addition to the rectifications above.

* A substituted call differs if its meaning is much different or if it is psychic.

Law 15, Wrong board or hand (2 of 2)

B. Wrong Board Discovered During Auction or Play Period**

If, after the commencement of the auction period, the Director discovers that a contestant is playing a board not designated for him to play in the current round, then:

1. if one or more players at the table have previously played the board, with the correct opponents or otherwise, the board is cancelled for both his side and his opponents.
2. if none of the four players have previously played the board the Director shall require the auction and play to be completed. He allows the score to stand and may require both pairs to play the correct board against one another later.
3. the Director shall award an artificial adjusted score [see Law 12C2(a)] to any contestant deprived of the opportunity to earn a valid score.

** This law only applies to pair and individual events – see Law 86B for team events.

Law 16, - Authorized and unauthorized information

B. Extraneous Information from Partner

1. **Any extraneous information from partner that might suggest a call or play is unauthorized. This includes remarks, questions, replies to questions, unexpected alerts or failures to alert, unmistakable hesitation, unwonted speed, special emphasis, tone, gesture, movement or mannerism.**
 - (a) **A player may not choose a call or play that is demonstrably suggested over another by unauthorized information if the other call or play is a logical alternative.**
 - (b) **A logical alternative is an action that a significant proportion of the class of players in question, using the methods of the partnership, would seriously consider, and some might select.**

Law 20, - Review and explanation of call (1 of 2)

4. (a) If a **player realizes during the auction** that his own explanation was erroneous or incomplete, he **must summon the Director before the end of the Clarification Period and correct the misexplanation. He may elect to call the Director sooner, but he is under no obligation to do so. (For a correction during the play period, see Law 75B2.)**
 - (b) The Director when summoned applies Law 21B or Law 40B3.

5. (a) **A player whose partner has given a mistaken explanation may not correct the error** during the auction, nor may he indicate in any manner that a mistake has been made. 'Mistaken explanation' here includes failure to alert or announce as regulations require or an alert (or an announcement) that regulations do not require.

Law 20, - Review and explanation of call (2 of 2)

G. Incorrect Procedure

1. **A player may not ask a question if his sole purpose is to benefit partner.**
2. **A player may not ask a question if his sole purpose is to elicit an incorrect response from an opponent.**
3. Except as the Regulating Authority allows, a player may not consult his own system card and notes during the **auction period and play** [but see Law 40B2(b)].

Law 23, -

Comparable call (1 of 2)

A. Definition

A call that replaces a withdrawn call is a comparable call, if it:

1. has the same or similar meaning as that attributable to the withdrawn call, or
2. defines a subset of the possible meanings attributable to the withdrawn call, or
3. has the same purpose (e.g. an asking bid or a relay) as that attributable to the withdrawn call.

Law 23, -

Comparable call (2 of 2)

B. No Rectification

When a call is cancelled (as per Law 29B) and the offender chooses at his proper turn to replace the irregularity with a comparable call, then both the auction and play continue without further rectification. Law 16C2 does not apply, but see C following.

C. Non-Offending Side Damaged

If following the substitution of a comparable call [see Laws 27B1(b), 30B1(b)(ii), 31A2(a) and 32A2(a)] the Director judges at the end of the play that without the assistance gained through the infraction the outcome of the board could well have been different, and in consequence the non-offending side is damaged, he shall award an adjusted score [see Law 12C1(b)].

Law 25, - Legal & illegal changes of call

A. Unintended Call

1. If a player discovers that he has not made the call he intended to make, he may, until his partner makes a call, substitute the call he intended for the unintended call. The second (intended) call stands and is subject to the appropriate Law, but the lead restrictions in Law 26 do not apply.
2. If the player's original intent was to make the call selected or voiced, that call stands. A change of call may be allowed because of a mechanical error or a slip of the tongue, but not because of a loss of concentration regarding the intent of the action.
3. A player is allowed to replace an unintended call if the conditions described in A1 above are met, no matter how he may have become aware of his error.

Law 26, - Call withdrawn, lead restrictions

A. No Lead Restrictions

When an offending player's call is withdrawn and it is replaced by a comparable call (see Law 23A), then if he becomes a defender there are no lead restrictions for his side. Law 16C does not apply, but see Law 23C.

B. Lead Restrictions

When an offending player's call is withdrawn and it is not replaced by a comparable call, then if he becomes a defender declarer may, at the offender's partner's first turn to lead (which may be the opening lead) either:

- ~~1. require the offender's partner to lead any (one) suit which has not been specified in the legal auction by the offender; or~~
2. prohibit offender's partner from leading any (one) suit which has not been specified in the legal auction by the offender. Such prohibition continues for as long as the offender's partner retains the lead.

Law 27, - Insufficient bid

B. Insufficient Bid not Accepted

If an insufficient bid in rotation is not accepted (see A) it must be corrected by the substitution of a legal call (but see 3 following).

Then:

1. (a) if the insufficient bid is corrected by the lowest sufficient bid **which specifies the same denomination(s) as that specified by the withdrawn call**, the auction proceeds without further rectification. Laws 26B and 16C do not apply but see D following.
(b) except as in (a), if the insufficient bid is corrected with a **comparable call (see Law 23A) the auction proceeds without further rectification. Law 16C does not apply but see D following.**

Law 30, - Pass out of rotation

When a player has passed out of rotation and the call is cancelled ...

A. RHO's Turn to Call

When a pass out of rotation is made at offender's RHO's turn to call, the offender must pass when next it is his turn to call and Law 72C may apply.

B. Partner's or LHO's Turn to Call

1. When the offender has passed at his partner's turn to call, or at his LHO's turn to call if the offender has not previously called, then:
 - (a) Offender's partner may make any legal call at his proper turn, but Law 16C2 applies.
 - (b) Offender may make any legal call at his correct turn and:
 - (i) When the call is a comparable call (see Law 23A), there is no further rectification. Law 26B does not apply, but see Law 23C.
 - (ii) When the call is not a comparable call (see Law 23A), offender's partner must pass when next it is his turn to call. Laws 16C, 26B and 72C may apply.

Law 31, - Bid out of rotation (1 of 2)

A. RHO's Turn to Call

When the offender has called at his RHO's turn to call, then:

1. If that opponent passes, offender must repeat the call out of rotation, and when that call is legal there is no rectification.
2. If that opponent makes a legal* bid, double or redouble, offender may make any legal call:
 - (a) **When the call is a comparable call (see Law 23A), there is no further rectification. Law 26B does not apply, but see Law 23C.**
 - (b) **When the call is not a comparable call (see Law 23A), offender's partner must pass when next it is his turn to call. Laws 16C, 26B and 72C may apply.**

Law 31, - Bid out of rotation (2 of 2)

B. Partner's or LHO's Turn to Call

When the offender has bid at his partner's turn to call, or at his LHO's turn to call if the offender has not previously called, then:

1. **Offender's partner may make any legal call at his proper turn, but Law 16C2 applies.**
2. **Offender may make any legal call at his correct turn and the Director rules as in A2(a) or A2(b) above.**

Law 32, - (1 of 2)

Double or redouble out of rotation

A. RHO's Turn to Call

2. If offender's RHO bids, doubles or redoubles, the offender may in turn make any legal call:

- (a) **When the call is a comparable call (see Law 23A), there is no further rectification. Law 26B does not apply, but see Law 23C.**
- (b) **When the call is not a comparable call (see Law 23A), offender's partner must pass when next it is his turn to call. Laws 16C, 26B and 72C may apply.**

Law 32, - (2 of 2)

Double or redouble out of rotation

B. Offender's Partner's Turn to Call

If a double or redouble out of rotation has been made when it was the offender's partner's turn to call, then:

- 1. Offender's partner may make any legal call, but Law 16C2 applies.**
- 2. Offender may make any legal call at his proper turn and the Director rules as in A2(a) or A2(b) above.**

Law 40, Partnership understandings

B. Special Partnership Understandings

1. (a) An agreement between partners, whether explicit or implicit, is a partnership understanding.
(b) In its discretion the Regulating Authority may designate certain partnership understandings as 'special partnership understandings'. A special partnership understanding is one whose meaning, in the opinion of the Regulating Authority, may not be readily understood and anticipated by a significant number of players in the tournament.
(c) Unless the Regulating Authority decides otherwise, any call that has an artificial meaning constitutes a special partnership understanding.
2. (a) The Regulating Authority:
 - (i) is empowered without restriction to allow, disallow, or allow conditionally, any special partnership understanding.
 - (ii) may prescribe a System Card, with or without supplementary sheets, for the prior listing of a partnership's understandings, and regulate its use.
 - (iii) may prescribe alerting procedures and/or other methods of disclosure of a partnership's methods.
 - (iv) may disallow prior agreement by a partnership to vary its understandings during the auction or play following an irregularity committed by the opponents.
 - (v) may restrict the use of psychic artificial calls.

Law 45, Card played

C. Card Deemed to be Played

4. (a) A card **is** played if a player names or otherwise designates it as the card he proposes to play (but see Law 47).
- (b) **Declarer may correct an unintended designation of a card from dummy until he next plays a card from either his own hand or from dummy. A change of designation may be allowed after a slip of the tongue, but not after a loss of concentration or a reconsideration of action.** If an opponent has, in turn, played a card that was legal before the change in designation, that opponent may withdraw the card so played, return it to his hand, and substitute another (see Laws 47D and 16C1).

Law 46, - Incomplete or **invalid designation** of a card played from dummy

B. Incomplete or **Invalid Designation**

In the case of an incomplete or invalid designation, the following restrictions apply (except when declarer's different intention is incontrovertible):

1. (a) If declarer in playing from dummy calls 'high', or words of like meaning, he is deemed to have called the highest card **of the suit led**.
(b) If he directs dummy to 'win' the trick, he is deemed to have called the lowest card that it is known will win the trick.
(c) If he calls 'low', or words of like meaning, he is deemed to have called the lowest card **of the suit led**.

Law 50, Disposition of penalty card

E. Information from a Penalty Card

1. Information derived from a penalty card and the requirements for playing that penalty card are authorized for all players for as long as the penalty card remains on the table.
2. Information derived from a penalty card that has been returned to hand [as per Law 50D2(a)] is unauthorized for the partner of the player who had the penalty card (see Law 16C), but authorized for declarer.
3. Once a penalty card has been played, information derived from the circumstances under which it was created is unauthorized for the partner of the player who had the card. (For a penalty card which has not yet been played, see E1 above.)
4. If following the application of E1 the Director judges at the end of play that without the assistance gained through the exposed card the outcome of the board could well have been different, and in consequence the non-offending side is damaged (see Law 12B1), he shall award an adjusted score. In his adjustment he should seek to recover as nearly as possible the probable outcome of the board without the effect of the penalty card(s).

Law 57, Premature lead or play (1 of 3)

A. Premature Play or Lead to Next Trick

When a defender leads to the next trick before his partner has played to the current trick, or plays out of turn before his partner has played, the card so led or played becomes a major penalty card, and declarer selects one of the following options. He may:

1. require offender's partner to play the highest card he holds of the suit led, or
2. require offender's partner to play the lowest card he holds of the suit led, or
3. require offender's partner to play a card of another suit specified by declarer, or
4. **forbid offender's partner to play a card of another suit specified by declarer.**

Law 57, Premature lead or play (2 of 3)

B. Offender's Partner Cannot Comply with Rectification

When offender's partner is unable to comply with the rectification selected by declarer (see A above) he may play any card, as provided in Law 59.

C. Declarer or Dummy Has Played

1. A defender is not subject to rectification for playing before his partner if declarer has played from both hands. **However a card is not considered** to be played **from dummy** until declarer has instructed (or **otherwise** indicated*) the play.
2. **A defender is not subject to rectification for playing before his partner** if dummy has **of his own volition prematurely selected** a card **before his RHO** or has illegally suggested that **one** be played.
3. A premature play (not a lead) by declarer from either hand is a played card and if legal may not be withdrawn.

Law 57, Premature lead or play (3 of 3)

D. Premature Play at RHO's Turn

When a defender attempts to play (not lead) to a trick at his RHO's turn, Law 16 may apply. If his card can be legally played to the trick, it must be played at his proper turn: otherwise, it becomes a major penalty card.

Law 64, - Procedure after establishment of a revoke (1 of 2)

B. No Automatic Trick Adjustment

There is no **automatic trick adjustment** following an established revoke (but see Law 64C) if:

1. the offending side did not win either the revoke trick or any subsequent trick.
2. it is a subsequent revoke in the same suit by the same player, **the first revoke having been established.**
3. the revoke was made in failing to play **a penalty card or any card belonging to dummy.**
4. attention was first drawn to the revoke after a member of the non-offending side has made a call on the subsequent deal.
5. attention was first drawn to the revoke after the round has ended.
6. it is a revoke on the twelfth trick.
7. both sides have revoked on the same board **and both revokes have become established.**
8. the revoke has been corrected as per Law 62C3.

Law 64, - Procedure after establishment of a revoke (2 of 2)

C. Redress of Damage

1. When, after any established revoke, including those not subject to trick adjustment, the Director deems that the non-offending side is insufficiently compensated by this Law for the damage caused, he shall assign an adjusted score.
2. (a) **After repeated revokes by the same player in the same suit (see B2 above), the Director adjusts the score if the non-offending side would likely have made more tricks had one or more of the subsequent revokes not occurred.**
(b) **When both sides have revoked on the same board (see B7 above) and the Director deems that a contestant has been damaged, he shall award an adjusted score based on the likely result had no revokes occurred**

Law 68, - Claim or concession of tricks

D. Suspension of Play

After any claim or concession, play is suspended.

1. If the claim or concession is agreed, Law 69 applies.
2. If it is doubted by any player (dummy included); **either**
 - (a) the Director **may immediately** be summoned **and no** action **should** be taken pending **his arrival, Law 70 applies**; or
 - (b) **upon the request of the non-claiming or non-conceding side, play may continue subject to the following:**
 - (i) **all four players must concur; otherwise the Director is summoned, who then proceeds as in (a) above.**
 - (ii) **the prior claim or concession is void and not subject to adjudication. Laws 16 and 50 do not apply, and the score subsequently obtained shall stand.**

Law 72, - General principles

C. Awareness of Potential Damage

If the Director determines that an offender could have been aware at the time of his irregularity that it could well damage the non-offending side, he shall require the auction and play to continue (if not completed). At the conclusion of play the Director awards an adjusted score if he considers the offending side has gained an advantage through the irregularity.

Law 73, - Communication, tempo & deception

- A. Appropriate Communication between Partners
- B. Inappropriate Communication between Partners
- C. Player Receives Unauthorized Information from Partner
- D. Variations in Tempo or Manner
- E. Deception

Law 75, - Mistaken explanation or mistaken call (1 of 4)

A. Mistake Causing Unauthorized Information

Irrespective of whether or not an explanation is a correct statement of partnership agreement, **a player**, having heard **his partner's** explanation, knows that his own call has been misinterpreted. This knowledge is unauthorized information (see Law 16A) **and the player must carefully** avoid taking any advantage from it (see Law 73C); **otherwise** the Director shall award an adjusted score.

Law 75, - Mistaken explanation or mistaken call (2 of 4)

B. Mistaken Explanation

1. **When the partnership agreement is different from the explanation given, the** explanation is an infraction of Law. When this infraction results in damage to the non-offending side, the Director shall award an adjusted score.
2. **If a player becomes aware of his own mistake, he must summon the Director before the opening lead is faced (or during the play, if discovered later), and then provide a correction. The player is also permitted to call the Director before the auction ends, but he is under no obligation to do so (see Law 20F4).**
3. **The player's partner must do nothing to correct the mistaken explanation while the auction continues and if he subsequently becomes a defender, he must call the Director and correct the explanation only after play ends. If the player's partner is to be declarer or dummy, he must, after the final pass, call the Director and then provide a correction.**

Law 75, - Mistaken explanation or mistaken call (3 of 4)

C. Mistaken Call

When the partnership agreement **has been** explained correctly, the mistake being the call made and not the explanation, there is no infraction. The explanation must not be corrected (nor must the Director be notified) immediately and there is no obligation to do so subsequently. Regardless of damage, the result stands [but see Law 21B1(b)].

Law 75, - Mistaken explanation or mistaken call (4 of 4)

D. Director's Determination

1. Players are expected to disclose their partnership agreements accurately (see Law 20F1); failure to do so constitutes Misinformation.
2. It is a condition of any partnership agreement that both players possess the same mutual understanding, and it is an infraction to describe an agreement where the same mutual understanding does not exist. If the Director determines that the misleading explanation was not based upon a partnership agreement, he applies Law 21B.
3. When there is an infraction (as per B1 or D2) and sufficient evidence exists as to the agreed meaning of the call, the Director awards an adjusted score based upon the likely outcome had the opponents received the correct explanation in a timely manner. If the Director determines that the call has no agreed meaning, he awards an adjusted score based upon the likely outcome had the opponents been so informed

Law 79, - Tricks Won

B Disagreement on Tricks Won

3. If the Director is not called before the round ends, the score may be changed for both sides only when he is clearly convinced as to the result obtained at the table. Otherwise he should either allow the recorded score to stand, or decrease the score for one side without increasing it for the other.

Law 86, - Team Play (1 of 3)

A. Substitute Board

The Director shall not exercise his Law 6 authority to order one board redealt when the final result of a match without that board could be known to a contestant. Instead, he awards an adjusted score.

B. Result Obtained at Other Table

1. Single Result Obtained

In team play when the Director awards an adjusted score and the result at the other table between the same contestants is clearly favourable to one side, the Director shall award an assigned adjusted score [see Law 12C1(c), but for multiple adjusted scores see B2 following].

Law 86, - Team Play (2 of 3)

2. Multiple Results Obtained at One or More Tables

In team play when two or more non-comparable results have been obtained between the same contestants or when these Laws otherwise require the Director to award more than one adjusted score:

- a) If no contestant was at fault, the Director shall cancel the board(s) and award one or more artificial adjusted scores [see Law 12C2] or, if time permits, play one or more substitute boards (but see A above).**
- b) If only one contestant was at fault, the Director shall award to the non-offending side, for each board in question, either an artificial adjusted score of average plus [see Law 12C2(b)] or an assigned adjusted score, whichever is more favourable. The offending side shall receive the complement of the score awarded to their opponents.**
- c) If both contestants were at fault, the Director shall cancel the board(s) and award one or more artificial adjusted scores [see Law 12C2].**

Law 86, - Team Play (2 of 3)

3. The Regulating Authority may provide differently for circumstances where boards have been played at only one table between the same or multiple contestants. The score awarded for each such board may be varied by regulation from that prescribed in B2, however in the absence of a relevant regulation, the Director proceeds as above.