Defend Like an Expert

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This document describes two separate things. Firstly, it is a detailed defense procedure that you can follow when sitting at a bridge table. Secondly, it describes a way of practising this defence procedure with a realistic simulation of being at a bridge table 'playing' real hands.

You can play through this simulation at your own speed. This allows you to practice counting and the many other skills needed to defend to a high level. With practice your speed will increase, so allowing you to bring these new skills to your face-to-face and online bridge.

The point of the activities in the list below to get you to see, almost literally, the unseen cards. The sooner you know the location of the unseen cards, the sooner you can defend the hand double dummy.

The Procedure for the Defence

1. Count your High Card Points (hcp).

2. Count your Total Points   hcp + adjustments   e.g. Bergen or your preferred system.

3. Count the number of your hcp scoring honnor cards A-K-Q-J. You have how many out of 16?

4. Consciously notice and **repeat to yourself**, your distribution pattern S-H-D-C order e.g. 5143

5. **As EACH bid is made** tell yourself consciously the assumed length in any suit revealed and the assumed point count of the bidder. Never bid yourself until after you have made that internal assessment. Remember you are trying to form good habits so no shortcuts allowed while you are learning.

6. Once the lead is on the table. Study dummy. If you are third in hand don't even think about what to play, instead study the dummy – Yes make them wait. A fast play by declarer, even of a singleton, is a tactic, she is trying to put you under pressure and so get you to make a mistake.

7. Count dummy's High Card Points (hcp).

8. Count the number of dummy's hcp scoring honnor cards A-K-Q-J.

9. Consciously notice and **repeat to yourself**, dummy's distribution. **This is vital**. It is no use getting to trick 6 and wondering - Did dummy start with 3 diamonds or was it ... ?

    Now the real work begins – Note that in the inference steps that follow with the hcp and distributional thinking will intermix but for clarity they are listed as separate actions so you won't skip them while you are learning. Remember the whole purpose is to get you to **focus your mind on the unseen**. The visible is easy, you need to make the effort to 'see' what is not visible.

10. Add your hcp and dummy's hcp and subtract the sum from 40.

11. Add your hcp scoring honnor card count and dummy's and subtract the sum from 16.

12. Now you can see dummy, revisit the bidding, focusing on getting a best estimate of both declarers and partners hcp.

13. Scan your and dummy's suits. For each of the missing honors try to imagine that card hovering in declarers hand or (if more reasonable) in partners hand or in the space between them. I am not joking the mantra is – **make the unseen visible.**

14. Sum the hcp points of the cards as you imagine each of them. At the end the total must agree with your earlier calculation.

15. Now you can see dummy, revisit the bidding, focusing on the distributions. For those new to this process, this is **the number one item to stress**. This is the gateway to being an advanced player. Because you know the hand patterns by heart (see the Appendix for how to learn them) the hand shapes will snap into your mind.
     Yes there will be lots of vagueness. This is not easy. Does declarer have 5 or 6 trumps? OK declarer has 6 cards in the minors but they could be almost any pattern that adds up to 6!

16. To help your insight – Sum your and dummy's hand shape and subtract each from 26 to give the number of cards in each of the unseen suits (you are NOT expected to remember this calculation) e.g.   13 13 13 13 - (5143 + 4333) = 4 9 6 7   Why bother? The purpose is to stop you looking at the dummy and saying – oooh look don't we have a lot of spades between us – and instead say to yourself – partner and declarer have only 13 - (5 + 4) = 4 spades between them. I must watch carefully as they are they played (or discarded).

17. From the information you have from the bidding – remember you can always ask what various bids mean – you will start to build up that elusive picture of declarers hand. Getting declarers shape is sometimes called "getting the count". It's a great feeling when you start to do it. See the examples that follow. Now at last, is the time when 3rd hand should play to the first trick.

18. **The play** – this is where you really have to work hard. If you calculated that partner has 5 – 6 points and she has shown up with an Ace then declarer has both missing Kings. Yes those two kings that you previously imagined floating out there are in declarers hand, so re-imagine them there.

     When there are three trumps in dummy and you also have three and partner shows out on the third round you will instantly know that declarer started with 5 and now has 2 left. Why because you have learnt the hand patterns.

19. **Signals** – at the very least you need to be playing standard signals, of course agreed with partner. This is so large a topic that I will just refer you to Eddie Kantar's book Modern Bridge Defense. Again this is covered in the examples that follow.

20. **Counting Declares Tricks** – as a final point – to form a defensive plan you need to be able to envision just how declarer will make his tricks – long suits to run or what? Once again the best advice is to refer you to Kantar's second book of the pair Advanced Bridge Defense.

If you think this list is overblown, picky and way too long then you are correct. The core point of this list is to train your conscious mind to start to imagine what you can't directly see. As you learn that skill, the need for the detailed points in the list will fade.

Getting aaBridge

The Bridge Movie player **aaBridge** is available at **http://RogerPf.com/aaBridge**. As it uses Java, it runs on Windows, MACs (**not** iPad) and Linux. Please install aaBridge from the link above. If you are new to aaBridge I strongly suggest that you spend a few minutes going through the 'New User' tutorial.

Please Follow the instructions, in red, at the bottom of the opening Welcome page. I also suggest you first get some familiarity with the **aaBridge** application before you start using it in full-blown simulation mode.

New MOUSE WHEEL support - aaBridge now supports the use of your mouse wheel. After clicking on Flow, Step or the (single fwd arrow) '>' use your mouse wheel to repeat or reverse that action.

aaBridge new User Setup

As a new user to aaBridge there are a couple of display items that you may want to adjust.

Red Hints

If the red arrow hints as shown on the left bother you then select the red hints options tab (from the right-hand column in aaBridge) and uncheck the ones you don't want to see.

Open aaBridge and click on the menu bar, from the drop down menu select **Books** -> **Hondo 717 - Mentoring and 2008** as shown in the image on the right.

The first 'Mentoring Tutorial' will now open. Halfway down the page it will wish you a happy New Year (for 2008).

Remember that these tutorials were written a long time ago and were then expected to run on different software. You should ignore all instructions to click 'funny' buttons. Instead YOU move about using the **Flow >** and **Step >** buttons and by clicking on the **Navigation Bar** that you can see below them.

Click the **Flow >** button twice **OR** click the second bobble on the navigation bar as shown below. You should now be looking at board 1.

If you have a large monitor you may find that the hand diagrams appear too large for comfortable viewing. You can reduce the size of the hands while keeping the display text and the **Flow >** buttons at normal size.

Click the **Size & Font** tab in the right-hand column and select Tiny as shown on the right.

(The deal showing with **Tiny** selected)

This setting is purely optional and you can change it at any time.

aaBridge Simulation Introduction

If you do not have **aaBridge** open and currently displaying Book 1 of the **first mentoring tutorial of 2008** then please follow the instructions on the previous page to get it showing.

aaBridge contains over 1,200 commented deals, sourced from the **HondoBridge** website, you are looking at one of them now.

The nine different deals in this Mentoring Bridge Movie are shown as the bumps on the black-and-white navigation bar, bottom of the window. Some of the deals are shown with labels like **o2** and **o3**. You can click anywhere on the bar and aaBridge will jump to that point in the Bridge Movie.

Looking at Board 1 you can see that the contract is 2 ♥hearts by North, Howard (hondo717) is sitting South and is dummy (which shows slightly darker) and that the declarer sitting North is Kia (nome). We are all indebted to Howard for his bridge teaching and to Kia for producing these many hundreds of Bridge Movies.

Now you can play this Bridge Movie (.lin file) in the way intended by Kia, the author. Just click the **Flow >** button and watch the play develop and read the commentary. I recommend that you do play the tutorials in the way the author intended but before you do that you can use the hand with aaBridge as a **True Table Simulation.**

You can use aaBridge to play any hand in one of three extra ways. You can play it as the left-hand opponent (LHO), the right-hand opponent (RHO) or as the declarer. The examples that follow will have us being the LHO.

Setting up aaBridge for 'True Table' Simulation

In order to make sure we only see 'our hand' when entering a deal we must set some of the aaBridge options. Click on seat choice in the options column on the right-hand side. You need to set the options as they are shown in the image. If you first click on the **Apply Defaults** button, see the bottom of the image (purple dot). You may then need to click on the items marked with a red dot so they **all** appear as shown in the image.

Once you have done this please click on any of the other deal Tabs visible on the command bar. After you have tried a few please click on please click on Tab **o4**.

Now click on the **Enter the Deal** button.
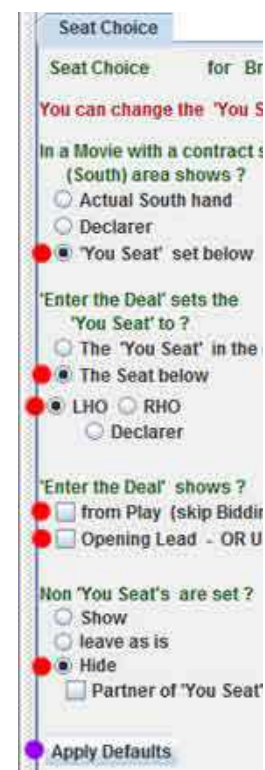
Success   This has achieved what we wanted. You can only see the hand you are about to 'play'.

You are sitting with the East hand, in the bottom zone. Howard (hondo717) is on your right and his 'hand display box' is slightly darker showing that he will end up as dummy.

So you are the left-hand opponent (LHO) to the declarer North who is on your right.

But there is a problem - to get here you will have caught a glimpse of all the other hands in the deal when you first clicked on that deal Tab.

Please click the **Back to Movie** button. Again please click on the different deal Tabs. **But -** this time please use the **right** **mouse button** to click on the tabs. The right mouse button will both take you to the deal at that tab **and** do an **Enter the Deal** for you.   Please practice doing this a few times and using the **Back to Movie** button to return each time.

If you get this wrong with the real examples that follow then a lot of their value will be lost, as you will have seen all the hidden hands before you start and that is not what happens at a real bridge table.

Please re-enter the deal at Tab **o4**. (Board 4)

The command bar area and the bottom of the window will now look like -

During the examples you would be asked to –

   Step through the bidding using the **Step >** button (please practice doing that). When you get to the end of the bidding and the contract appears, please stop and next –

   Click the **small forward arrow** **>** button. It is the first small button to the **left** of the **Back to Movie** button. This will 'play' the first (next) card and the dummy will appear. Please now –

   Click the **Flow >** button and proceed through the play trick by trick.

The procedure above is what you will be asked to do in the examples that follow.

The Bidding System in the Mentoring Hands

The students basically play Standard American and 2/1. With over 2/1 becoming dominant in the later years. Howard teaches **Standard carding** except he likes to use coded 9's and 10's. So the lead of a 10 promises the Jack **and** either the King or the Ace.

Example no. 1

Let us start with an simple one.

Click on the **aaBridge** menu bar and select **Books** -> **Hondo 717 - Mentoring and 2008**. (Note - If you have just done the tutorial described above then you will already be in this 'book').

Look in the gray column on the left-hand side towards the bottom you will see **mentoring081023**.   Please click on it.

Look at the **Navigation bar** towards the bottom of the window. Find the tab (the bobble) marked **B07**. Please **right** click it with your mouse. It is important to right click it because that way you will only see your own cards.

If you can see any other information, such as other hands or the bidding them please click the **Back to Movie** button and adjust the settings in the **Seat Choice** options column (see the setup procedure described earlier) and try again.

When you are successful the deal part of the display will look has shown on the right.

This full procedure is designed to mimic what you do at a face-to-face table or when playing online.

In truth, if you practice with these hands on your own then you will probably cut a lot of the corners, for example looking straight at the completed bidding. Please try to remember that the purpose of this long list is to get you into the habit of doing the right things in the right order at a real table.
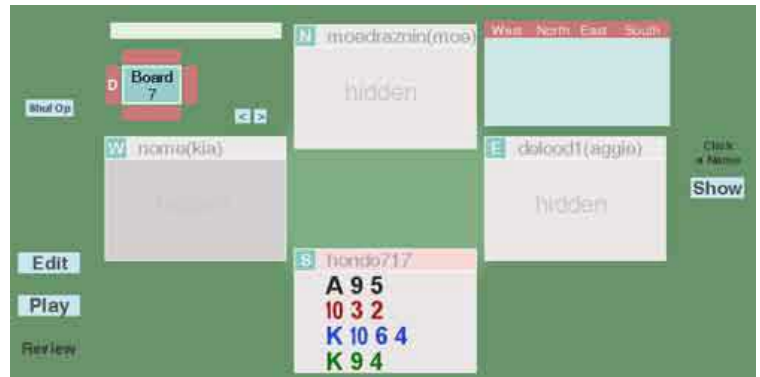
From the action list given earlier

1 – 4 You have 10 hcp. 10 Starting points (Bergen, the same points).   3 scoring Honors.   3343 distribution SHDC.

5 Click the **Step** button once and the first bid will appear both in the table in the upper right and on the green baize just in front of the player. Keep clicking **Step** as needed.
    W – pass.
    N – **2♠**   standard weak two in spades.
    E – **3♥**   again standard stuff. I would expect at least a roughly opening hand with five or more hearts.
    S – **3♠**   (Us) Howard furthering the pre-empt, just making it hard for the opponents.
    W – **4♥**   11 or 12, maybe with three card support and some controls?
                  and three passes.

Don't forget **you can now use the** **MOUSE WHEEL** **instead of all that clicking.**

Because this is the 'pretending to be real' example, click the **small forward arrow > button**. It is just to the left of the **Back to Movie** button.

6 You will see Howard make his lead of the ace of spades (♠A) and dummy will appear. The first thing that strikes me, is that clearly West (Kia) expects his partner to be stronger than I would have. So I would adjust my mental expectation of East hand to be 15+ points with six hearts. But first back to the system –

7 – 9 Dummy has 10 hcp. 11 Starting points (Bergen). 3 scoring Honors. 3235 distribution (SHDC). The combined missing card distributions are   13 13 13 13 – (3235 + 2343) = 7865

10 – 14 There are 20 hcp's visible and 20 in the unseen hands. There are 10 hidden scoring honors 16 – (3+3). Let us make the effort to name them to bring them to mind ♠KQJ ♥AKQJ ♦J ♣QJ which also adds up to 20 points. If you fell into the trap of forgetting the ace of spades when bringing to mind the cards that are not in the visible hands then this is the right time to make those mistakes.

15 – 16 Revisit the bidding. We know partner has got six spades. So declarer must have a singleton, be careful not to forget that with our ace of spades on the table, we like, dummy have three. Given that we are now putting declarer with six hearts (trumps) that means partner has a doubleton.

What of the points? If declarer really does have 15 then partner can only have 5. A weak two on only five points? And vulnerable? Yes, that is the style that Howard teaches. Where are those points most likely to be? Howard supports Marty Bergen's view that the best pre-empts have minimal defensive values. So values she does hold should be mainly in the pre-emptive suit.

When it comes to distribution, for the bidding analysed earlier we already know what is happening in the majors. In the minors the unseen hands have between them 6 ♦diamonds and 5 ♣clubs. We know declarer has a singleton ♠spade and six ♥hearts so must she therefore have 6 cards in the minors. So it looks like the important decisions of this hand (if there are any) are going to come from the play of the minor suits.

18 **The play** - Click the   **Flow >**   button (once) and watch the first trick complete.

So declarer's singleton spade was the King. (So has 12 points left).

Click **Flow >** As expected declarer trumps this (so she should now have five left). This also confirms that our partner has three points tied up in the ♠QJ.

Click **Flow >** Declarer draws a round the trumps with the Ace. (So as 8 points left). Of with 6 hearts. So now has 2 left along with her six cards in the minors. Our King of diamonds is looking very finessable. When the finesse comes we will be ready to play 'smoothly and in tempo'. (So has 2 points left).

Click **Flow >** Finesse taken as expected.

Click **Flow >** That return play is somewhat strange, declarer playing in the Jack of diamonds. Our King of diamonds wins and we are on lead. So the only two scoring honors left to place are the ♣QJ. If our assumption about 15 points for declarer is correct then she has the Queen partner (hopefully) has

the Jack.

Click **Flow >**   Our Six of diamonds to dummy's Ace. And that being the third round of diamond and us having the 13th, means that declarer started with 3 Diamond's and therefore has 3 clubs (and 2 trumps) left. As declarer is stranded on table we are certain to make our King but we will need a second club trick to get the contract down. The club's (none of which have been played) are clearly 5233. Partner with the doubleton.

Click **Flow >**   Dummy's two of clubs runs to declarer's Queen and our King. So if partner has the Jack and even then he was very light for two spade opener, declarer must be going down because our nine will be promoted.

Click **Flow >**   Exit with the Nine of spades. Roughed by declarer.

Click **Flow >**   Eight of trumps for us to all discard on (declarer's last).

Click **Flow >**   And as predicted declarer leads a low club to the ace and partners Jack falls.

Click **Flow >**   Dummy's Seven runs to our promoted nine of clubs. One down.

Click the **Back to Movie** button and use the **Flow >** to play this hand in the way the moviemaker (Kia) originally expected it would be played. We also get to read Howard's commentary on the bidding and play by his students. Don't be too hard on the students. Back then they were still learning. They are now good players.

Don't forget you can now use the **MOUSE WHEEL** **instead of all that clicking.**

Example no. 2

If aaBridge is not currently set up for **'True Table' Simulation**, please refer to the earlier section in this document which covers the necessary settings.

Click on the **aaBridge** menu bar and select **Books** -> **Hondo 717 - Mentoring and 2008**. (Note - If you have just done "Example no. 1" above, then you will already be in this 'book').

Look in the gray column on the left-hand side towards the bottom you will see   **mentoring080529**.   Please click on it.

Please (important) **right click** on the navbar tab labelled **o5**. You should now see only one hand and that will be in East hand and it will be in the bottom zone.

From the action list given earlier in this document –

1 – 4 You have 5 hcp. 5 Starting points (Bergen, the same points).   3 scoring honors.   4414 distribution SHDC.

5   Click the **Step >**   button once and the first bid will appear both in the table in the upper right and on the green baize just in front of the player. Keep clicking **Step** as needed.
Three passes to partner who bids 1NT (15-17).
Three more passes.

S – 2♦ (DONT – Howard encourages use of DONT), Diamonds and one higher suit 5 – 5.
W – **Dbl** (partner). For penalties? I assume.
N – **2♥**   showing lack of tolerance (less than 3) for the DONT bidders first suit.
S – pass (you)
W – pass, yes the DONT bidders second suit is ♥hearts.   Two other passes.

Click the **small forward arrow > button**. It is just to the left of the **Back to Movie** button.

6   You will see Mel make the lead, (your lead) of the singleton seven of diamonds (♦**7**) and the dummy will appear.

7 – 9   Dummy has 9 hcp. 10 Starting points (Bergen).   4 scoring Honors.   2551 distribution (SHDC). The combined missing card distributions are   13 13 13 13 – (2551 + 4414) = 7478

10 – 14   There are 14 hcp's visible and so 26 in the unseen hands. There are 9 hidden scoring honors 16 – (4+3). Make the effort to bring them to mind ♠AK ♥AK ♦AKQ ♣QJ which, as it should, adds up to 26 points.

15 – 16   **Revisit the bidding**. At first glance it looks as if we can see what was clearly bid. The DONT bidder has 5 - 5 in the 'red' suits. But that misses a huge giveaway. Our right-hand opponent denied having 3 diamonds by bidding hearts. Also remember we made ourselves calculate that the unseen hands had only four hearts between them. Partner opened one no-trump therefore must have at least two hearts. So this leaves at most two hearts for declarer.

While there are a number of extreme possibilities (e.g. declarer having singletons in hearts and diamonds) the most likely explanation for this bidding is that declarer has doubletons in both ♥hearts and ♦diamonds. This means declarer has 9 cards the 'black' suits.

What of the points? While partner is most likely to have 15 points we will allocate her 16 because that way our maximum error will only be one point either way. This leaves 26 – 16 = 10 for declarer.

18   **The play** - Click the   **Flow >**   button (once) and watch the first trick complete.

Partner plays the queen of diamonds. (So has 14 points left).
Declarer plays the Ace. (So has 6 points left).

Click **Flow >**   The three of clubs and runs to dummy's singleton Ace. Partner plays the 8 of club's, which is an interesting but uninformative card. It could be high low from 2 or four or even the lowest of three.

Click **Flow >**   Dummy leads the 9 of diamonds and partners 10 wins. Declarer plays what must be her second and last diamond. It looks like declarer is trying to set up a diamond ruff in her hand.

Click **Flow >**   Partner, who has been counting, knows you can over ruff and so obliges declarer.

Click **Flow >**   You lead the two of spades to partner's is king. (So has 11 points left). Declarer's failure to cover the King means we can put the ace with partner.

Click **Flow >**   Partner's king of diamonds is ruffed high by declarer with what must be her last trump. (So Partner has 8 points left the two unseen aces?) (So Declarer has 3 points left!!!) Her play of the

King is definitely helping to promote our Jack and 9. As we haven't had around of trumps partner must still have her initial two hearts still in her hand, one of which we can be pretty sure is the Ace. Note – we still do not have a handle on the distribution of declarers 'black' suits.

Click **Flow >**   declarer leads the Queen, we cover, dummy ruffs and Partner plays 9 of club's.

Now everything is revealed. Partner has played the 8 of clubs then the 9 of clubs in following low situations. This means she has to have three. Could she have started with five clubs? We already know she started with 2 hearts and 5 diamonds adding 5 clubs means her hand would definitely not be bid as one no-trump.

We are playing double dummy now, as partner started with 3 clubs we know declarer started with 5 and a distribution of 4225. She is now down to 3--4 and must have the queen of clubs and most likely the Jack as well. If partner has the Jack she started with 17 points. Either way it is not going to end well for declarer.

Click **Flow >**   Queen of clubs, covered by your king and ruffed dummy.

Click **Flow >**   Desperation lead of the Queen of hearts from dummy. Won by partners ace.

Click **Flow >**   Partner cashes the ace of spades.

Click **Flow >**   Partner cleverly leads her last diamond which as dummy has to follow means you score your 9 of hearts.

Click **Flow >**   The end is obvious, you get your master trump, the Jack. Two down

Now you can click the **Back to Movie** button and use the **Flow >** to play this hand in the way the moviemaker (Kia) originally expected it would be played. We also get to read Howard's commentary on the bidding and play by his students.

Did you spot **big thing** that I missed ?   Karen (who reviewed this document) pointed out to me that even **before** the 7 of diamonds led, we know the distributions.   But for simplicity rewind the play to just after the 7♦ has been led.   South has 5-5 in Hearts and Diamonds. North (declarer) has, by not passing the 2 diamond bid, shown a maximum of two diamonds in her hand.

So ? Once you give two diamonds to North then clearly partner must have five. Partner must also have at least two hearts which leaves only two for declarer.   So we are now down to 6 unknown 'black' cards in partners hand. As partner has bid 1NT (which for these players and for most of us, denies having **two** doubletons) they must be 3-3.   This therefore means that declarer must have 4-2-2-5 shape. !

Example no. 3

I am going to leave you to do **Example no. 3** without my assistance.

It is in the same 'book' – on the menubar select **Books** -> **Hondo 717 - Mentoring and 2008**

See **mentoring080904**. Board **B05**   Remember NO CHEATING use the   **right click** on your mouse when you jump into the deal.

This deal is just as interesting and readable as the first two.   I will leave you with **a little hint** – Howard loves to open a weak two with 6 cards in the suit and the flimsiest collection points imaginable. So if he doesn't...

Appendix 1 - Learning the Suit Distributions

A standard approach to this is for you to write out the common distributions. It is normal when doing this to exclude 8 card suits and longer. From my experience if you make your learning slightly more structured you can make the studying more effective.

The key is to realise that what is important is to find the missing number. So if you discover that a suit is distributed 4, 2, 2 in each of three hands that what you want to know instantly if the number of cards in the fourth hand.

To help with this my suggestion is that you pick a target number and write down all the combinations that end with that target number. And learn those.

While this produces longer lists that need learning, I have found it far more effective. On the right is an example of the list for summing to 5.

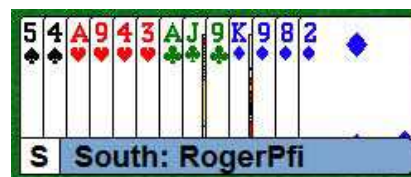Suggestion - when on a car journey in try repeating the list to yourself.

```
3 3 2 5
4 4 - 5
4 3 1 5
4 2 2 5
5 3 - 5
5 2 1 5
6 2 - 5
6 1 1 5
7 1 - 5
```

Appendix 2 - Why you should play on-line using Hand Diagrams

If are like me you like pictures of cards.

Hey I even made a four color set of cards that would work on the old BBO windows client.

But now I know better

Hand diagrams show shape.

Hand diagrams have a consistent order.

Above all else the most important thing is that they show shape.

As this document has stressed so many times when playing need to be able to bring to mind the shape of your opponents hand. You need to visualise their initial distribution, their initial shape.

One thing you don't do when you are trying to imagine their hand is to try to imagine it is as four suits sorted in red-black order.

Yes I know, pictures of cards, look nice to the eye but they get in the way of your thinking.

So my advice is, give them up and learn to love hand diagrams.

Appendix 3a   - Using aaBridge DFC - Distribution Flash Cards

A good way to test your speed and knowledge of suit distributions is to use the aaBridge DFC feature.

A YouTube video is available to take you through the steps - **Learning to Count the Unseen Hands**

In case the video ever becomes unavailable the next section takes you through the steps.

On the Welcome page click the **Distribution Flash Cards** button. Click the DFC tab in the right-hand column and select **Auto Next** **– Fast** (see the red dot in the image on the right).

Repeatedly click the **Tell Me** button. Each time you do this a new question is presented and all you have to do is to call out the answer (or just thinking to yourself) and then again click the **Tell Me** button. You will be shown the answer and then the next problem will **Auto** appear.

You can vary the order (the sorted-ness) of the numbers using the **Suit Length Order** setting.

While this is a good way to test your knowledge, it's probably not the best way to learn the distribution's. See above how to do that.

Appendix 2b - Exam Mode

Click the **Exam** button, in the bottom right-hand corner of the DFC page. It is next to the **Train** button.

Clicking on one or the other moves you between the two modes.   The default settings for Exam mode will do just fine. In this mode you repeatedly click **flow** button to take you through the different stages. Once a question is complete you see the time you have taken on the right. The next click will present you with the next problem.

With the default settings you are sitting in the bottom zone holding the West cards. The is declarer on your right and dummy on your left. You are trying to work out declarer's distribution.

You can always click **New** to get to the start of a new problem but you don't need to do that. All you need to do is to click flow and you will automatically come back around to the start.

Click **Flow**, and so get to get to the start of a new problem, where you can first see your cards. Let's say your hand is   ♠T954 ♥6 ♦J963 ♣Q543

Click **Flow**, you will now be shown a length of one of the suits in declarer's hand. (This is imitating information that you discover during the bidding.) Imagine that you can see three dots and the digit 4 next to where the diamonds would be in declarer's hidden hand.

Hold your mind that declarer has **4** diamonds.

Click **Flow**, the dummy now becomes visible, assume you can see   ♠T8762 ♥A43 ♦A8 ♣K82

Click **Flow**, imagine you now see, in partners hand, three large dots with a 4 next to where the clubs go.
      You have 4 clubs, dummy has 3, partner has just been shown to have 4, so declarer has ... 2.

Hold your mind that declarer has **4** diamonds and **2** clubs.

Click **Flow**, imagine you now see, in partners hand, three large dots with a 5 next to where partners hearts go.
      You have 1 heart, dummy has 3, partner has just been shown to have 5, so declarer has ... 4.

So declarer's distribution is now known to be **?442**   and the ? is ... **3**.

Click **Flow**, three very large dots will appear in the cream area. You can call out the missing number **3**

Better still - call out the complete distribution (in your head if you like)   **3 4 4 2**

Click **Flow,** (twice)   and the complete distribution will be revealed. The time taken will be shown.

Taking 30 seconds is getting reasonable. By 15 seconds you are getting fast. I have never got below 10 seconds, but it must be possible. (You need to include the time taken calling out the full distribution in your head or the time doesn't count) - Why? because I said so.   :)

Whatever your time don't delay, click **Flow** and onto the next.

Enjoy your bridge

                                                                                                Roger Pfister