

When To Call the Director

Peter Peterson, Tournament Director

This simply isn't true. It's never rude to call the director if an irregularity has occurred. In fact, it's rude NOT to call. One does not call the director ON the opponents. One calls the director to assess options associated with irregularities, and to do so from an unbiased perspective. I do not always agree with rulings, even when they go in my favour, but I am **always** thankful to have someone unbiased to make those rulings so the players don't have to.

At every duplicate bridge game, there is at least one trained referee known as the director. She is responsible for making sure play proceeds in a timely manner and for settling any problems that might arise. Whenever you are unsure of the proprieties or laws of bridge, you may tell the rest of the players at the table that you are going to call for the director. Then simply raise your hand in the air and say, "Director, please." The director will then come over to help straighten things out. When in doubt, ask the director! That is what she's there for. –

When the Director must be called There are two types of ruling that the Director may be required to make: Book Rulings, where there is a clear course of action; and Judgement Decisions where there is an element of discretion. Book Rulings apply to the mechanics of the game: calls, leads or plays out of turn; insufficient bids; revokes; a defender's exposed card; or a disputed claim. Even in these cases, which may seem to be simple situations, the Laws of Duplicate Bridge can be surprisingly complex and it is mandatory to call the Director. Book Rulings are made and applied immediately at the table. Judgement Decisions apply to situations that are less clear cut, and it may not be obvious what infringement has occurred or whether an unfair advantage has been gained. These include: a) Corrected or conflicting information regarding a call or play by either member of a partnership, including Alerts and Announcements (see * below). b) When a player can not or will not answer questions about a call or play. c) A discussion overheard about a board at another table. d) A bid which may be a Deviation or Psychic Bid. e) Possible Unauthorised Information from a hesitation or misuse of the bidding box. f) Bad behaviour of any sort at your own or another table. The result of a Judgement Decision may have to wait till the end of the session for the Director to review the full impact of the event, to consult with other directors, and to adjust any scores. * The declaring side must make any corrections regarding calls, alerts and announcements before the lead is made: the defending side must wait till the play is over.

Please remember that whenever there is any sort of issue at your table, it is important that you do call "Director, please!" and hold up a hand to show the Director from where the call has come. Please do not make your own rulings at the table without calling the Director, regardless of how long you yourself have been playing or directing.

Calling the Director There is no shame or embarrassment in calling for the Director. Nor is it an aggressive action. It is just that something may have gone awry and needs fixing. Any player may call the Director in the auction, but during the play, only the three active participants may, and Dummy must wait until the play is over. When needed, simply call the Director without delay, clearly and audibly, and please not forgetting to say 'please'. Our Directors are also playing and may be head down playing or defending a tricky contract, so hold up a hand to show where the call has come from. The Director will acknowledge your call, but you may have to wait a minute or two to be attended.