



Revoke Procedures and Rectification

by Bob Gruber

The intricacies of establishing, correcting and rectifying a revoke are often a difficult maze to navigate. The fact that there are four different laws on the subject is a testament to that difficulty. Some understanding may be achieved by addressing the various components in logical order.

Establishing a Revoke

Law #

Failure to follow suit or comply with a lead/play restriction when possible constitutes a revoke. Any one of the following three actions establishes the revoke:

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1. The offender or his partner leads or plays to the next trick,
2. The offender or his partner names/designates a card to be played to the next trick,
3. A member of the offending side makes or agrees to a claim or concession.

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A revoke is not established until one (or more) of these three actions takes place.

Some observations/other rules:

- By far, action 1 is the most prevalent. The key is:
 - one of the players from the offending side plays to the next trick.
- Once established, a revoke cannot be corrected—except for trick 12, and then only before all four (4) hands have been returned to the board.
- The trick on which a revoke was established stands as played. The rest of the hand must be played with the cards that remain in each player’s hand (with the exception of penalty cards face up on the table).
- The Director determines rectification at the end of play of all 13 tricks, not before.

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Correcting a Revoke

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A revoke must be corrected if the offender becomes aware of it before it is established.

- The revoke card is withdrawn from the current trick and a legal card substituted.
- A defender’s withdrawn card remains face up on the table as a major penalty card.
- Declarer’s or dummy’s card is replaced without further rectification.

Non-offenders may change—without penalty—a card played after the revoke but before the revoke was known.

After a non-offender makes a change, the next player from the offending side may also change a played card, but if that player is a defender, the withdrawn card becomes a penalty card and the withdrawn card is unauthorized information for that person’s partner.

Determining Rectification

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Only when all 13 cards of the hand have been played, does the director determine the proper rectification. Under the 2008 Laws, more often than not, rectification will consist of transferring 1 trick from the offending side to the non-offending side, but it could be 0 tricks, or 2 tricks or even more if needed to restore equity. There are, not surprisingly, a number of factors that go into this decision.



The most common of these factors is: who won the revoke trick.

Revoke Trick Winner	# Subsequent Tricks Won by Revoking Side:	# Subsequent Tricks Won by Revoking Side:
	0	1 or more
	# Tricks Transferred	
Revoker	1	2
Revoker's Partner	1	1
Non-Offender	0	1

A trick won in dummy is not won by declarer for the purposes of Law 64

Note that a 2-trick transfer occurs only when

- it is the revoker himself (not his partner) who won the revoke trick, and
- the revoking side won 1 or more subsequent tricks

Several circumstances other than the one shown in the table call for a zero (0) trick transfer. Among them:

- Both sides revoked.
- It is a 2nd (i.e. subsequent) revoke in the same suit by the same player.
- The proper card to play was face up on the table.
- The revoke occurred at trick 12.
- The revoke was not noted until after a non-offender made a call on the next deal or the round ended.

The table that follows summarizes the director's rectification considerations.

# tricks x-ferred	Circumstances
0	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The offenders didn't win the revoke trick or any subsequent tricks. 2. Both sides have revoked on the same board. 3. It's a subsequent revoke in the same suit by the same player—unless it results in an inequity, at which point the Director assigns an adjusted score. 4. The proper card to play was face up on the table, including dummy's hand. 5. The revoke occurred on trick 12. If at least 1 hand has <u>not</u> been returned to the board, the revoke is corrected. Otherwise, the result stands. 6. A non-offender made a call on the subsequent deal before the revoke was noted. 7. The round ended before attention was drawn to the revoke.
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The revoker won the revoke trick, but his side won no subsequent tricks. 2. The revoker's partner won the revoke trick. The number of subsequent tricks won by the revoking side is immaterial. 3. The revoking side did not win the trick, but did win 1 or more subsequent tricks.
2	The revoker won the revoke trick, and his side won 1 or more subsequent tricks.
3 or more	The prescribed rectification does not restore equity in the Director's view. The Director then assigns an adjusted score.



When might a director award 3 or more tricks to the non-offending side? Typically, it involves the revoker being able to prevent the run of a long suit where there are no other entries to that long suit and 3 or more otherwise winnable tricks will not be taken by the non-offending side. This situation can occur in either NT or a suit contract.

In NT, the revoke is withholding a relatively high card in the long suit. Then, when the long suit is being run, the revoker produces the high card and whatever cards remain in the long-suited hand are no longer able to be cashed. If the 1 or 2 trick transfer is inadequate compensation, the director determines the number of tricks that would have been won without the revoke, and awards an adjusted score on that basis.

In a suit contract, the revoke card is usually a trump. Then, when the otherwise unreachable long suit is being run, the revoker ruffs in and whatever cards remain in the long hand are no longer able to be cashed. As with a NT contract, if the 1 or 2 trick transfer is inadequate compensation, the director determines the number of tricks that would have been won without the revoke, and awards an adjusted score on that basis.

One additional point, the Laws are intended to restore equity, not be punitive. In the two cases cited above no additional tricks would be transferred/awarded. The normal 1 or 2 trick transfer would not be applied on top of the adjusted score because the adjusted score restored equity in the director's opinion.

P.S. Many players have the mistaken belief that everyone is responsible for dummy. Not true. Only the declaring side is responsible for dummy. If dummy has revoked, the revoke rectifications of Law 64 apply.

The misconception about everyone being responsible for dummy may have arisen from a revoke by dummy when the revoke card was face up on the table and visible. In that circumstance, there is no rectification. Players may have mistaken the "no rectification" rule as "everyone is responsible for dummy." But even with no rectification, if the Director deems insufficient compensation for the non-offending side, he should assign an adjusted score.