

Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB)

A 4NT Bid asks partner for their number of “key” cards (Aces + the King of trump = 5 total)

Main Purpose: To avoid bidding a slam when you have two quick losers

Notes about using Blackwood:

- Assumes the trump suit is established (and there is no confusion whether NT or Suit)
- Assumes you are fairly confident you have the winners for slam but need to check losers.
- Try to avoid RKCB when you have a void or a worthless doubleton in an unbid suit.
- If you can get information on Aces by cue bidding then do so before starting Blackwood.
- Be very confident of slam when using RKCB with clubs (If partner has zero you'll be at 6♣)

Responses to 4NT (using 1430 system – “fourteen-thirty”)

5♣	One or Four Key Cards (14 from the mnemonic “fourteen-thirty”)
5♦	Three or Zero Key Cards (30 from the mnemonic “fourteen-thirty”)
5♥	Two (or Five) Key Cards without the Queen of trump
5♠	Two (or Five) Key Cards with the Queen of trump
5NT*	<i>Even number of Key Cards & a void</i>
6 Void*	<i>Odd number of Key Cards & void suit ranks below trump suit.</i>
6 Trump*	<i>Odd number of Key Cards & void suit ranks above trump suit</i>

* *Don't use void-showing bids unless you are a master level player in a very experienced partnership*

Rebids by 4NT bidder after partner response

5 of your trump suit	Signoff – partner should pass
5 of next highest non-trump suit*	Asks if partner has the trump Queen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bid Trump Suit = Don't have trump Queen</i> • <i>Bid a non-trump suit = Have the Queen & King in suit bid.</i> • <i>Bid 5NT = Have the Queen but no other non-trump Kings</i>
5 NT	Asks partner to bid cheapest non-trump king
6 or 7 of your trump suit	Signoff – Responder should Pass

* *Don't use queen-ask bids unless you are an intermediate level player in an experienced partnership*

Other Variations – be sure to ask your partner

- Some players use 3014 system that reverses the meaning of the 5♣ and 5♦
- Some players use 5NT to ask # of kings (6♣=0, 6♦=1, etc.) rather than cheapest king

QUIZ:

Opener

♠ K

♥ A Q 10 7 5 4

♦ A 5

♣ A Q 5 4

Responder

♠ A 6 5

♥ K 6 3 2

♦ K 6

♣ J 9 3 2

Bidding

Opener

1 ♥

4NT

#2

#4

Responder

3 ♥ (10-12 points & 4 hearts)

#1

#3

Questions:

- 1) Looking just at the Opener hand - after responder bids 3 hearts
 - a) How many points does your team have?
 - b) How many hearts does your team have?
- 2) What is responder bid #1 and what does it tell the opener? How many key cards is partnership missing?
- 3) What is opener bid #2 and what does it ask of the responder?
- 4) What is responder bid #3 and what does it tell the opener?
- 5) What is opener bid #4 and what does it ask of the responder?
- 6) If responder had a different hand and replied 5♣ on bid #3 then what would you as opener bid for #4? Why?

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Your Hand:

♠ A K Q 10 7 4

♥ 4 3

♦ K Q 7

♣ A 4

You open 1♠ and partner replies 3♠ (limit raise = 4 spades & 10-12 points)

Questions:

1. How many high card points does your team have?
2. How many quick losers does your team have?
3. What is your next bid? – **Note:** some choices below aren't standard bidding
 - a. 4♣ (Cue bid asking partner to
 - b. bid their cheapest Ace – partner, do you have Aces?)
 - c. 4♦ (I have pretty good diamonds also – partner, do you have support in diamonds?)
 - d. 4♠ (We have 28-30 points vs. 33 minimum for a slam & 3 possible quick losers - so let's stop)
 - e. 4 NT (Blackwood asking for "key" cards). Partner, we can make 6 if you have enough key cards)
 - f. 5♠ (We are on the edge of slam. Partner, if you have a really good limit raise then go to 6♠)
4. Why is that your best bid?