Scissors maneuver
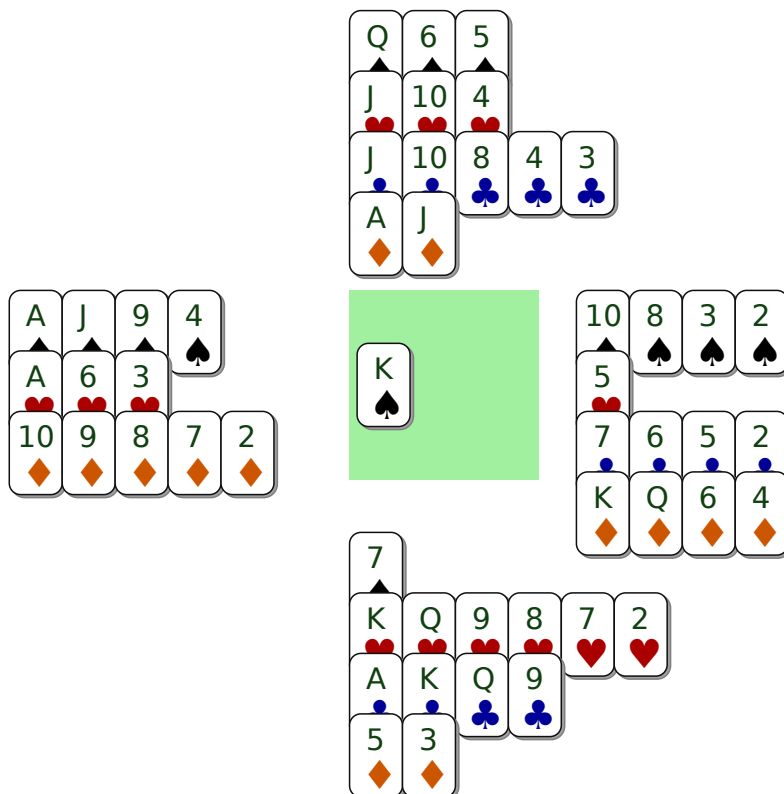
Scissors coup

In trump contracts, the declarer uses this coup when he feels threatened by a ruff. He definitely needs to avoid giving the lead to the dangerous opponent... the one going to give his partner a ruff.

This can happen when the declarer can discard a loser (or losers) from his hand or dummy's or both in order to cut the opponents' communications. Doing so, he may give the lead to the safe opponent...the ruffing one ! The scissors coup is protecting the declarer from a disastrous ruff.

Example : You are South, playing 5 COX. The leader plays K ♠, then 2 ♦. You take with your Ace. Looking at dummy, you feel the contract is going to be fruitful. 3 tricks to lose when the opponents would have won 4 ♠. But now, take a little time and count dummy's ♣....

S	W	N	E
	1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠
4 ♥	4 ♠	5 ♥	Pass
Pass	X	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Exercise 27263 You may face a ♣ ruff. On the 3rd trick, play Q ♠...and discard your ♦ loser. ♦ was the only way the opponents can communicate, but now East will never take the lead to give his partner a ♣ ruff...

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