

ACTION AFTER OPPONENTS OVERCALL

There are two types of auction

1. **CONSTRUCTIVE AUCTION** Where you have the bidding to yourselves.
2. **COMPETITIVE AUCTION** Where the opponents compete.

The meaning of responding bids alters slightly if opponents compete. Here are some examples

Responding Bids of NTs in the Competitive Auction

CONSTRUCTIVE AUCTION

♠ K8
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ64
♣ 52

♠ J5
♥ J97
♦ 8753
♣ KQ98

N S
1♥ (1NT)

COMPETITIVE AUCTION 1.

♠ K8
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ64
♣ 52

♠ J5
♥ J97
♦ 8753
♣ KQ98

N E S
1♥ 1♠ (2H)

COMPETITIVE AUCTION 2.

♠ K8
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ64
♣ 52

♠ J5
♥ J9
♦ 98753
♣ KQ98

N E S
1♥ 1♠ (X)

In the **constructive auction** south will respond 1NT to show 6-9 pts. without four spades or four hearts.

AUCTION 1.

After east overcalls 1♠, south can no longer respond 1NT because south has NO STOP in spades. The best bid now for south would be a limit bid of 2♥ with only 3 card support. Not perfect but better than passing.

AUCTION 2.

With south's slightly altered hand, the options would be X to show the other two suits or pass!

Requirements for 2 Level Suit Changes in the Competitive Auction

CONSTRUCTIVE AUCTION

♠ K8
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ64
♣ 52

♠ 105
♥ 1097
♦ A75
♣ KJ1074

N S
1♥ (1NT)

COMPETITIVE AUCTION 1.

♠ K8
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ64
♣ 52

♠ 105
♥ 1097
♦ A75
♣ KJ1074

N E S
1♥ 1♠ (2C)

COMPETITIVE AUCTION 2.

♠ K8
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ64
♣ 52

♠ KJ10
♥ 109
♦ A75
♣ K10974

N E S
1♥ 1♠ (2NT)

In the **constructive auction** south will respond 1NT to show 6-9 pts. without four spades or four hearts.

AUCTION 1.

After east overcalls 1♠, south can shade the requirements for a 2 level change of suit and bid a forcing 2♣ to show a decent suit and a willingness to play in 2♥.

AUCTION 2.

With this hand, 2NT to show the stop and 11ish pts., is more important than the club suit.

We suggest that 1NT in this sequence would show a stop and 9 ish HCPs.

CONSTRUCTIVE AUCTION

♠ Q1082
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ
♣ 92

♠ KJ65
♥ 109
♦ 752
♣ KJ107

N S
1♥ (1♠)

COMPETITIVE AUCTION 1.

♠ Q1082
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ
♣ 92

♠ KJ653
♥ 109
♦ 752
♣ K104

N E S
1♥ 2♦ (X)

COMPETITIVE AUCTION 2.

♠ Q1082
♥ AQ862
♦ KQ
♣ 92

♠ KJ653
♥ K9
♦ 752
♣ AJ10

N E S
1♥ 2♦ (2♠)

In the **constructive auction** east will simply respond 1♠.

AUCTION 1.

In a competitive auction south is not strong enough to bid spades even with five of them. South should double to show four of the other major (or five but too weak to bid them). A NEGATIVE DOUBLE.

AUCTION 2.

In a competitive auction south on this hand, IS now strong enough to bid a forcing 2♠

OPPONENTS OVERCALL a minor opening with the other minor

Note the different use of X after N 1♣ E 1♦ S ? and N 1♦ E 2♣ S ?

AUCTION 1.

South's X shows BOTH MAJORS (6+pts.)

AUCTION 2.

South's 1♥ shows a FOUR+ heart suit *without four spades*. (6+pts.)

AUCTION 3.

South's 1♠ shows a FOUR+ spade suit *without four hearts*. (6+pts.)

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | KJ83 |
| ♥ | A97 |
| ♦ | 4 |
| ♣ | KQ972 |
| South 1. | |
| ♠ | 10952 |
| ♥ | KJ102 |
| ♦ | J5 |
| ♣ | J43 |

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | KJ83 |
| ♥ | A97 |
| ♦ | 4 |
| ♣ | KQ972 |
| South 2. | |
| ♠ | 1095 |
| ♥ | KJ102 |
| ♦ | KJ5 |
| ♣ | J43 |

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | K83 |
| ♥ | A974 |
| ♦ | 4 |
| ♣ | KQ972 |
| South 3. | |
| ♠ | J1095 |
| ♥ | K102 |
| ♦ | K75 |
| ♣ | J43 |

| | | |
|----|----|---|
| N | E | S |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | X |

| | | |
|----|----|----|
| N | E | S |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♥ |

| | | |
|----|----|----|
| N | E | S |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♠ |

Subsequent bidding may go as follows:

1♠ (limit bid)
P/2♠

1♠ (shows shape)
1NT

2♣ (Not 2♥)
Pass

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | K985 |
| ♥ | AQ |
| ♦ | KQ642 |
| ♣ | J5 |
| South 1. | |
| ♠ | Q105 |
| ♥ | K973 |
| ♦ | A753 |
| ♣ | 84 |

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | K985 |
| ♥ | AQ |
| ♦ | KQ642 |
| ♣ | J5 |
| South 2. | |
| ♠ | Q1053 |
| ♥ | KJ97 |
| ♦ | A73 |
| ♣ | 84 |

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | K985 |
| ♥ | AQ |
| ♦ | KQ642 |
| ♣ | J5 |
| South 3. | |
| ♠ | A105 |
| ♥ | KJ973 |
| ♦ | A75 |
| ♣ | 84 |

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | K98 |
| ♥ | AQ10 |
| ♦ | KQJ42 |
| ♣ | J5 |
| South 4. | |
| ♠ | QJ5 |
| ♥ | KJ973 |
| ♦ | 75 |
| ♣ | 843 |

| | |
|----------|-------|
| North | |
| ♠ | K98 |
| ♥ | AQ10 |
| ♦ | KQ642 |
| ♣ | J5 |
| South 5. | |
| ♠ | A105 |
| ♥ | J97 |
| ♦ | A5 |
| ♣ | KQ3 |

| | | |
|----|----|---|
| N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 2♣ | X |

| | | |
|----|----|---|
| N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 2♣ | X |

| | | |
|----|----|----|
| N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 2♣ | 2♥ |

| | | |
|----|----|---|
| N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 2♣ | P |

| | | |
|----|----|-----|
| N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 2♣ | 3NT |

Subsequent bidding may go as follows:

2♠ P *3♦
*3♦ is a limit bid

2♠ P 3♠
4♠

*3♥ P 4♥
*AQ as good as xxx

*X P 2♥ P
*X is for takeout

AUCTION 1.

South's X shows at least one 4 card major 9ish pts. and a preparedness to play in 3♦

AUCTION 2.

South's X shows at least one 4 card major 9ish pts. and a preparedness to play in 3♦

AUCTION 3.

South's 2♥ shows 5+ hearts and at least 9ish pts. and a preparedness to play in 3♦.

AUCTION 4.

South's pass relies on partner re-opening the bidding with X or 2♦.

AUCTION 5.

Unless north has an extraordinary shape (5-1-6-1) this is the obvious contract!

| | | |
|----|----|---|
| N | E | S |
| 1♣ | 2♦ | ? |

NOTE

After a 2♦ overcall, both 'X' and 2♥ are bids that force your partner to the 3 level. If you cannot support this, you should pass. If you pass, hopefully partner in protective position will be able to re-open the bidding with a takeout double, or a 2nd suit.

WHAT TO DO WHEN PARTNER OVERCALLS!

PLEASE REMEMBER - OVERCALLS ARE NOT OPENING BIDS!!

DO NOT respond to an overcall as if it was an opening bid. IT'S NOT!

How you should read partner's SIMPLE OVERCALLS

1. Partner's simple overcall is **NON-FORCING**
2. An overcall promises a **good FIVE+** card suit
3. An overcall shows 8 ish - 15 pts. (10 ish - 15 at the 2 level)
4. An overcall does **NOT HAVE** 16+ pts. (Partner should **X** with 16+)
5. At the 1 level (equal vulnerability) it is often an 8 loser. (7 loser at the 2 level).

| S | W | N | YOU |
|----|---------|---|-----|
| 1♠ | 2♣ | | ? |
| | ♠ 97 | | |
| | ♥ J83 | | |
| | ♦ A954 | | |
| | ♣ AQ852 | | |

With this information look at your hand, and ask yourself "Is game possible".

If your answer is NO!

With no fit and fewer than 12 points - PASS is usually the best bid!
DO NOT bid your 5 card suit just because you have a void/singleton in partner's suit.
NEVER TRY TO RESCUE PARTNER!

| EAST |
|---------|
| ♠ 863 |
| ♥ K9752 |
| ♦ 10632 |
| ♣ K |
| PASS |

With a fit, at favourable vulnerability you could raise partner pre-emptively
*This is NOT an invitation to game. It is to discourage opponenents from bidding.

| |
|---------|
| ♠ 532 |
| ♥ K1096 |
| ♦ 74 |
| ♣ K8743 |
| BID 3♣ |

DO NOT bid your four card heart suit. Partner has overcalled - Not opened !!!!

If your answer is YES! your options WITH A FIT are:

| | | | | |
|----|----------|---|---|--------|
| S | W | N | E | |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | | ? | |
| | ♠ AJ1076 | | | ♠ K43 |
| | ♥ 83 | | | ♥ 93 |
| | ♦ K95 | | | ♦ Q10 |
| | ♣ K52 | | | ♣ QJ72 |

At equal vulnerability raise to 2♠ with an 8 loser.
At favourable vulnerability, raise to 3♠ with an 8 loser.

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---------|---|
| | | | | ♠ KQ432 | Raise to 3♠ with a 7 loser. |
| | | | | ♥ 9 | (at favourable vulnerability - maybe an 8 loser.) |
| | | | | ♦ J108 | Will not have opening values. (More pre-emptive.) |
| | | | | ♣ Q872 | |

BID *2♦ ♠ K43
♥ A92
♦ A4
♣ Q8743

Without this conventional bid just raise to 3♠.

WITH A FIT AND 11 ish pts. cue bid the opponents suit.
This **Unassuming Cue Bid** asks partner "How good was your overcall?" Partner, if weak, can simply bid 2♠ and you can pass!

If you think game could be on WITHOUT A FIT

You could still use an UCB with Ax, Kx or Qx of partner's suit with a good 13+ count. Looking for NTs

BID 2♥ ♠ 76
♥ AQJ83
♦ A82
♣ Q65

Bid your own FIVE+ card suit.
Although this is NOT forcing, it is **constructive**. (NOT a rescue bid)
It shows a possible alternative contract and a interest in game.
It should have at least 12 pts. (Fewer with a 6 card suit)

BID 2NT ♠ J5
♥ AQ9
♦ QJ1083
♣ A87

Bid 2NT with a stop in opponent's suit & maybe a good 5+ card minor suit.
Again this is not forcing but will have at least 13 ish HCPs.

WHAT TO DO WHEN PARTNER OVERCALLS!

♠ 52
♥ A
♦ K10643
♣ K9632

♠ AK9 ♠ QJ108743
♥ Q10652 ♥ 3
♦ J2 ♦ A7
♣ Q108 ♣ A75

♠ 6
♥ KJ9874
♦ Q985
♣ J4

Bidding at the table

| | | | |
|-----|-----|----|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♥ | P | 1♠ | P |
| 1NT | X | 4♠ | P |
| P | 4NT | P | 5♦ |
| P | P | 5♠ | P |
| P | P | | |

NOTES on the Actual bidding sequence.

MOST importantly there is favourable vulnerability for N/S

Assuming E/W can make 4S, E/W can go three down (-500) and still show a profit.

E/W were playing a strong NT
So west's rebid of 1NT showed 12-14

North's X showed the other two suits.

North's 4NT insisted that south must bid.

East with two aces should take the money
Simply 'X' 5D for +300. (Giving them 26%)

Alternative sequence

| | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♥ | 2NT | 3♠ | P |
| 4♠ | 4NT | P | 5♦ |
| P | P | X | P |
| P | P | | |

NOTES on the Alternative bidding sequence.

West's original 2NT is the Unusual Notrump (UNT) showing 5/5 in the two lowest unbid suits.

East's 3S is a game force (probably 6 spades)

If you succeed in pushing opponents to level they cannot make, X for penalties if you can see quick tricks (holding aces and kings). In part score competitive auctions - let them play 3 level contracts. The 5 level also belongs to opponents.

Other tips.

If you are weak in HCPs bid strongly with good shape.
If you are strong in HCPs, bid slowly until you know the denomination.
Computer dealt hands often result in highly distributional hands.
Distributional hands mean lots of competitive decisions to make.
Always trust partner!
Win the post mortem.

| Cont | By | Ld | Rst | Score | mpN | mpE | North | South | N% | East | West | E% |
|--------|----|----|-----|-------|------|------|----------------|---------------|--------|----------------|----------------|--------|
| 6S Dbl | E | D5 | -2 | 500 | 26.0 | 0.0 | christina | KarenzaC34464 | 100.00 | Bingham | Nick Norfolk | 0.00 |
| 5S | E | H9 | -1 | 100 | 24.0 | 2.0 | Rev Benji | leyla z | 92.31 | claudpe38090 | PhoenixEast | 7.69 |
| 5S | E | CJ | -1 | 100 | 24.0 | 2.0 | Hannah | GordonF78646 | 92.31 | ChrisF94451 | Swany | 7.69 |
| 5S | E | CJ | -1 | 100 | 24.0 | 2.0 | | | 92.31 | Ariaan | KathrynG57463 | 7.69 |
| 5D Dbl | S | SA | -1 | -100 | 21.5 | 4.5 | Rajeev | GautamS20259 | 82.69 | honour | marinah96500 | 17.31 |
| 5D Dbl | S | SA | -1 | -100 | 21.5 | 4.5 | Regis | pinhi | 82.69 | The Mick | lilium | 17.31 |
| 5D Dbl | S | SA | -2 | -300 | 19.0 | 7.0 | Pinto | AnwarG (Pk) | 73.08 | genevieve1 | foyez839 | 26.92 |
| 5D Dbl | S | SA | -2 | -300 | 19.0 | 7.0 | Baldrick | DavidT38936 | 73.08 | hobblet | cherylm | 26.92 |
| 5D Dbl | S | SA | -2 | -300 | 19.0 | 7.0 | AliSaoirse | Errand | 73.08 | MaryL | Olivia c | 26.92 |
| 5C Dbl | N | H3 | -3 | -500 | 17.0 | 9.0 | Mahmood Sultan | Tiger Lady | 65.38 | KennyP | CarolynK | 34.62 |
| 4S | E | D5 | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | savla | EwaHa | 48.08 | DeborahA | allanb | 51.92 |
| 4S | E | CJ | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | cvrao | Manas | 48.08 | Paladin | Sybilla | 51.92 |
| 4S | E | CJ | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | GabyL | Mr Micawber | 48.08 | EdFNN11780 | amukit | 51.92 |
| 4S | W | HA | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | Tasha | DOROTHY J S | 48.08 | JJJ20 | moondancer | 51.92 |
| 4S | W | HA | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | BarbaraB65018 | the artist | 48.08 | John(Xelstree) | wwweb | 51.92 |
| 4S | E | D5 | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | KelleyC | JohnB30500 | 48.08 | buggy | Champers | 51.92 |
| 4S | E | CJ | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | DaveW69257 | crocus1 | 48.08 | phyllis | ben g | 51.92 |
| 4S | E | CJ | 4 | -620 | 12.5 | 13.5 | XiandeW | Michael SP | 48.08 | LeonJ 1512 | Dr M Akram | 51.92 |
| 4S | E | H9 | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | AngelaM | Den.V | 17.31 | Redhand | ravindras57947 | 82.69 |
| 4S | E | D9 | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | ElenaV78831 | ginfizz | 17.31 | Ken * | zucker | 82.69 |
| 4S | E | CJ | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | red rum | foxglove | 17.31 | mbcat | MarianV36623 | 82.69 |
| 4S | E | CJ | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | DonaldG | YorkieShe | 17.31 | Mary poppins | Del__ | 82.69 |
| 4S | E | H7 | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | Kingsley | Newlands | 17.31 | Derek. | Jim_F | 82.69 |
| 5S | E | CJ | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | Berthold | Emil. | 17.31 | rachel | Jenny P. | 82.69 |
| 4S | E | DQ | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | PegFN73927 | SkCNN25355 | 17.31 | ecoman | SylvLM | 82.69 |
| 5S | E | DQ | 5 | -650 | 4.5 | 21.5 | MAURICEY | dramaqueen | 17.31 | migil | AnnegretZ | 82.69 |
| 6D Dbl | S | SA | -5 | -1100 | 0.0 | 26.0 | SuzanneO94964 | Niamh | 0.00 | surendraa | KrishnaR18441 | 100.00 |

UNASSUMING CUE BID

An Unassuming Cue Bid is made after your partner has overcalled in a suit. *Obviously the unassuming cue bid is alertable!* It shows 11 ish pts., usually three card support for partner's suit - **and an interest in bidding on to game.**

S W N You
 1♥ *1♠ P 2♥ = Game interest in spades. "How good was your overcall?"
 *(Remember, partner's overcall could be as many as 15 pts. or as few as 8 pts.)

If partner's overcall was made on a weak hand - they can sign off by repeating their suit.

If the overcall was stronger - they can bid an outside feature, 2NT with a stop, or even raise to game with six spades.

This means that any direct raise to 2♣ or 3♣ after partner's 1♠ overcall, are pre-emptive. (Double check your vulnerability.)

S W N You
 1♥ 1♠ Pass 2♠/3♠ = Pre-emptive bids, hoping to cut opponents out of the auction.

When the situation gets competitive and the opponents jump to game, you will have a better idea whether to double for penalties or sacrifice in 4♠.

| <p>Was this partner's 1♠ overcall?</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>You</th></tr> <tr><td>1♥</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>?</td></tr> </table> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <table style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 150px;"> <tr><td>♠ A10853</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ J6</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ J65</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ Q86</td></tr> </table> 8 points </div> | S | W | N | You | 1♥ | 1♠ | P | ? | ♠ A10853 | ♥ J6 | ♦ J65 | ♣ Q86 | <p>Was this partner's 1♠ overcall?</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>You</th></tr> <tr><td>1♥</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>?</td></tr> </table> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <table style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 150px;"> <tr><td>♠ AQ1053</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ J6</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ AJ105</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ Q8</td></tr> </table> 14 points </div> | S | W | N | You | 1♥ | 1♠ | P | ? | ♠ AQ1053 | ♥ J6 | ♦ AJ105 | ♣ Q8 |
|--|----|---|-----|-----|----|----|---|---|----------|------|-------|-------|--|---|---|---|-----|----|----|---|---|----------|------|---------|------|
| S | W | N | You | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♥ | 1♠ | P | ? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ A10853 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ J6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ J65 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ Q86 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | W | N | You | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♥ | 1♠ | P | ? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ AQ1053 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♥ J6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♦ AJ105 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♣ Q8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Bid each of the four hands below against partner's overcall.

With hand 1 below, make a pre-emptive raise to 2♠

With hand 2 below, make a pre-emptive raise to 3♠

With hand 1 below, make a pre-emptive raise to 2♠

With hand 2 below, make a pre-emptive raise to 3♠

1

| | |
|----------|--------|
| ♠ A10853 | ♠ J964 |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ 1043 |
| ♦ J65 | ♦ 87 |
| ♣ Q86 | ♣ KJ97 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 2♠ |
| p | p | p | |

2

| | |
|----------|---------|
| ♠ A10853 | ♠ J7642 |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ - |
| ♦ J65 | ♦ K9732 |
| ♣ Q86 | ♣ J95 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 3♠ |
| p | p | p | |

1

| | |
|----------|--------|
| ♠ AQ1053 | ♠ J964 |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ 1043 |
| ♦ AJ105 | ♦ 87 |
| ♣ Q8 | ♣ KJ97 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 2♠ |
| p | p | p | |

2

| | |
|----------|---------|
| ♠ AQ1053 | ♠ J7642 |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ - |
| ♦ AJ105 | ♦ K9732 |
| ♣ Q8 | ♣ J95 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 3♠ |
| p | p | p | |

With hand 3 below, make an UCB - 2♥

With hand 4 below, make an UCB - 2♥

With hand 3 below, make an UCB - 2♥

With hand 4 below, make an UCB - 2♥

3

| | |
|----------|----------|
| ♠ A10853 | ♠ KJ97 |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ 84 |
| ♦ J65 | ♦ KQ |
| ♣ Q86 | ♣ KJ1097 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 2♥ |
| p | 2♠ | p | 3♠ |
| p | p | | |

4

| | |
|----------|---------|
| ♠ A10853 | ♠ KJ |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ KQ5 |
| ♦ J65 | ♦ Q93 |
| ♣ Q86 | ♣ A7432 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 2♥ |
| p | 2♠ | p | p |

3

| | |
|----------|----------|
| ♠ AQ1053 | ♠ KJ97 |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ 84 |
| ♦ AJ105 | ♦ KQ |
| ♣ Q8 | ♣ KJ1097 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 2♥ |
| p | 3♦ | p | 4♠ |
| p | p | p | |

4

| | |
|----------|---------|
| ♠ AQ1053 | ♠ KJ |
| ♥ J6 | ♥ KQ5 |
| ♦ AJ105 | ♦ Q93 |
| ♣ Q8 | ♣ A7432 |

| S | W | N | You |
|----|----|---|-----|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | p | 2♥ |
| p | 3♦ | p | 3NT |

ESTABLISH WINNERS 1.

I know that it is a terrible bore, but you really **MUST** train yourself to pause as soon as dummy is faced.
Go through each of your suits in turn and:

In **NT CONTRACTS** count your top tricks (AKxxx is only two top tricks.) If QJx turns up in dummy - you have FIVE! Do not play this suit though, until you can see the ALL the tricks you need.

If you are two tricks short, play to **ESTABLISH** two extra tricks e.g. KQx opposite Jx

In **SUIT CONTRACTS** - count your LOSERS. Axx opposite Kxx = 1 loser

With too many losers try to find, or **ESTABLISH**, surplus winners on which to throw the losers.

In **ALL CONTRACTS** ask yourself "How many times can I afford to give the lead away, to **ESTABLISH** extra winners?"

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>♠ 986 ♥ QJ1087 ♦ J86 ♣ A2</p> | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <p>♠ AQJ10 ♥ K4 ♦ A73 ♣ Q1084</p> <p>3NT by S</p> </div> | <p>♠ K75 ♥ 652 ♦ 10942 ♣ 765</p> <p>♠ 432 ♥ A93 ♦ KQ5 ♣ KJ93</p> |
|--|--|--|

| | |
|-----|-----|
| S | N |
| 1NT | 2C |
| 2D | 3NT |

DECLARER PLAY after ♥Q lead

Count your TOP tricks, 1 spade, 2 hearts, and 3 diamonds.
3 more needed!

PLAN -

If spade finesse works, you can repeat it to make **12 tricks!**
If it fails, you have only 2 extra tricks - and -
east plays another heart to remove your only other heart stop.

When you play a club for your 9th trick
west cashes club ace AND 3 heart winners to put you down.

CONCLUSION & PLAY

Don't be greedy set up 3 extra tricks by leading clubs immediately!

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>♠ K92 ♥ KQJ104 ♦ 94 ♣ 532</p> | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <p>♠ AQJ ♥ 84 ♦ AJ732 ♣ Q84</p> <p>3NT by S</p> </div> | <p>♠ 10654 ♥ 9652 ♦ 1086 ♣ A6</p> <p>♠ 432 ♥ A9 ♦ KQ5 ♣ KJ1093</p> |
|--|--|--|

| | |
|-----|-----|
| S | N |
| 1NT | 3NT |

DECLARER PLAY after ♥K lead

Count your TOP tricks, 1 spade, 1 hearts, and 5 diamonds 7
2 more needed!

PLAN -

You have an unfortunate problem in hearts - It happens sometimes!
There are LOTS of club tricks, once the ace is removed - BUT
if I play clubs the ♣A will win and E/W will cash lots of hearts. UGH!

CONCLUSION & PLAY

Unlike the previous hand,
YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO GIVE THE LEAD AWAY *even once.*
Your **ONLY** chance - is that west holds ♠K.

PLAY

Win ♥A, lead ♠3 and finesse ♠J
If it holds come back to hand with a diamond and repeat the finesse.

If it loses, be philosophical, a 50/50 chance is better than no chance!

ESTABLISH WINNERS 2.

EAST plays in 4♠

♠ AQJ95
♥ K32
♦ 872
♣ 74

4♠

♠ K876
♥ A76
♦ AK3
♣ QJ10

♥ Q LEAD
4 losers
Draw trumps
Establish a club winner

EAST plays in 4♠

♠ K87
♥ A76
♦ K873
♣ 853

4♠

♠ AQJ1095
♥ 432
♦ 2
♣ AK4

♥ Q LEAD
4 losers
Draw trumps
Finesse DK

EAST plays in 6♠

♠ QJ109543
♥ 4
♦ A2
♣ AK4

6♠

♠ K876
♥ AQ6
♦ 873
♣ Q53

♦ K LEAD
2 losers
Draw trumps
Finesse HQ

EAST plays in 3NT

♠ Q54
♥ KJ4
♦ 54
♣ 108764

3NT

♠ K876
♥ AQ63
♦ AK8
♣ AK

♦ Q LEAD
8 top tricks
Win
Establish a spade winner

EAST plays in 3NT

♠ Q543
♥ KJ4
♦ 54
♣ 10876

3NT

♠ K87
♥ Q1063
♦ AKQ
♣ AKQ

♦ J LEAD
6 top tricks
Win
Establish 3 heart tricks

PLANNING THE PLAY is boring and many players prefer to make it up as they go along. Such players will consider themselves UNLUCKY on the following hands when they fail to make their contracts. A moment or two before playing to trick 1 might just reveal what has to be done.

♠ Q1075
♥ A953
♦ 64
♣ KJ8

♠ 96
♥ QJ104
♦ A982
♣ 764

♠ A4
♥ 86
♦ 10753
♣ A10952

♠ KJ832
♥ K72
♦ KQJ
♣ Q3

1

Contract 4♠ by south. Lead ♥Q

ASK YOURSELF

How many losers can I afford?
How many losers are there?
Are they all fast losers?
Can I afford to lose the lead?
Can I draw trumps immediately?
How can I get rid of a loser?

Three
Four (one in each suit)
No. Heart loser is still guarded
Yes but only once.
No.
Establish a club winner!

♠ K75
♥ QJ953
♦ AK4
♣ 87

♠ 9863
♥ A4
♦ QJ92
♣ K64

♠ A104
♥ 86
♦ 1086
♣ 109532

♠ QJ2
♥ K1072
♦ 753
♣ AQJ

2

Contract 4♥ by south. Lead ♦Q

ASK YOURSELF

How many losers can I afford?
How many losers are there?
Are they all fast losers?
Can I afford to lose the lead?
Can I draw trumps immediately?
How can I get rid of a loser?

Three
Four Assuming the finesse is wrong
No. Diamond loser is still guarded
Yes, but only once.
No.
Establish a club winner!

Hand 1. Hope you won with ♥K* and played ♣Q at trick 2 to establish a winner on which you throw the ♥2.
*Without thinking it through BEFORE playing to trick 1, you may not realise how much you needed the ♥A entry!

Hand 2. Hope you played ♣Q at trick 2. Even losing, it establishes a winner on which you can throw the ♦4.

ESTABLISH WINNERS 3.

In each of these **much harder hands** there is a way to ensure your contract - Well on most days!

It requires you, as declarer, to do the most difficult thing -

STOP and work out what you need BEFORE you play a card to trick 1

| S | W | N | E |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| 1D | P | 1S | P |
| 2D | P | 2H | P |
| 2NT | P | 3NT | |

| | | |
|--------|-----------|--------|
| ♠ J106 | ♠ AQ542 | ♠ K973 |
| ♥ KJ98 | ♥ A1054 | ♥ 76 |
| ♦ 43 | ♦ Q | ♦ J652 |
| ♣ 9762 | ♣ QJ10 | ♣ K85 |
| | ♠ 3 | |
| | ♥ Q32 | |
| | ♦ AK10987 | |
| | ♣ A43 | |

DON'T ALWAYS ACCEPT THE OPPONENT'S GIFTS

Lead: ♣2 East plays ♣K

Did you pounce on East's ♣K?

If you did you can say goodbye to your contract.

This would remove a crucial entry to hand and you could no longer **ESTABLISH** and use the diamonds.

It's a bit painful but you must duck the ♣K.

Assume a club is returned. Win in dummy, lead the ♦Q and overtake it in your hand — look at those beautiful diamond spots. Just continue leading diamonds to smoke out the jack, and you have nine certain tricks: two clubs, five diamonds, and dummy's two aces.

| S | W | N | E |
|-----|---|----|---|
| 1H | P | 2D | P |
| 2NT | P | 3H | P |
| 3NT | | | |

| | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| ♠ K9852 | ♠ 3 | ♠ 10764 |
| ♥ 107 | ♥ K32 | ♥ A986 |
| ♦ J8 | ♦ Q9432 | ♦ A106 |
| ♣ 9764 | ♣ AQJ10 | ♣ 85 |
| | ♠ AQJ | |
| | ♥ QJ54 | |
| | ♦ K75 | |
| | ♣ K32 | |

FORCE OPPONENTS TO PLAY 2ND HAND HIGH!

Lead: ♠5 East plays ♠10

After winning the ♠Q you have six top tricks, and you can **ESTABLISH** two in hearts and one in diamonds.

The problem is you may have to give up the lead twice, and a spade through your ace/jack of spades will hurt.

The solution is to force east to waste an ace.

Cross to dummy in clubs and lead a low heart. If east takes the ace you'll get three heart tricks and the battle is over.

So assume the ♥Q wins.

Cross again in clubs and lead a low diamond.

Similar story!

Finally, if the ♦K wins, just lead another heart to ensure nine tricks.

| S | W | N | E |
|-----|---|-------|---|
| 1H | P | 1S | P |
| 3D | P | 4C | P |
| 4N | P | 5H/5S | P |
| 6NT | | | |

| | | |
|---------|---------|--------|
| ♠ 864 | ♠ AKJ92 | ♠ Q753 |
| ♥ J1098 | ♥ 52 | ♥ 76 |
| ♦ J854 | ♦ Q | ♦ 1097 |
| ♣ 73 | ♣ AK862 | ♣ Q954 |
| | ♠ 10 | |
| | ♥ AKQ43 | |
| | ♦ AK632 | |
| | ♣ J10 | |

UNBLOCK ♦Q

Lead: ♥J

Win the opening heart lead.

Lead a 2♦ to dummy's queen.

Next lead the spade two. If this loses to the queen, you have 12 tricks (four spades, three hearts, three diamonds and two clubs). If the spade 10 wins, cross to dummy with a club and continue spades to drive out the queen.

Note

It would be an error to take the spade finesse at trick two (*a heart return removes your entry back to hand.*) or after unblocking diamonds if you play a second heart, you would have no further entry to your hand.

ESTABLISH WINNERS 4.

Declarer should recognize four potential losers. One in each suit

| | | |
|---------|-----------|----------|
| ♠ QJ107 | ♠ A93 | ♠ 542 |
| ♥ K98 | ♥ 53 | ♥ 62 |
| ♦ Q107 | ♦ J8432 | ♦ K95 |
| ♣ K86 | ♣ Q72 | ♣ 109543 |
| | ♠ K86 | |
| | ♥ AQJ1074 | |
| | ♦ A6 | |
| | ♣ AJ | |

| | | | |
|----|---|-----|---|
| S | W | N | E |
| 1H | P | 1NT | P |
| 4H | | | |

The diamond loser vanishes when you establish ♣Q winner.

| | | | | |
|-------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Trick | | | | |
| 1. | West ♠Q | N ♠3 | E ♠2 | S ♠K |
| 2. | South ♣A | W ♣6 | N ♣2 | E ♣3 |
| 3. | South ♣J | W ♣K | N ♣7 | E ♣4 |
| 4. | West ♠J | N ♠A | E ♠4 | S ♠6 |
| 5. | North ♣Q | E ♣5 | S ♦6 | W ♣8 |
| 6. | North ♥3 | E ♥2 | S ♥Q | W ♥K |
| 7. | West ♠10 | N ♠9 | E ♠5 | S ♠8 |
| 8. | West ♦7 | N ♦2 | E ♦K | S ♦A |

Declarer should recognize four potential losers. Two trumps, one heart and one slow loser in diamonds.

| | | |
|---------|---------|--------|
| ♠ AK | ♠ J1063 | ♠ 42 |
| ♥ 10942 | ♥ KQ3 | ♥ A876 |
| ♦ QJ106 | ♦ 854 | ♦ 973 |
| ♣ 642 | ♣ AJ3 | ♣ 9875 |
| | ♠ Q9875 | |
| | ♥ J5 | |
| | ♦ AK2 | |
| | ♣ KQ10 | |

| | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| S | W | N | E |
| 1S | P | 3S | P |
| 4S | | | |

Do NOT play trumps immediately.

| | | | | |
|----|-------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. | West ♦Q | N ♦4 | E ♦3 | S ♦A |
| 2. | South ♥J | W ♥9 | N ♥3 | E ♥A |
| 3. | East ♦7 | S ♦K | W ♦6 | N ♦5 |
| 4. | South ♥5 | W ♥4 | N ♥K | E ♥8 |
| 5. | North ♥Q | E ♥7 | S ♦2 | W ♥2 |
| 6. | North ♠3 | E ♠2 | S ♠7 | W ♠K |
| 7. | West ♦10 | N ♦8 | E ♦9 | S ♠5 |
| 8. | South ♠8 | W ♠A | N ♠6 | E ♠2 |

Declarer should recognize four potential losers. One heart, one diamond and two slow losers in clubs.

| | | |
|---------|------------|---------|
| ♠ 52 | ♠ Q97 | ♠ 4 |
| ♥ QJ105 | ♥ 83 | ♥ K9762 |
| ♦ AJ98 | ♦ 65432 | ♦ KQ10 |
| ♣ K108 | ♣ A32 | ♣ Q765 |
| | ♠ AKJ10863 | |
| | ♥ A4 | |
| | ♦ 7 | |
| | ♣ J94 | |

| | | | |
|----|---|-----|---|
| S | W | N | E |
| 1S | P | 1NT | P |
| 4S | | | |

When declarer has established ♦6 as a winner (and can get to it with ♠7) one club loser can be thrown.

| | | | | |
|----|-------------|---------|----------|----------|
| 1. | West ♥Q | N ♥3 | E ♥2 | S ♥A |
| 2. | South ♦7 | W ♦9 | N ♦2 | E ♦10 |
| 3. | East ♥6 | S ♥4 | W ♥10 | N ♥8 |
| 4. | West ♣8 | N ♣A | E ♣7 | S ♣4 |
| 5. | North ♦3 | E ♦Q | S ♠6 | W ♦8 |
| 6. | South ♠J | W ♠2 | N ♠Q | E ♠4 |
| 7. | North ♦4 | E ♦K | S ♠A | W ♦J |
| 8. | South ♠8 | W ♥5 | N ♠9 | E ♥7 |
| 9. | North ♦5 | E ♥9 | S ♠J | W ♦A |

ESTABLISH WINNERS 5.

| | | |
|----------|------------|---------|
| ♠ A9854 | | |
| ♥ AJ | | |
| ♦ A54 | | |
| ♣ Q8 | | ♠ Q32 |
| ♠ KJ107 | | ♥ 32 |
| ♥ 5 | 4♥ | ♦ QJ106 |
| ♦ K83 | | ♣ AK72 |
| ♣ J10964 | | |
| | ♠ 6 | |
| | ♥ KQ108764 | |
| | ♦ 972 | |
| | ♣ 53 | |

Contract - 4♥ by south

| | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| S | W | N | E |
| 3H | P | 4H | P |

Declarer has two club losers, and two diamond losers possible. If the hearts were splitting 3-3, all declarer would need to do is ruff one heart, and she would have two extra tricks. On the more likely 4-2 split, declarer needs to ruff two hearts, in order to set up a surplus winner. Has declarer the three dummy entries needed to ruff twice, and still get back to dummy to cash the last heart? - Yes.

| | | |
|----------|---------|----------|
| | ♠ 65 | |
| | ♥ Q105 | |
| | ♦ AKQ63 | |
| ♠ J8 | ♣ J32 | ♠ KQ1074 |
| ♥ 862 | 4♥ | ♥ 74 |
| ♦ 875 | | ♦ J1094 |
| ♣ AK1065 | | ♣ 94 |
| | ♠ A932 | |
| | ♥ AKJ93 | |
| | ♦ 2 | |
| | ♣ Q87 | |

Contract - 4♥ by south

The defence start by cashing ♣A, ♣K, and a club ruff. East switches to a spade. Declarer must win the ♠A and hope to dispose of all three of the remaining spades on diamonds. Two can clearly be discarded; the third will take some luck.

Declarer should draw only two rounds of trumps, making sure to leave an entry to the dummy. Cash ♦A, and ruff a diamond high. Now a trump back to dummy's ♥Q draws the last trump. Declarer can cash the ♦K, ♦Q, dropping east's last diamond. ♦6 now takes care of declarer's other spade loser.

| | | |
|----------|------------|--------|
| | ♠ J5432 | |
| | ♥ Q98 | |
| | ♦ K54 | |
| ♠ 1076 | ♣ QJ | ♠ AQ98 |
| ♥ 6 | 6♥ | ♥ 73 |
| ♦ 9632 | | ♦ QJ10 |
| ♣ 109876 | | ♣ 5432 |
| | ♠ K | |
| | ♥ AKJ10542 | |
| | ♦ A87 | |
| | ♣ AK | |

Contract - 6♥ by south

What must declarer do in the spade suit in order to set one up? Lose one spade, ruff three of them, then get back to dummy to cash the fifth spade. .

Each of dummy's trumps must be used as an entry to ruff spades. Win the ♣A, and give up a spade. Win whatever the defence plays, win in hand (*except a trump, which should be won in dummy*), and cross to the ♥8. Ruff a spade high, then cross to the ♥9. Ruff another spade high, then cross to dummy's last trump. Ruff yet another spade, establishing the ♠6 as a winner. Finally, cross to the ♦A and throw the losing diamond on that precious winning spade.

| | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| | ♠ AK854 | |
| | ♥ 42 | |
| | ♦ A53 | |
| ♠ Q2 | ♣ QJ8 | ♠ J1073 |
| ♥ K10765 | 5♣ | ♥ AJ93 |
| ♦ J109 | | ♦ Q864 |
| ♣ 962 | | ♣ 4 |
| | ♠ 96 | |
| | ♥ Q8 | |
| | ♦ K72 | |
| | ♣ AK10753 | |

Contract - 5♣ by south

| | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| S | W | N | E |
| 1C | P | 1S | P |
| 2C | P | 2D | P |
| 3C | P | 5C | |

E/W cash the first two tricks in hearts, and switch to a diamond.

Declarer must establish a surplus winner from dummy's spade suit, in order to ruff the slow diamond loser. Win with ♦K in hand. ♦A is a vital entry to dummy.

Declarer should draw two rounds of trumps, saving a high one in dummy. Now declarer must play ♠A, ♠K and ruff a spade high. Now return to the last trump, and ruff another spade,

Now the fifth spade is good. Declarer gets to dummy with ♦A. Cash it, throw south's diamond loser in order to ruff dummy's small diamond. Ruff the losing diamond. These are four more examples of **suit ESTABLISHMENT**.

POTENTIAL WITHIN A SINGLE SUIT

For the last couple of weeks we have looked at the decisions declarer must make *as soon as dummy is faced*. Checking each suit in turn will reveal how many top tricks are available (in NT contracts.) Checking losers in suit contracts also reveals how many more tricks need to be ESTABLISHED. Declarer must then find a suit to create winners and be aware of dangers. e.g. How many times can declarer give the lead away whilst establishing winners. Sometimes there is a danger hand that must be kept off lead.

This week we are recapping on the potential of single suits holdings. West is declarer East is dummy!

Dummy With 6 cards missing - The odds on a 4-2 break is 48% 3-3 break is 36%

♦76 ♦AKQ32 DUCKING
IF you only need four tricks play 6 to 2 (Assume no outside entries.)
IF you only need five tricks play 6 to A (only a 36% chance)

♦A7 ♦K5432 RUFFING In a spade, heart or club contract
You can ESTABLISH two winners (*by ruffing*) if opponent's diamonds break 3-3.
WITH outside entries, you can still ESTABLISH one winner on a 4-2 break
In a NT contract you could ESTABLISH two winners on a 3-3 break. (You would need to give the lead away once)
In a NT contract you could ESTABLISH one winners on a 4-2 break. (You would need to give the lead away twice)

♦A76 ♦K432
In any contract you could ESTABLISH one winner on a 3-3 break. (You would need to give the lead away once.)
If this is the ONLY way to make your contract, play 6 to the 2 FIRST! (Playing A & K first loses control of the suit)

♦AJ76 ♦K432 FINESSE
Because only west has a tenace. Play K first and then low towards AJ, finessing J if south plays low.

♦76 ♦KQ2 STILL A FINESSE
I constantly see declarers playing FROM K This guarantees that you will only ever make ONE trick wherever the A is.
If entries allow it you must lead 6 UP TO K. If it holds, get back to hand and lead 7 UP TO Q (North had the A !*)

♦AJ1076 ♦32 FINESSING FOR SPLIT HONOURS
IF you are finessing for TWO missing honours
Same logic as before. Play 3 & finesse J. This will only win 25% of the time - BUT regain the lead and repeat the finesse,
Play 2 from east and do not lose faith, play 10 from west. This has a remarkable 75% chance of success.

♦AJ1076 ♦92
Same logic as before. but when you have a card (9) the same value as the card you will finesse - Lead 9 - NOT the 2

♦A76 ♦Q32 FINESSE EXCEPTION
This is the ONLY time that you lead AWAY from your top honours.
Play A and then low to Q (finessing against north's hoped for K)

♦A76 ♦Q3
Same logic as before, but with only Qx you cannot cash A first!

♦A1076 ♦KJ93 TWO WAY FINESSE Sometimes, you can encourage the opponents to help you!
It is a 50-50 guess as to where the queen is. You can finesse either way! Leading 3 from dummy or 6 from hand is POOR!
Remember defenders cannot see your diamond holding. Lead J from dummy. South will play Q if he has it. Wouldn't you?
South may not have decided and hesitate before playing low. If he does - run the J.
IF south plays without consideration, assume that he doesn't have the Q and play A. Now lead low to dummy's 9!

Next week we will consider declarer play in a suit AFTER OPPONENTS HAVE LED THE SUIT

WHAT TO PLAY ON PARTNER'S LEAD

Continuing the theme of 'PLAY' we turn to some thoughts on defence. Assume NT contracts and opening leads, but most of these plays are suitable when defending against suit contracts or on mid game leads.

LOW CARD LEADS

Low card leads against NT contracts are usually fourth highest leads from at least the queen, but declarer can ASK what lead style the opponents play. It may be simply low from an honour with no indication of count!

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>Dummy ♦ J 5 4</p> <p>Partner's ♦ 3 lead</p> <p>YOU ♦ A Q 8</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>'3rd hand' high</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ Q 5 4</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♦ K 10 8</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Play 2nd highest (9+) if guarding an honour in dummy</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ 8 5 4</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♦ Q J 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Try to win with lowerr or lowest of high cards</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ Q 10 4</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♦ A J 9 8</p> <p>♦ ?</p> |
|---|--|---|--|

HONOUR LEADS

Remember that Top of Sequence leads against NT contracts promise a sequence of THREE cards. QJ10x, QJ9x, 1097x, etc.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Dummy ♦ 8 5 4</p> <p>Partner's ♦ J lead</p> <p>YOU ♦ 9 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Count signal</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ 8 5 4</p> <p>♦ J</p> <p>♦ K 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>You know that declarer has ♦ Q. Partner may have ♦ A J 10 9</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ Q 5 4</p> <p>♦ J</p> <p>♦ K 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Count signal</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ K 5 4</p> <p>♦ Q</p> <p>♦ A 6</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Unblock and return ♦ 6</p> |
|--|--|---|---|

KING LEADS

Against NT contracts, KING LEADS are special. They ask you to throw any honour you have. If you (or dummy hold the jack, partner has led from KQ10 and partner needs to know where the jack is. With no honour - give count!

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Dummy ♦ 8 5 4</p> <p>Partner's ♦ K lead</p> <p>YOU ♦ A 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Overtake & return ♦ 6 Partner has KQ10 x</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ 8 5 4</p> <p>♦ K</p> <p>♦ J 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Throw ♦ J. Partner has KQ10 x</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ J 5 4</p> <p>♦ K</p> <p>♦ A 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>IF declarer had ♦ A he would play it, ♦ Q in west, so ♦ J would be a 2nd trick.</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ A 5 4</p> <p>♦ K</p> <p>♦ 7 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Count signal</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

RETURNING PARTNER'S SUIT

It is USUALLY correct to return partner's suit. When your high card wins, return hi low from two remaining cards or lowest from three remaining cards. **But do consider what has appeared in dummy and think!**

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Dummy ♦ 8 5 4</p> <p>Partner's ♦ 3 lead</p> <p>YOU ♦ K 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>When ♦ K holds return ♦ 6 hi-lo from two</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ 4</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♦ Q 7 5 3</p> <p>♦ K 10 9 6</p> <p>♦ ? ♦ A J 8 2</p> <p>When ♦ K holds return ♦ 10 ♦ 6 return gives declarer A&J</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ A 8 4</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♦ Q 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Win and return ♦ 2</p> | <p>Dummy ♦ A J 10 8</p> <p>♦ 3</p> <p>♦ K 6 2</p> <p>♦ ?</p> <p>Win ♦ K but don't return the suit</p> |
|--|---|---|---|

ON THE LEAD OF A KING AGAINST NT CONTRACTS 1.

In units 8 and 10 we looked at the special circumstances that apply after a king is led to NT contracts. The situations covered in those units consider holdings such as KQJxx and KQ10xx. Here we look at the same principle applied to holdings that are less than obvious.

| | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------|---|---|---|----|-----|
| | | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td> </tr> </table> | N | S | 1♦ | 3NT |
| N | S | | | | | |
| 1♦ | 3NT | | | | | |
| | ♠ 9 | | | | | |
| | ♥ 52 | | | | | |
| | ♦ K7432 | | | | | |
| | ♣ AK1073 | | | | | |
| YOU | | | | | | |
| ♠ Q743 | 3NT by South | ♠ J8652 | | | | |
| ♥ AKJ1096 | | ♥ 87 | | | | |
| ♦ J | | ♦ A86 | | | | |
| ♣ J6 | | ♣ 982 | | | | |
| | ♠ AK10 | | | | | |
| | ♥ Q42 | | | | | |
| | ♦ Q1095 | | | | | |
| | ♣ Q52 | | | | | |

Lead ♥K

On this hand, played at Brunton Bridge Club, there are two things you need to know to get the defence right.

1. Who has the ♥Q?
 2. How do the remaining hearts break?
- The only lead that will give you this information is ♥K.

On the lead of a king against NT contracts, partner is instructed to:

1. *Throw any honour they have.*
2. *To give count.*

So, when east plays ♥8 on your ♥K it looks like a doubleton, leaving ♥Qxx in declarer's hand. You must therefore SWITCH AT TRICK 2 and declarer can never make this contract. He has only seven top tricks, 2 spades and 5 clubs. Declarer will at some stage play a diamond and east must rise with the ♦A and return the ♥7

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------|-------------|---|---|---|-----|----|----|-----|
| | | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2C</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2D</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td> </tr> </table> | S | N | 1NT | 2C | 2D | 3NT |
| S | N | | | | | | | |
| 1NT | 2C | | | | | | | |
| 2D | 3NT | | | | | | | |
| | ♠ Q763 | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ KQ106 | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ AQ7 | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ 62 | | | | | | | |
| YOU | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ 102 | 4♥ by South | ♠ J985 | | | | | | |
| ♥ 972 | | ♥ J853 | | | | | | |
| ♦ 965 | | ♦ K84 | | | | | | |
| ♣ AKQ103 | | ♣ 95 | | | | | | |
| | ♠ AK4 | | | | | | | |
| | ♥ A4 | | | | | | | |
| | ♦ J1032 | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ J874 | | | | | | | |

Lead ♣K

Here your club suit looks solid and many players would simply begin with ♣A (top of a sequence)

However the information you require for best defence, is the same as the previous hand.

Who has the ♣J and how do the clubs break?

The lead that will answer your questions is ♣K. When east plays ♣9 from two, west must switch. ♥7 looks safe, but it is the ♦K that east will win, before returning the ♣5. Bidding suggests that south holds four clubs rather than two (*2-5-3-3 is possible.*)

| | | |
|------------|-------------|--------|
| | ♠ Q763 | |
| | ♥ KQ10 | |
| | ♦ AQ72 | |
| | ♣ 62 | |
| YOU | | |
| ♠ 102 | 4♥ by South | ♠ J985 |
| ♥ 972 | | ♥ J85 |
| ♦ 965 | | ♦ K84 |
| ♣ AKQ103 | | ♣ 975 |
| | ♠ AK4 | |
| | ♥ A643 | |
| | ♦ J103 | |
| | ♣ J84 | |

IF east had followed with the ♣5, signalling three clubs, a continuation of ♣A and ♣Q would obviously be correct (knowing that the jack would drop).

IF east held only one club, cashing ♣AKQ and ♦K would be the best result, even though the contract makes.

ON THE LEAD OF A KING AGAINST NT CONTRACTS 2.

West leads ♥K to 3NT

| | | |
|------------------|-------|-------|
| | ♠ | |
| | ♥ J76 | |
| | ♦ | |
| | ♣ | |
| ♠ | | ♠ |
| ♥ <u>K</u> Q1054 | | ♥ A92 |
| ♦ | | ♦ |
| ♣ | | ♣ |

Things change when the jack appears in dummy.
If east plays the ace, declarer will always win a trick with ♥J.
So, should east encourage, or give count?

West should reason as follows: IF south had the ace, he would surely win the trick knowing that a 2nd trick will be made with the ♥J. He didn't therefore, he hasn't! East should give count and west should continue with a low heart.

West leads ♥K to 3NT

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|
| | | |
| | ♠ Q63 | |
| | ♥ 854 | |
| | ♦ AQ953 | |
| ♠ 9842 | ♣ KQ | ♠ A107 |
| ♥ <u>A</u> <u>K</u> J103 | | ♥ 762 |
| ♦ 8 | | ♦ J1076 |
| ♣ 532 | | ♣ J64 |
| | ♠ KJ5 | |
| | ♥ Q9 | |
| | ♦ K42 | |
| | ♣ A10987 | |

This holding is less orthodox for a king lead, but the information you require is the same,
"Where is the missing heart honour?"
Therefore, west should lead the ♥K!
East doesn't have it and therefore gives count by playing ♥2.
Now it is easy for west to work out that declarer has two hearts and that a continuation of the ace will set the contract.

IF west, your partner, leads the *ace*, how do you play.
Would you play an attitude signal or a count signal?

| | |
|------------|------------|
| <i>S</i> | <i>N</i> |
| <i>1♣</i> | <i>1♦</i> |
| <i>1♠</i> | <i>2♥</i> |
| <i>2NT</i> | <i>3NT</i> |

West leads ♥K to 3NT

| | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------|
| | | |
| | ♠ Q6 | |
| | ♥ J85 | |
| | ♦ AQ9532 | |
| ♠ 9842 | ♣ KQ | ♠ A107 |
| ♥ <u>K</u> Q1043 | | ♥ 762 |
| ♦ 8 | | ♦ J1076 |
| ♣ 532 | | ♣ A64 |
| | ♠ KJ53 | |
| | ♥ A9 | |
| | ♦ K | |
| | ♣ J109874 | |

Dummy plays ♥5, and east plays ♥2.
South wins with ♥A.
South unblocks ♦K and leads ♣4 to the ♣K.
East wins and returns ♥7. WHAT SHOULD WEST PLAY?

IF west wins with ♥Q and plays a 3rd heart,
east, when in with ♠A, will have no heart to return.

East is known to have three hearts from his play at trick 1.
(It also looks as if declarer's ♦K is singleton.)

West should duck the heart return and hope that east can get on lead once more to return his 3rd heart.

WHAT TO PLAY - 2ND IN HAND

Dummy
 Partner ♦ Q 5 4
 ♦ 10 8 6 3 3NT by S
 YOU ♦ K 7 2
 Declarer ♦ A J 9

2nd hand LOW

Dummy
 Partner ♦ Q 5 4
 ♦ 10 8 6 3 3NT by S
 YOU ♦ K 7 2
 Declarer ♦ A J 9

Cover an honour with an honour

2ND HAND PLAYS AFTER LEADS FROM DUMMY

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Dummy leads Q 5 4 | Play K 7 2 | Cover the honour |
| Dummy leads Q 5 4 | Play K 7 2 | 2nd hand low |
| Dummy leads J 5 4 | Play K 7 2 | Cover the honour |
| Dummy leads 8 5 4 | Play K 10 2 | 2nd hand low |
| Dummy leads Q J 4 | Play K 7 2 | 2nd hand low. <i>Touching honours</i> |
| Dummy leads A J 4 | Play K 7 2 | Take the trick - if a suit contract |
| Dummy leads A J 4 | Play K 7 2 | 2nd hand low - if a NT contract |
| Dummy leads Q 4 | Play K 7 2 | Cover the honour |
| Dummy leads 8 5 4 | Play K Q 7 | Split your honours (suit contract) |
| Dummy leads 8 5 4 | Play Q J 10 7 | Lowest of touching honours |

2ND IN HAND PLAYS AFTER LEADS FROM DECLARER'S HIDDEN HAND

Dummy ♦ A J 6
 ANY contract
 Cover the honour ♦ K 8 2
 Hoping partner has ♦ 10 x x
 Declarer leads ♦ Q

If declarer has ♦ 10 you cannot make a trick any way!

2nd hand low!
 If declarer has J x x
 He will make no tricks in this suit
 Win ♦ K 10 2 3NT by S
 Declarer ♦ 3

4♠ by S
 Win ♦ K 10 2
 Declarer ♦ 3

If the bidding suggests that declarer may be short in diamonds e.g. ♦ A 3 doubleton - Beware!

4♠ by S
 Split your honours ♦ K Q 2
 Declarer leads ♦ 3
 or you may not make even 1

Declarer may only have two. He finesses ♦ J, cashes ♦ A and ruffs ♦ 6.

4♠ by S
 When you have trump queen - Be prepared!
 ♠ K 9 6 4
 ♠ Q 8 2
 NEVER play trump queen!
 Declarer leads ♠ J

Declarer has at least four trumps. You CANNOT promote a trick for partner.

ANY contract
 A well protected king
 ♦ K 9 8 5 3
 ♦ A Q 10 6 4
 Declarer cannot catch your king!
 Declarer leads ♦ J

If partner follows, declarer has only 1 or 2 diamonds.

3NT by S
 3NT with limited entries to dummy
 ♦ Q 5
 ♦ A J 10 6 4
 Partner has K x x
 Declarer leads ♦ J

If you duck, partner's king will win but on the next round your Q will fall giving declarer 4 tricks. Partner with three can hold up to cut communications with dummy

♠ 105
 ♥ J752
 ♦ Q743
 ♣ K76
 ♠ AQ8742
 ♥ Q64
 ♦ 952
 ♣ 2
 3NT by S
 ♠ KJ3
 ♥ AK
 ♦ K108
 ♣ AQJ53

W N E S
 2♣ P P 3NT
 West leads ♠ 7 (4th highest)

Single suit plays (as described) can be modified when considering the whole hand. After winning ♠ J declarer plays to ♣ K and leads ♦ 3.

If east plays low, declarer's diamond trick, means s/he can cash 9 tricks, to make the contract.



DISCARDS

There are many theories on what to discard when you cannot follow suit. Unusually, most of the following hands have been taken from books and other bridge websites. The advice we offer may be different from the solutions originally suggested. Every card tells a story but we suggest four guiding principles when you are simply protecting your hand

1. Discard from a suit in which you have NO interest. (Unless your first discard is an honour)
2. Keep length with dummy. (Even four small cards 8642 can save a trick when dummy has AQ73)
3. Keep your honours guarded. (Kx, Qxx, Jxxx.)
4. Remember declarer is watching your discards too. (Careless discards often give declarer the contract.)

KEEP LENGTH WITH DUMMY

| | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--|
| | Dummy | | |
| | ♠ AQ52 | You | |
| ♠ J106 | ■ | ♠ 9874 | |
| | ♠ K3 | | |

You can see four spades in dummy, and you have four spades. Although they are not good spades, one will make a trick providing you do not discard spades when declarer runs a long suit.

CARELESS DISCARDS

| | | | |
|-------|----------|------|--|
| | Dummy | | |
| | ♠ A10952 | You | |
| ♠ Q86 | ■ | ♠ 74 | |
| | ♠ KJ3 | | |

Remember declarer is watching!
If you throw a worthless spade, declarer will pretty much know that you are not protecting the queen!

| | |
|----|----|
| S | N |
| 1H | 2C |
| 2D | 4H |

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|--|
| | Dummy | | |
| | ♠ A7 | YOU | |
| | ♥ J93 | | |
| | ♦ A1064 | | |
| | ♣ K1085 | | |
| ♠ 10542 | 4H | ♠ KJ986 | |
| ♥ 862 | | ♥ 104 | |
| ♦ Q52 | | ♦ 97 | |
| ♣ QJ6 | | ♣ A972 | |
| | ♠ Q3 | | |
| | ♥ AKQ75 | | |
| | ♦ KJ83 | | |
| | ♣ 43 | | |

CARELESS DISCARD 1.

LEAD ♥6. won by declarer who leads ♣4 - ♣J - ♣K - to east's ♣A.
East returns a trump (*good defence*) to declarer's ♥K.
Declarer plays ♣3 to west's ♣10. West switches to ♠5 to dummy's ♠A.
♠Q is now thrown on ♣10.

Now declarer has to find ♦Q! and guess what?
On the play of the 3rd trump - - east discards - - a diamond!
Would she discard from Qxx? Unlikely.
So cash ♦K. Finesse ♦10.
As a defender, would you be as helpful?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| S | N |
| 1NT | 2C |
| 2D | 3NT |

| | | | |
|----------|---------|--------|--|
| | Dummy | | |
| | ♠ AJ105 | | |
| | ♥ K | | |
| | ♦ J1072 | | |
| | ♣ AQ96 | | |
| ♠ 862 | 3NT | ♠ Q73 | |
| ♥ QJ1052 | | ♥ 9643 | |
| ♦ 5 | | ♦ K983 | |
| ♣ K1052 | | ♣ 43 | |
| | ♠ K94 | | |
| | ♥ A87 | | |
| | ♦ AQ64 | | |
| | ♣ J87 | | |

CARELESS DISCARD 2.

LEAD ♥Q Dummy wins with ♥K. ♦J holds
♦10 covered with ♦K and south wins with ♦A.
What does west discard?

IF west discards from the worthless spade declarer can reasonably guess that west is not protecting ♠Q.
Play ♠5 from table and finesse the ♠9.
Without this careless discard you are likely to finesse ♠J, giving east a trick. West needs to protect the spades and clubs and must discard two low hearts to hold you to 11 tricks.

DISCARDS THAT SIMPLY PROTECT YOUR SUITS

Although good defenders can often use discards to make suit preference or count signals, sometimes you are simply trying to protect your holdings

NOTICE ♠Q AT TRICK 2.

| | | | |
|------------|-----|----------|--|
| S | | N | |
| 1NT | | 3NT | |
| Dummy | | | |
| ♠ A4 | | | |
| ♥ 109 | | | |
| ♦ K865 | | | |
| ♣ AQJ32 | | | |
| YOU | | | |
| ♠ J6532 | | ♠ K1087 | |
| ♥ KQ62 | | ♥ 843 | |
| ♦ Q1074 | | ♦ 9 | |
| ♣ | | ♣ 109854 | |
| | 3NT | | |
| | | ♠ Q9 | |
| | | ♥ AJ75 | |
| | | ♦ AJ32 | |
| | | ♣ K76 | |

♠3 LEAD East wins ♠K and returns ♠7
 Declarer tries clubs until he sees that they won't run.
 You have thrown two hearts and a diamond.
 Declarer now finesses ♦J. You win ♦Q. Now what?
 If you cashed ♠J, declarer makes the contract!
 (1 spade, 1 heart, 3 diamonds, 4 clubs
You blocked the spade suit!)

KEEP YOUR ESTABLISHED WINNERS

| | | | |
|------------|-----|--------|--|
| S | | N | |
| 1NT | | 3NT | |
| Dummy | | | |
| ♠ A4 | | | |
| ♥ A96 | | | |
| ♦ KQ852 | | | |
| ♣ K73 | | | |
| YOU | | | |
| ♠ Q10862 | | ♠ K93 | |
| ♥ J72 | | ♥ Q854 | |
| ♦ 76 | | ♦ 943 | |
| ♣ 982 | | ♣ A104 | |
| | 3NT | | |
| | | ♠ J75 | |
| | | ♥ K103 | |
| | | ♦ AJ10 | |
| | | ♣ QJ65 | |

♠6 LEAD. East wins ♠K and returns ♠9
 Declarer runs 5 diamond winners.
 You have to find three discards! **CHOOSE 3 CLUBS.**
 (as the half stop in hearts might be useful)

Partner can discard 2 CLUBS. **He must keep ♠3**

KEEP LENGTH WITH DUMMY

| | | | |
|------------|-----|----------|--|
| S | | N | |
| 1D | | 1H | |
| 1NT | | 3NT | |
| Dummy | | | |
| ♠ J | | | |
| ♥ AQ63 | | | |
| ♦ AJ974 | | | |
| ♣ 742 | | | |
| YOU | | | |
| ♠ 9743 | | ♠ KQ1085 | |
| ♥ 74 | | ♥ J1092 | |
| ♦ 85 | | ♦ 103 | |
| ♣ KQJ105 | | ♣ 83 | |
| | 3NT | | |
| | | ♠ A62 | |
| | | ♥ K85 | |
| | | ♦ KQ62 | |
| | | ♣ A96 | |

♣K LEAD
 West continues ♣Q. Declarer wins ♣A (Rule of 7)
 Declarer cashes five diamonds.

You must find 3 discards.
 Discard three small spades

You MUST hold on to ♥J1093 (and ♠KQ)

A TOUGH BUT CLEAR CUT DECISION

| | | | |
|------------|-----|---------|--|
| S | | N | |
| 2NT | | 3C | |
| 3NT | | | |
| Dummy | | | |
| ♠ K1074 | | | |
| ♥ 73 | | | |
| ♦ 972 | | | |
| ♣ QJ62 | | | |
| YOU | | | |
| ♠ 3 | | ♠ J9852 | |
| ♥ Q10984 | | ♥ A62 | |
| ♦ A1043 | | ♦ Q65 | |
| ♣ 983 | | ♣ 104 | |
| | 3NT | | |
| | | ♠ AQ6 | |
| | | ♥ KJ5 | |
| | | ♦ KJ8 | |
| | | ♣ AK75 | |

♥10 LEAD
 You win ♥A and return ♥6
 Partner wins ♥J and plays a 3rd heart to south's ♥K.
 Declarer switches to clubs.
 When declarer cashes the 3rd club, throw ♠5.
 On the 4th club, cross your fingers and throw ♦5

(You MUST keep FOUR spades.)

DISCARDS

There are many theories on what to discard when you cannot follow suit. Unusually, most of the following hands have been taken from books and other bridge websites. The advice we offer may be different from the solutions originally suggested. Every card tells a story but we suggest four guiding principles when you are simply protecting your hand

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3. Keep your honours guarded. (Kx, Qxx, Jxxx.)
4. Remember declarer is watching your discards too. (Careless discards often give declarer the contract.)

| | | |
|--------|---|--------|
| Dummy | | You |
| ♠ AQ52 | | |
| ♠ J106 | ■ | ♠ 9874 |
| | | ♠ K3 |

You can see four spades in dummy, and you have four spades. Although they are not good spades, one will make a trick providing you do not discard spades when declarer runs a long suit.

| | | |
|----------|---|-------|
| Dummy | | You |
| ♠ A10952 | | |
| ♠ Q86 | ■ | ♠ 74 |
| | | ♠ KJ3 |

Remember declarer is watching!
If you throw a worthless spade, declarer will pretty much know that you are not protecting the queen!

| | |
|----|----|
| S | N |
| 1H | 2D |
| 2H | 4H |

| | | |
|---------|----|---------|
| Dummy | | YOU |
| ♠ A7 | | ♠ KJ986 |
| ♥ J93 | | ♥ 104 |
| ♦ A1064 | | ♦ 97 |
| ♣ K1085 | | ♣ A972 |
| ♠ 10542 | 4H | |
| ♥ 862 | | ♠ Q3 |
| ♦ Q52 | | ♥ AKQ75 |
| ♣ QJ6 | | ♦ KJ83 |
| | | ♣ 43 |

CARELESS DISCARD 1.

LEAD ♥6. won by declarer who leads ♣4 - ♣J - ♣K - to east's ♠A. East returns a trump (*good defence*) to declarer's ♥K. Declarer plays ♣3 to west's ♣10. West switches to ♠5 to dummy's ♠A. ♠Q is now thrown on ♣10.

Now declarer has to find ♦Q! and guess what?
On the play of the 3rd trump - - east discards - - a diamond!
Would she discard from Qxx? Unlikely.
So cash ♦K. Finesse ♦10.
As a defender, would you be as helpful?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| S | N |
| 1NT | 2C |
| 2D | 3NT |

| | | |
|----------|-----|--------|
| Dummy | | |
| ♠ AJ105 | | |
| ♥ K | | |
| ♦ J1072 | | |
| ♣ AQ96 | | |
| ♠ 862 | 3NT | ♠ Q73 |
| ♥ QJ1052 | | ♥ 9643 |
| ♦ 5 | | ♦ K983 |
| ♣ K1052 | | ♣ 43 |
| | | ♠ K94 |
| | | ♥ A87 |
| | | ♦ AQ64 |
| | | ♣ J87 |

CARELESS DISCARD 2.

LEAD ♥Q Dummy wins with ♥K. ♦J holds ♦10 covered with ♦K and south wins with ♦A. What does west discard?

If west discards from the worthless spade declarer can reasonably guess that west is not protecting ♠Q.
Play ♠5 from table and finesse the ♠9.
Without this careless discard you are likely to finesse ♠J, giving east a trick. West needs to protect the spades and clubs and must discard two low hearts to hold you to 11 tricks.

SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNALS

A SINGLETON IN DUMMY

| | | |
|--------|--|--------|
| ♠ KJ73 | | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ KJ73 | | ♥ 8654 |
| ♦ 4 | | ♦ 9653 |
| ♣ KJ73 | | ♣ AQ54 |

| | | |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| ♠ 654 | 4♠ | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ 92 | by South | ♥ 8654 |
| ♦ AK10872 | | ♦ 9653 |
| ♣ 92 | | ♣ AQ54 |

| | | |
|----------|--|--------|
| ♠ AQ1092 | | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ AQ10 | | ♥ 8654 |
| ♦ QJ | | ♦ 9653 |
| ♣ 1086 | | ♣ AQ54 |

♦ A lead

When a singleton diamond appears in dummy, it would be futile to continue diamonds. East must tell west which suit to switch to. A low card, ♦3, requests the lower of the other two suits (excluding trumps). West leads ♣9 (hi lo). East wins with ♣Q, cashes ♣A and returns a 3rd club for west to ruff.

COUNT, THEN SUIT PREFERENCE

| | | |
|--------|--|---------|
| ♠ KJ73 | | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ KJ73 | | ♥ 8654 |
| ♦ 64 | | ♦ 953 |
| ♣ KJ7 | | ♣ AQ543 |

| | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|
| ♠ 654 | 4♠ | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ 92 | by South | ♥ 8654 |
| ♦ AK10872 | | ♦ 953 |
| ♣ 92 | | ♣ AQ543 |

| | | |
|----------|--|---------|
| ♠ AQ1092 | | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ AQ10 | | ♥ 8654 |
| ♦ QJ | | ♦ 953 |
| ♣ 1086 | | ♣ AQ543 |

♦ A lead

Similar hand, but now dummy has two diamonds. East gives count at trick 1. (♦3) When the king is played, east has the choice between ♦5 & ♦9. To ask west to play a club at trick 3 east plays the lower of these two cards! 4♠ -2!

HIGH CARD SWITCHES

| | | |
|---------|--|----------|
| ♠ K74 | | ♠ AJ1062 |
| ♥ KQ107 | | ♥ A9 |
| ♦ Q874 | | ♦ 1092 |
| ♣ 94 | | ♣ 853 |

| | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| ♠ 85 | 3NT | ♠ AJ1062 |
| ♥ 8543 | by South | ♥ A9 |
| ♦ 63 | | ♦ 1092 |
| ♣ AJ1062 | | ♣ 853 |

| | | |
|--------|--|----------|
| ♠ Q93 | | ♠ AJ1062 |
| ♥ J62 | | ♥ A9 |
| ♦ AKJ5 | | ♦ 1092 |
| ♣ KQ7 | | ♣ 853 |

♠8 lead

West leads partner's overcalled suit. 8-4-10-Q Declarer leads to ♥K, won by east, who needs to get partner on lead. Clubs is the chosen suit, but east must be careful to lead ♣8. A high card switch in mid game shows no interest in the suit but asks partner to return the original suit!

LOW CARD SWITCHES

| | | |
|---------|--|----------|
| ♠ K74 | | ♠ J10962 |
| ♥ KQ107 | | ♥ A9 |
| ♦ Q874 | | ♦ 1092 |
| ♣ 94 | | ♣ K83 |

| | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| ♠ 85 | 3NT | ♠ J10962 |
| ♥ 8543 | by South | ♥ A9 |
| ♦ 63 | | ♦ 1092 |
| ♣ AJ1062 | | ♣ K83 |

| | | |
|--------|--|----------|
| ♠ AQ3 | | ♠ J10962 |
| ♥ J62 | | ♥ A9 |
| ♦ AKJ5 | | ♦ 1092 |
| ♣ Q75 | | ♣ K83 |

♠8 lead

Similar to the previous hand and yes it's a poor overcall but it has some pre-emptive value. Now when you win the ♥A, your switch is to the ♣3! A low card switch says forget my original suit! This suit gives us the best chance to set the contract.

ATTITUDE FROM PARTNER

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| ♠ A652 | | ♠ Q8 |
| ♥ 102 | | ♥ A54 |
| ♦ 3 | | ♦ AQ10874 |
| ♣ KQJ873 | | ♣ A9 |

| | | |
|---------|----------|-----------|
| ♠ 74 | 4♠ | ♠ Q8 |
| ♥ KJ973 | by South | ♥ A54 |
| ♦ 962 | | ♦ AQ10874 |
| ♣ 1042 | | ♣ A9 |

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| ♠ KJ1093 | | ♠ Q8 |
| ♥ Q86 | | ♥ A54 |
| ♦ KJ5 | | ♦ AQ10874 |
| ♣ 65 | | ♣ A9 |

♦6 lead

East opened 1♦ but has been out gunned by spades. After winning with ♦A, east can see 3 tricks for the defence but where is the 4th coming from? He can only play ♥A and hope that partner can signal some encouragement.

SUIT PREFERENCE IF YOU CAN

| | | |
|-----------|--|---------|
| ♠ Q7 | | ♠ AJ986 |
| ♥ K10 | | ♥ J83 |
| ♦ 1054 | | ♦ Q97 |
| ♣ QJ10987 | | ♣ 32 |

| | | |
|--------|----------|---------|
| ♠ K53 | 1NT | ♠ AJ986 |
| ♥ 7654 | by South | ♥ J83 |
| ♦ KJ63 | | ♦ Q97 |
| ♣ K5 | | ♣ 32 |

| | | |
|--------|--|---------|
| ♠ 1042 | | ♠ AJ986 |
| ♥ AQ92 | | ♥ J83 |
| ♦ A82 | | ♦ Q97 |
| ♣ A64 | | ♣ 32 |

♦3 lead

Declarer wins and plays ♣A and another. West can now cash three diamond winners AND on the 4th diamond, east can signal for the spade switch with ♥8. 1NT - 2. On a heart lead E/W have no chance to signal and if west switches to a diamond, 10 tricks will be usual!

SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNALS

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| | ♠ A 8 6 5 2 | |
| | ♥ K Q J | |
| | ♦ Q 8 | |
| | ♣ K 7 5 | |
| ♠ 9 7 | | ♠ J |
| ♥ 2 | 4♠ | ♥ A 9 8 4 3 |
| ♦ J 7 6 4 2 | by S | ♦ A 9 5 3 |
| ♣ Q 10 6 4 3 | | ♣ J 9 2 |
| | | |
| | ♠ K Q 10 4 3 | |
| | ♥ 10 7 6 5 | |
| | ♦ K 10 | |
| | ♣ A 8 | |

Suit preference . The card you return.

4♠ by south. Lead ♥2 East wins with ♥A
The lead must be a singleton! (Why?)

East returns the ♥9 (an unnecessarily high card) for west to ruff.
The high return tells partner to play back diamonds, the higher of the other two suits (excluding trumps).
The diamond is returned and east can now give his partner a 2nd ruff.
If the aces were switched, east would return the ♥3 to ask for a club return.

| | |
|----------|---------|
| | ♠ J |
| | ♥ A9843 |
| | ♦ 10953 |
| | ♣ A92 |
| ♠ KQ1043 | |
| ♥ J1075 | |
| ♦ AK | |
| ♣ K8 | |

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|------------|
| | ♠ J 9 7 6 | |
| | ♥ J | |
| | ♦ K 10 9 8 4 | |
| | ♣ K 9 4 | |
| ♠ A 5 | | ♠ 8 4 |
| ♥ A 10 7 5 4 3 | 4♠ | ♥ 9 6 2 |
| ♦ J 6 | by S | ♦ 7 5 3 2 |
| ♣ 5 3 2 | | ♣ A Q 10 7 |
| | | |
| | ♠ K Q 10 3 2 | |
| | ♥ K Q 8 | |
| | ♦ A Q | |
| | ♣ J 8 6 | |

Suit preference . A singleton in dummy.

4♠ by south. Lead ♥A

When dummy goes down, a heart a continuation would be futile.

Therefore count or attitude signals would have no relevance.

East must give partner a suit preference signal with the ♥2.

This low card asks for the lower of the other two suits - clubs.

(Switch the ♣A and ♦A) Now east plays the ♥9 to signal for a diamond.

SUMMARY OF DEFENSIVE PLAYS

DISCARDS

1. Discard from a suit in which you have NO interest. (Unless your first discard is an honour)
2. Keep length with dummy. (Even four small cards 8642 can save a trick when dummy has AQ73)
3. Keep your honours guarded. (Kx, Qxx, Jxxx.)
4. Remember declarer is watching your discards too. (Careless discards often give declarer the contract.)

SUIT PREFERENCE - (McKenney not McKinney)

5. HIGH DISCARD - Please lead higher of other suits (discounting trumps)
6. LOW DISCARD - Please lead lower of other suits (discounting trumps)
7. With no message to give look for a 6 (5 or 7) to throw.

COUNT

8. When following suit play lowest from 3 cards and HI-LO from 2. (Obviously not if this would cost a trick.)

MID GAME SWITCHES

8. High card lead in mid game - No interest. Please return my 1st suit.
9. Low card lead in mid game - Forget my 1st suit, return this one!

ETHICS

10. Avoid any body language that indicates that partner has got it wrong (or right.)

GOOD PLAY REWARDED!

| | | |
|----------|----|---------|
| ♠ K107 | | ♠ 9862 |
| ♥ A52 | | ♥ KQ8 |
| ♦ K54 | | ♦ 862 |
| ♣ K1086 | | ♣ 753 |
| ♠ 5 | 4♠ | ♠ 9862 |
| ♥ 7643 | | ♥ KQ8 |
| ♦ A10973 | | ♦ 862 |
| ♣ AJ9 | | ♣ 753 |
| | | ♠ AQJ43 |
| | | ♥ J109 |
| | | ♦ QJ |
| | | ♣ Q42 |

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| S | N | | S | N |
| 1S | 2C | OR | 1NT | 3NT |
| 2S | 4S | | | |

A balanced hand with a 5 card major is always difficult. 1NT or 1♠?
Some pairs will open 1 of the major if it's a 7 loser
and open 1NT if it's an 8 loser.

3NT can go off on a heart lead and diamond switch (to west's ♦A).
If west returns another heart, EW should take 3 hearts and 2 aces

On the more natural lead of ♦10 (Top of internal sequence),
south has time to set up a club winner (5 spades, 1 heart, 2 diamonds, 1 club).

♥7 LEAD

Against 4♠ west has a difficult lead.

West should not lead **from** a suit headed by the ACE.

The lead of either ace would be disastrous

The lead of a singleton trump is never a good idea either.

So a heart! but which one?

Not ♥3 or ♥4!! (Low card leads - promise honours). ♥7 followed by ♥6 (or 6 then 4 will suggest four poor cards)

Declarer's Thoughts

I have 5 top spades, and ♥A. FOUR extra tricks must be found and **there is no ruffing potential**.

I can easily make two diamond tricks once the ♦A is removed.

I can easily make one club trick, the same way, but that still leaves me one short.

Maybe a heart finesse Playing for split honours in hearts (♥K in one hand ♥Q in other).

Maybe a club finesse Playing ♣Q, then towards ♣K10 (*finessing ♣10*)

Timing

If I take ♥A, I will have FOUR FAST LOSERS. Two hearts and two aces

Ugh! I MUST duck. East's ♥Q wins - - - - -

East CANNOT return a heart and so switches to ♦6 This is won by west's ♦A

West correctly returns another heart! Can you see the difference now?

Yes! You now have a SURPLUS WINNER (♦K)

Win ♥A - Play a low diamond to your ♦J. Play a low spade to ♠10. Now throw the heart loser on ♦K.

SO FAR SO GOOD

When you test the trump suit you discover the bad 4-1 split but as the climax to this hand depends entirely on the club finesse, draw ALL of west's trumps. (You will still have one trump to ruff a diamond or heart.)

As suggested above, there is only one way to play the club suit.

There is a tenace in dummy (♣K10). You must preserve this by playing ♣Q FIRST

(Ideally you would lead towards the ♣Q but you are short of entries to dummy.)

Whoever wins, ruff the return and finesse ♣10.

This is often a cruel game but here your good play is rewarded when you make your contract!

SLAMS

♠ AQ
 ♥ J108
 ♦ AK873
 ♣ 1065

♠ 9876
 ♥ 74
 ♦ J1092
 ♣ QJ3

6NT

♠ 10432
 ♥ 9632
 ♦ Q6
 ♣ 972

♠ KJ5
 ♥ AKQ5
 ♦ 54
 ♣ AK84

♦ J LEAD

S W N E
 2NT 6NT

♦ J LEAD

A good bid by north but an unfavourable lie of the cards
 3 spades, 4 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs! One short!
 Are there chances?

Diamonds or clubs might break 3/3 or ♣QJ may fall doubleton.

The most advanced declarer play is a SQUEEZE PLAY
 and it works perfectly on this hand. Duck the diamond lead!

Cash three spades. (throwing a diamond.)

Cash three hearts. (*Seven cards played.*)

♠ -
 ♥ -
 ♦ AK8
 ♣ 1065

♠
 ♥
 ♦ 1092
 ♣ QJ3

6NT

When you lead ♥A,
 west has to throw a club or a diamond.
 If west throws a club, you throw a diamond.
 If west throws a diamond, you throw a club.

♠ -
 ♥ A
 ♦ 5
 ♣ AK84

Did you recognise the importance of ♣10 as a threat card?

♠ AJ1053
 ♥ A865
 ♦ A64
 ♣ K

♠ 86
 ♥ J92
 ♦ Q95
 ♣ J86432

6♠

♠ K9
 ♥ Q1043
 ♦ K108
 ♣ 107542

♠ Q742
 ♥ K7
 ♦ J732
 ♣ AQ9

♦ 5 LEAD

S N
 1NT 2♥
 2♠ 3♥
 3♠ 4NT*
 5♦ 5♥***
 6♠ P

- 2♥ = 5+ spades (transfer)
- 3♥ = 5 spades & 4 hearts (1 round force)
- 3♠ = at least three spades & not maximum
- 4NT = Roman Key Card Blackwood
- 5♣ = 0 or 3 of five key cards.
- 5♦ = Do you have trump queen (♠Q)
- 5♠ = Yes! (the next suit up, 5♥, would say no)

An optimistic slam that makes - IF you're careful!

Win ♦A. Unblock ♣K

Come to hand with ♥K and play ♣A & ♣Q, throwing ♦6 & ♦4.

Try spade finesse (which loses)

Ruff the diamond return.

Take another round of trumps and ruff two hearts.

THE UNEXPECTED BID

♠ K108643
♥ Q76
♦ J3
♣ J3

♦ J LEAD

♠ -
♥ K10843
♦ 9542
♣ AQ84

3NT

♠ AQ97
♥ -
♦ AQ876
♣ K432

♠ J62
♥ AJ952
♦ K10
♣ 1097

Sometimes when playing in a new partnership, partner makes a bid that you do not understand.

After east opens 1♦, west is thinking about a game. North's overcall of 1♠, strengthens this view. When east rebids 2♣ (showing FIVE diamonds) west is really interested - but *which* game? 5♦, 4♥ or 3NT? *East has four unknown cards.* Three of them could be hearts to play in 4♥. or east may have a good spade stop for a 3NT contract. Or failing that 5♦.

| Pairs | | Contract | | Scores | | MPs | |
|-------|-----|----------|-------|--------|-----|-----|----|
| NS | EW | Bid | By Ld | NS | EW | NS | EW |
| 1A | 8A | 3N-1 | E | 50 | | 31 | 3 |
| 7A | 13A | 5D | E | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 6A | 11A | 5D | E | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 5A | 9A | 5D | E | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 4A | 14A | 4D | E | | 130 | 27 | 7 |
| 3A | 12A | 3Sx-2 | N | | 300 | 17 | 17 |
| 2A | 10A | | | 50% | 50% | 17 | 17 |
| 1B | 12B | 3D+3 | E | | 170 | 19 | 15 |
| 2B | 21B | 5D | E | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 3B | 14B | 5D | E | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 4B | 16B | 3D+2 | E | | 150 | 23 | 11 |
| 5B | 18B | 5D | W | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 6B | 20B | 4H-2 | W | 100 | | 33 | 1 |
| 7B | 22B | 2S-2 | N | | 100 | 29 | 5 |
| 8B | 13B | 5D | E | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 9B | 15B | 4D+1 | E | | 150 | 23 | 11 |
| 10B | 17B | 5D | E | | 400 | 8 | 26 |
| 11B | 19B | 2S-3 | N | | 150 | 23 | 11 |

| | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|
| N | E | S | W |
| P | 1D | P | 1H |
| 1S | 2C | 2S | 3S |
| X | 3NT | | |

Even with no partnership agreement this cue bid of the opponent's suit must surely be understood as a forcing bid primarily looking for a spade stop

IF west trusts partner's 3NT, there are 4 diamonds, 4 clubs and 2 spade tricks for a TOP!

♠ QJ10
♥ AJ104
♦ AQ92
♣ J2

♦ 8 LEAD

♠ 63
♥ 9873
♦ 87
♣ Q10754

4♠
by N

♠ A42
♥ K2
♦ K10653
♣ K93

♠ K9875
♥ Q65
♦ J4
♣ A86

N/S play Negative Doubles but didn't use one here. WHY?

After one major has been bid - X shows either FOUR of the other major or FIVE, but not strong enough to bid them directly.

Therefore a free bid of 2♠ guarantees at least five spades, 10+pts and a willingness to play in 3♥ if partner cannot support spades. North has a choice between 3♠ or 4♠ and opts for game!

ANALYSIS after the ♦8 lead

You will lose a diamond ruff and can 'see' a loser in each suit, but your hand has lots of 'stuffing' enabling you to establish winners.

PLAN

To reduce your losers to ♠A, a diamond ruff and ♥K.

PLAY

By ducking the diamond lead you will gain surplus winners.

East wins ♦K and returns the suit. You win with ♦J.

East wins your spade switch and plays another diamond.

West ruffs and switches to hearts. Duck, because this establishes more winners AND you can ruff the 3rd diamond with a top trump.

Draw trumps and claim.

| | | | |
|----|----|----|---|
| N | E | S | W |
| 1H | 2D | 2S | P |
| 4S | | | |