

Deal 1
South Deals
None Vul

♠ K Q J 8
♥ —
♦ 9 7 6 4
♣ Q 10 6 5 2

16
8 5
11

N
W E
S

♠ 10 6 3
♥ A 10 7 5 4
♦ A J 2
♣ A K

♠ 9 5 2
♥ K Q 9 2
♦ K Q 8 3
♣ J 7

West	North	East	South
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	4 ♥
4 ♥ by South			

first trump play is ♥ A or ♥ K, you will still be able to finesse the ♥ J. But if West holds ♥ J 8 6 3 it is vital that you first play either the ♥ K or ♥ Q. If you start with the ♥ A you will have lost your finesse position. The general rule is to first play a high trump from the hand that has two. That preserves a finesse through either defender's ♥ J x x x.

Next visualize the situation if your first play was the ♥ K. East would show out and you would play the ♥ Q, then a small ♥ finessing your ♥ T.

Finally visualize the situation if your first play was the ♥ K and it was West who showed out. You would play a small ♥ to your ♥ A, then lead a ♥ toward dummy finessing with the ♥ 9.

Using the correct Plan guarantees the contract however ♥s split.

You are North and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

You have 12 points which isn't quite enough to force to game.

It is just right for a limit raise though, so you bid 3 ♥.

Partner does bid the game.

South would play 4 ♥.

North plays 4 ♥. The defense takes the first three ♠ tricks, then switches to a ♣.

Losers: ♠ 3 : ♥ ?? : ♦ 0 : ♣ 0 : Total = 3+??

With no more outside losers your task is very very simple:DO NOT LOSE A TRUMP TRICK.

There is no problem if trumps split 2-2 or 3-1, so you can put your mind to 4-0 splits only. If East holds ♥ J 8 6 3 then it won't matter whether your

Deal 2
 North Deals
 None Vul

♠ J 10 6 3
 ♥ K Q J
 ♦ 10 9 5 4
 ♣ 9 5

13
7 7
13

	N		
W		E	
	S		

♠ —
 ♥ A 8 7 4
 ♦ Q J 6 3 2
 ♣ 10 7 6 4

♠ A 8 7 5 4
 ♥ 10 6 3
 ♦ A 8
 ♣ A J 2

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

4♠ by South

from dummy he will "split his honors" by playing the ♠T. This will force your ♠A and he can just sit back and wait for his ♠J to make a trick.

But if it is West with ♠ J T 6 3 you can keep him from winning a ♠ trick, IF YOUR FIRST ♠ PLAY IS THE ♠A. East shows out and you play a small ♠ toward dummy's ♠ K Q 9. If West plays low you insert the ♠9, if he plays one of his honors you win it, then return to your hand and finesse him out of the other honor.

If your first ♠ was ♠K or ♠Q then it would be too late.

to see an alternate deal.

To summarize: If you are missing J x x x your first play should be from the hand with two honors. Then you will be able to finesse in either direction. If you are missing J T x x your first play should be honor from the hand with only one. This will leave you with a double-finesse position in one direction. If the other defender has the trumps there is nothing you can do.

You are South and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

Partner has opened and you have 14 points. You know you belong in game but there is no need to jump and use up bidding space. You respond 1♠.

Partner now bids 2♠. What do you bid next?

You know you should be in game and now you know the suit. You bid 4♠.

South plays 4♠. The defense quickly takes three ♥ tricks, then switches to a ♦.

Losers: ♠ o? : ♥ 3 : ♦ o : ♣ o : Total = 3?

This Deal is VERY similar to Deal 9 in that you are only worried about a 4-0 trump split. The reason that it shows up right here is to point out the difference between J 8 6 3 and J T 6 3.

If East holds ♠ J T 6 3 then there is nothing you can do about it - you will go down. If you lead a ♠

Deal 3East Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 5 4
 ♥ J 8 3
 ♦ Q 10 3
 ♣ K 10 8 2

8
 8 8
 16

♠ K 8 2
 ♥ 7 5 4
 ♦ K 9 5 4 2
 ♣ Q 3

N
 W E
 S

♠ J 10 9 7
 ♥ K Q 10 6
 ♦ J 6
 ♣ J 5 4

♠ A 6 3
 ♥ A 9 2
 ♦ A 8 7
 ♣ A 9 7 6

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	2 NT	Pass	1 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	3 NT

3 NT by South

Lead: ♣ 2

You are South and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

Aces and Spaces is the description you often hear about this hand. But the REAL description is 16 points, balanced. So you open 1 NT. Partner replies 2 NT.

Partner is INVITING you to bid 3 NT. If you have 17 points you should bid 3 NT. If you have 15 points you should pass.

With 16 points you must make a judgement. This one is actually easy, despite the negative sound of "Aces and Spaces". In strength terms Aces are undervalued. Instead of being worth 4 points they are actually worth about 4.3 points. So you really do have a 17 point hand, and you bid 3 NT.

South plays 3 NT. West leads the ♣ 2.

Winner count: ♠ 2 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 2 : ♣ 1 : Total = 6

Wow. Things do look a little Acey/Spacey. If the ♦s are 3-2, which is likely, you can establish 2 tricks there. You need one more and the best hope is the ♣ Q. There is a very good chance that West led from the ♣ K. So with a brief prayer to Brigidda (the Goddess of Bridge) you put up the ♣ Q. It wins the trick.

Now you are on cruise-control. Play a ♦ to the ♦ A. Play another ♦ back to dummy's ♦ K (both defenders follow). Now a third ♦ sets up the rest of the suit.

Deal 4
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ Q 10 4 3 ♥ 5 4 ♦ J 10 9 6 4 ♣ 9 5	♠ A K 7 2 ♥ A 8 3 ♦ A Q 7 2 ♣ 6 2
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♠ 8 5 ♥ J 7 6 2 ♦ 8 3 ♣ A K Q 4 3	♠ J 9 6 ♥ K Q 10 9 ♦ K 5 ♣ J 10 8 7
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17
3 10
10

West North East South

Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass

Pass

3 NT by South

Lead: ♦ J

You are North and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

Despite the great ♣ suit, you have a 4-card Major. It is your duty to first seek an 8-card Major fit, so you bid 2 ♣ (Stayman). Partner replies 2 ♠. What do you bid?

Well, that wasn't the Major suit you were hoping for.

But with 11 points you have enough for game, so you bid 3 NT.

South would play 3 NT.

North plays 3 NT. East leads ♦ J, West plays ♦ K.

Winners: ♠ 2 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 2 : ♣ 3 : Total = 8

Thanks to the opening lead you get an extra ♦ winner. Well, since the finesse would have worked it really isn't extra, it's just nice to know about it early. You need to find one more winner and the ♣ suit beckons. A 3-3 split would be very nice, but a 4-2 is more likely. Even with a 4-2 split you can

still make your fifth ♣ good - but you must be careful with entries.

Since you have no immediate problem in any suit you can afford to give up the lead. So you play the ♣ 2 from your hand and the ♣ 3 from dummy. In other words, you duck a ♣. Somebody will win this trick cheaply and no doubt play another ♦. You don't mind at all - you win the ♦ Q, the ♠ A K, the ♥ A and dummy's ♣ A K Q 4, all of which are good.

If you played a high ♣ first you would never have an entry back to dummy. You would have been forced to try to get there with the ♥ J but as you can see, that wouldn't work.

If you had just played the ♣s from the top you would have made an overtrick when they split 3-3, but gone down when they split 4-2. Making an overtrick about 40% of the time is a high price to pay for going down the other 60%.