

Board 1
South Deals
None Vul

♠ 9 6 5 3
♥ T 9 5 2
♦ A 8 5
♣ T 9

♠ A K
♥ A J
♦ Q J T 2
♣ A Q J 7 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q J T 8 4
♥ 4
♦ 7 6 3
♣ K 6 4 3

♠ 7 2
♥ K Q 8 7 6 3
♦ K 9 4
♣ 8 5

West	North	East	South
			2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

6NT by North

Partner replies 3♦.

Trust your partner. He has shown a better-than-minimum Weak-2 bid, probably 9-11 points, and a high card in ♦s, either the ♦A or ♦K.

With your hand you don't need anything else to make a slam. You have to decide between 6♥ and 6NT. Based on your reluctance to have an opening ♣ lead go through your ♣ A Q you choose 6NT.

North plays 6NT. East leads the ♠Q.

Winners: ♠ 2 : ♥ 6? : ♦ 0 : ♣ 1 : Total = 9

The winner list isn't as bad as it looks, once you drive out the ♦A you'll have your three extra winners in ♦s.

In fact, your only real problem is making sure you get all 6 ♥ winners. If the ♥s split 3-2 it's easy, but if they are 4-1 you cannot afford to overtake the ♥J at the second trick. Fortunately dummy has both the ♦K and the ♦9.

Win the ♠A. Play ♥A and ♥J. East shows out on the second one. Lead your ♦2 to dummy's ♦9. Either you are in dummy now to run the ♥s, or West wins the trick with the ♦A. In this case you can win his return (don't finesse if he leads a ♣), and get to dummy with the ♦K to run the ♥s.

But when you can make a plan that caters for the possibility you should certainly do so.

In this case dummy had a certain entry in the ♦ suit so you take advantage of that entry.

Baker 100Deals 67

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

You were probably stunned when you picked up this hand and even more stunned when partner bid.

Your biggest problem is that partner has opened with a weak bid and won't credit you with such a huge hand. So you must make sure you don't make a bid he might pass until you're ready.

For example, suppose you made a jump shift to 4♣. Would partner know what that meant? Do you know what it meant?

The best(?) bid at this point is probably 2NT. Everybody knows what that means. Partner is forced to reply, and will either rebid his suit with a minimum hand or show a "feature" if his hand is better than minimum.

Board 2

South Deals

N-S Vul

♠ Q 6
 ♥ A
 ♦ A K J 9 6 5
 ♣ 9 7 5 2

♠ A J 4
 ♥ K Q J T 8 6
 ♦ 8 7 3
 ♣ 6

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K T 9 8 5 2
 ♥ 9 7
 ♦ T 2
 ♣ Q J 4

♠ 7 3
 ♥ 5 4 3 2
 ♦ Q 4
 ♣ A K T 8 3

West	North	East	South
2♦	2♥	2♠	1♥
Pass	3♥	All Pass	Pass

3♥ by North

Losers: ♠ 2 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 3 : ♣ 0 : Total = 6

Although there are two ♠ losers in your hand, one can either be ruffed in dummy or discarded on a high ♣. So you really only have one loser too many.

You should realize that if you ruff this ♦ with one of dummy's teensy ♥s it will be over-ruffed. West did signal a doubleton. The loss of the teensy ♥ doesn't worry you, you have plenty of them. But the loss of the opportunity to dump a loser should worry you a lot.

So don't ruff at all. Discard a ♠. Now you can ruff your other ♠ loser in dummy.

Often, like in this deal, you can discard a loser instead.

Baker 100Deals 68

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

With 11 points you would probably have bid 3♥, a limit raise, if West hadn't overcalled.

But you now doubt your ♦Q is worth 2 points so you just say 2♥.

Now East comes in with 2♠ and it is passed around to you.

With a known 9-card fit this hand is worth a 3♥ bid.

Everybody passes.

South would play 3♥.

North plays 3♥. East leads ♦A, ♦K, ♦J. West plays first the ♦T, then ♦2.

Board 3

North Deals

None Vul

♠ T 8 6 5
♥ K 9 4 3
♦ 7 4
♣ 8 7 4

♠ 9 2

♥ 8 5

♦ K 6 5 2

♣ A J T 3 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A Q 4

♥ A J T

♦ A Q J 8

♣ K Q 6

♠ K J 7 3

♥ Q 7 6 2

♦ T 9 3

♣ 9 5

West	North	East	South
	2♣	Pass	3♣
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♦
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

6NT by North

South plays 6NT. West leads the ♦ T.

Winner count: ♠ 1 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 4 : ♣ 5 : Total = 11

You need just one more winner. If the ♠ K is with East then a simple finesse will provide it. This would not be a terrible plan - you can expect it to succeed 50% of the time. Of course that means you will go down the other 50% of the time.

The double finesse in ♥s is better. If East holds EITHER the ♥K OR the ♥Q you will succeed. This raises your chances to 75%.

So win the opening lead with dummy's ♦ K. Play the ♥5, finessing your ♥T. West will probably win this with either ♥K or ♥Q. No matter. Win West's probable ♦ return and take 5 ♣ tricks, discarding your 2 ♠ losers. Lead dummy's ♥7 and finesse the ♥J. When this wins the rest of the tricks are yours.

The choice between a single finesse and a double finesse is one that you will face many times. So remember that the double finesse works 75% of the time.

Baker 100Deals 69

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

With 9 points you have enough strength to make a positive response. And with a good 5-card suit you respond 3♣.

Partner says 4NT.

Partner's 4NT bid is clearly Blackwood. With one Ace you answer 5♦.

Partner says 5NT.

Partner's 5NT bid guarantees that your side has all the Aces, and asks for your Kings. With one King you answer 6♦.

Partner says 6NT and you pass.

North would play 6NT.

Board 4

South Deals

Both Vul

♠ J 9 5 2
♥ K 8 7 3
♦ A 7 5 2
♣ 6

♠ K 7 6 4

♥ A Q

♦ K Q 8

♣ A J 9 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A Q T
♥ J T 9 5 2
♦ J 9 4 3
♣ 5

♠ 8 3

♥ 6 4

♦ T 6

♣ K Q T 8 7 3 2

West

North

East

South

Pass

5♣

All Pass

1♣

5♣ by North

Baker 100Deals 70

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

This is NOT a simple choice.

Partner may have a hand where 3NT is a laydown. Or he may have a hand where 3NT is a godown.

Science isn't going to help you so you guess that 5♣ probably has a good chance.

South would play 5♣.

North plays 5♣. East leads ♦A, then ♦2.

Losers: ♠ 2 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 1 : ♣ 0 : Total = 4

MAYBE West will have the ♠A and the ♥K. But maybe not. You do have an extra ♦ trick so you need to determine the best use you can make of that.

First pull trumps. It takes one round. Play your other ♦ winner and discard one of dummy's ♠s. This protects you from losing more than one ♠. Enter dummy with a trump and lead the last ♠. Assume West has the ♠A. If he goes up with it you will be able to dump dummy's ♥ loser on your ♠K. If he plays low you put on your ♠K and you no longer have a ♠ loser.

If it turns out East has the ♠A then your ♠ play didn't work. In that case you would enter dummy again and try the ♥ finesse. This plan is a winner if West holds EITHER the ♥K or the ♠A.

With correct play you succeed when West holds the ♠A, but also if he holds the ♥K.

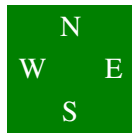
The key play was dumping the ♠ on your ♦K rather than a ♥.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q J T 7
♥ J 9 3
♦ A J 4
♣ 9 7 2

♠ A 5
♥ A K Q 7 6 4
♦ Q 7 3
♣ 8 5



♠ 9 3 2
♥ 8
♦ T 9 6 5 2
♣ A K Q J

♠ K 8 6 4
♥ T 5 2
♦ K 8
♣ T 6 4 3

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	4 ♥
All Pass			

4 ♥ by South

point or two.

North plays 4 ♥. East leads the ♣A, ♣K, ♣Q.

Losers: ♠ 0 : ♥ 0 : ♦ 2 : ♣ 2 : Total = 4

You must eliminate one ♦ loser, that means ruffing it in dummy. You would like to pull trumps first but you cannot chance pulling two rounds because if they don't split 2-2 you would have to leave one out until after you had ruffed the ♦. The problem would then be that the defender who took the ♦A might lead the third trump, preventing your ruff.

So first you must drive out the ♦A. After you ruff the ♣ you play a ♦ to dummy's ♦K. West takes the ♦A and leads a trump. You win in your hand, pull one more trump, then play ♦Q, ♦7, ruffing in dummy. Back to your hand with the ♠A, pull the last trump and claim.

And you couldn't get the ♦ ruff until after you had forced out the ♦A.

Baker 100Deals 71

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

You have a straightforward 1 ♥ opening bid.

Partner responds 2 ♥.

With 17 points and two doubletons you are on the borderline between passing and bidding game. If partner has the top of his 6-10 points you want to be in game, if he is at the bottom you don't.

A reasonable bid would be 3 ♥, inviting partner to bid game with a maximum.

A better bid is 3 ♦, a Help Suit Game Try. This says the same thing, bid game with a maximum, but also says "Use your ♦ holding to help you decide."

That was just what South needed. He only had 7 points but decided the ♦ help was worth an extra

Board 6

West Deals

None Vul

♠ 8 5
♥ K Q J T 9 2
♦ Q J 4
♣ Q J

♠ A J 4 3

♥ 4

♦ K 7 3 2

♣ A K 7 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q T 9

♥ 8 5

♦ T 9 8 6

♣ T 8 5 4

♠ K 7 6 2

♥ A 7 6 3

♦ A 5

♣ 9 6 2

West

1 ♥

4 ♠

North

Pass

All Pass

East

2 ♠

South

Pass

4 ♠ by West

Total = 7

Thinking like this makes it clear that you must win 3 of your 4 small trumps. The best way to do this is to win the ♥A and pull 2 rounds of trumps with ♠A and ♠K, spurning the finesse. Trumps split 3-2, so leave the master trump out and cash your other high card winners. Then start cross-ruffing, ♥s in dummy and ♦s in your hand. The defender with the master trump is welcome to ruff with it whenever he wants - it won't stop you from coming to T tricks.

If you tried that East would have won his ♠Q, then played another ♠. That would leave both you and dummy with only one trump each and you would have come up a trick short. You can afford to pull just two rounds of trumps, then must cross-ruff with your remaining four.

Baker 100Deals 72

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

When responding to partner's Takeout Double:- with 0-8 points you bid cheaply- with 9-11 points you jump in a suit- with 12 or more points you cue-bid their suit

You have 11 so you jump to 2♠. Partner bids 4♠ and you pass.

South plays 4♠. West leads the ♥K.

Losers: ♠ 1 : ♥ 3? : ♦ 0 : ♣ 1 : Total = 5?

The loser count is somewhat misleading because obviously you can ruff some ♥s in dummy.

Sometimes it is better to count winners, even though it is a suit contract. Winners: ♠ 2 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 2 : ♣ 2 :