

Deal 1

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 4
♥ K J 8 6 2
♦ K Q 5
♣ K 10 7 3

♠ A K Q 10 9 7
♥ A 5
♦ 7 3
♣ A Q 6



♠ J 5 2
♥ 10 9 3
♦ J 10 9 4
♣ J 8 2

19
12 3
6

♠ 8 6 3
♥ Q 7 4
♦ A 8 6 2
♣ 9 5 4

West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠
Dbl	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			
4 ♠ by North			
Lead: ♦ J			

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

You have a good hand, a very good hand. But not good enough to open 2 ♣.

Instead you open 1 ♠, partner raises to 2 ♠ and West doubles.

Some would think it clever to now redouble - to put the pressure on West maybe.

But why bother? West would just bid 3 ♥ or 3 ♦ and then you would bid 4 ♠. So save all the in-between and just bid it now.

North plays 4 ♠. East leads the ♦ J.

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

One loser to get rid of. Perhaps you could lead toward the ♥ Q? Nope, that wouldn't work because West surely has the ♥ K for his Takeout Double.

Play West for the ♣ K and finesse him out of it? That probably would work since he likely has that card for his Takeout Double.

So you take the ♦ A, pull trumps and then . . . and then you apologize to your partner. You had to be in dummy to finesse the ♣ and you were only going to be there once. You must finesse the ♣ immediately, then pull trumps.

If you decided to play for trumps to split 2-2 so you could use the ♠ 8 as an entry back to dummy for the ♣ finesse then you need to start thinking more clearly!

Deal 2

South Deals
None Vul

♠ K 8 4
♥ 9 7
♦ A 9 4
♣ Q J 10 5 3

8
10 6
16

♠ J 10 7
♥ A Q J 4
♦ 7 6 5 2
♣ 9 7



♠ A Q 9 6 5 3
♥ K 6 2
♦ K 8
♣ A 8

♠ 2
♥ 10 8 5 3
♦ Q J 10 3
♣ K 6 4 2

West North East South

			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

4 ♠ by South

Lead: ♣ Q

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

You open 1 ♠ and partner responds 2 ♠.

With 18 points you want to invite partner to bid game if he has 9 or 10 points. While you could do this with a 3 ♠ bid it is more informative to use a Help Suit Game try - bidding 3 of the suit you'd most like help in. You bid 3 ♥.

Partner has magnificent help in the ♥ suit so he bids 4 ♠.

South to play 4 ♠. West leads the ♣ Q.

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

You know you are going to get to dummy with a ♥ and then try the ♠ finesse. Your big worry should be that if the ♠ finesse loses East will be able to get the lead and play a ♦ through your ♦ K 8.

So ask yourself: "How is East going to get the lead?" The only trick he could win would be the ♣ K which he almost surely has. But you can keep

this from happening by simply holding up on the first ♣ trick. Win the next one with your ♣ A, enter dummy with a ♥ and take the ♠ finesse. It loses, but to West who can't hurt you with a ♦ play.

Then think about how to keep East from getting the lead - in this case holding up on the first trick.

Deal 3

North Deals
None Vul

♠ A 5
♥ 9 6 5
♦ 10 7 6 2
♣ A 10 8 4

11
8 10
11

West

Pass

Pass

4 ♠ by North

Lead: ♥ Q

♠ K J 6 2

♥ K 7 3

♦ J 4

♣ K 7 6 2



♠ Q 10 9 7 4 3

♥ A 8 2

♦ K Q 8

♣ 3

North

1 ♠

4 ♠

East

Pass

Pass

South

3 ♠

Pass

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

With four trumps and 11-12 points you have a pretty standard limit raise.

So you bid 3 ♠ and partner raises to game.

North would play 4 ♠.

South plays 4 ♠. West leads the ♥ Q.

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

You have a loser in each suit and must eliminate one of them. Since the defense can take their Aces whenever they want to you need to find a place to put your "slow" ♥ loser. There are two possibilities, but each must be tried immediately because once you lose the lead the defenders will set up their ♥.

You could win the ♥ in your hand and lead toward the ♣ K. If West holds ♣ A you can establish the ♣ K for a ♥ discard.

You could win in dummy and set up a ♦ no matter which defender holds ♦ A. You could then discard a ♥ from dummy on your good ♦. This is obviously the better choice since it works with any distribution.

Win the first trick with dummy's ♥ K and play ♦ J. Continue ♦s until they take the ♦ A. Win their return with your ♥ A and discard dummy's ♥ 7 on your good ♦. Only then do you start on trumps.

A very important part of this Plan was where you chose to win the first trick. Since entries are a problem with either hand you had to save the high ♥ as entry to the hand that would have the eventual winner.

Deal 4

North Deals
None Vul

♠ J 9 4
♥ 6 2
♦ A 10 7 2
♣ Q J 9 7

18
8 7
7

West

North

East

South

Pass
Pass
Pass

1 ♣
3 ♥
Pass

Pass
Pass
Pass

1 ♥
4 ♥

4 ♥ by South

Lead: ♣ Q

♠ A K 5
♥ A Q 9 3
♦ K Q 4
♣ 6 5 2



♠ Q 10 8 3
♥ J 10
♦ J 9 8 3
♣ K 10 4

♠ 7 6 2
♥ K 8 7 5 4
♦ 6 5
♣ A 8 3

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

You certainly want to show a Major suit so you respond 1 ♥.

Partner jumps to 3 ♥. What do you say?

Your response showed 6-10 points and at least four ♥s.

Partner is inviting you to game if you are in the top of that range. With 9 points you certainly are so you bid the game.

South plays 4 ♥. West leads the ♣ Q.

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

The defense will take their two ♣ tricks as soon as they get the lead. But you can discard your "slow" ♠ loser on one of dummy's ♦ honors IF West has the ♦ A and IF you act quickly.

Win the first trick with your ♣ A. Immediately play a ♦, putting up dummy's ♦ Q if West plays low. Pull a round of trumps with ♥ A, then another, getting back to your hand with ♥ K. Play your other ♦. If West doesn't take his ♦ A now then you no longer have a ♦ loser, so assume he takes it. The defense can now take their two ♣ winners, but when you get the lead again you can discard your ♠ loser on dummy's good ♦ K.

This wasn't a guaranteed Plan like some. If East held the ♦ A then you would go down.

Deal 5

West Deals
None Vul

♠ 4 2
♥ J 10 8 3
♦ A 9 2
♣ Q 10 7 3

16
7 9
8

West

Pass

Pass

Pass

3 NT by North

Lead: ♠ 6

♠ A 10 8
♥ A K 9
♦ J 8 7
♣ A 9 8 2



♠ Q J 5
♥ 7 6 4
♦ K Q 10 6 3
♣ 6 5

North

1 NT

3 NT

East

Pass

Pass

South

2 NT

Pass

♠ K 9 7 6 3
♥ Q 5 2
♦ 5 4
♣ K J 4

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

With a balanced hand and 16 points you open 1 NT. In the Bridge dictionary under "Opening 1 NT Bid" they probably have a picture of this hand. Partner responds 2 NT. What do you bid?

Partner's 2 NT bid is invitational. Specifically it tells you to pass with 15 points or bid 3 NT with 17 points. But it doesn't tell you what to do when you have 16 points. So you have to make a judgement about your hand. Is it closer to 15 or closer to 17? The answer is definitely "closer to 17". Aces are actually worth a little more than 4 points and you have three of them. Also, most of your spot cards are higher than average, with only one card below a 7. So you bid 3 NT.

North plays 3 NT. East leads the ♠ 6, West plays ♠ 2.

Winner count: ♠ 2 : ♥ 2 : ♦ 0 : ♣ 1 : Total = 5

You are bound to get 2 winners in ♠s. You need to create 4 winners and the ♦ suit offers the perfect opportunity. Drive out the ♦ A and the other four ♦s are winners. But there is a very critical problem. If the defenders hold up their ♦ A until the third round of the suit you may be locked out of dummy.

Suppose you win the first ♠ with your ♠ 8. Then you start on ♦s and the defense wins the third one and leads a ♥. You win the ♥ but your only hope of reaching dummy is with a ♠. If you take your ♠ A, then lead a low one East will take his ♠ K and two more. Suppose you try to sneak over to dummy by playing your ♠ T. East will jump up with ♠ K, then lead another which you must win with your ♠ A. No entry.

In hindsight the answer is simple. Win the very first ♠ trick with your ♠ A. That leaves dummy with the ♠ Q J and a sure entry. It seems strange to win a trick with a higher card than necessary but it is the only way to make this contract.

to see the effect of your play to the first trick.

Notice that no matter what you try East can prevent you from reaching dummy.

to see how the correct play works.

Notice that East cannot prevent you from reaching dummy with the ♠ Q J.