

Board 1

South Deals

None Vul

♠ Q 9 8 6
♥ K Q J 3
♦ K Q
♣ 8 5 3

♠ A J T 7 5 4 2

♥ -

♦ 7 5

♣ A K J T

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 3

♥ A 8 7 4 2
♦ J 8 2
♣ 9 6 4

♠ -

♥ T 9 6 5

♦ A T 9 6 4 3

♣ Q 7 2

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

4♠ by South

If the missing ♠s split 3-3 then your life is easy. You play ♠A, then any ♠. Win their return and play any ♠. The defense can win two ♠s but no more.

It's when the ♠s are splitting 4-2 that you must be careful. If somebody has ♠ K Q 9 3 for example you will go down. The one important distribution to guard against is a doubleton honor in one hand. In this case your second ♠ play must be a LOW ♠. When this drives out one honor your ♠ J T can insure that only one more trick is lost.

But if your second ♠ play is a small ♠ West will win the ♠K and you will be left with the ♠ J T to deal with East's ♠ Q 9, holding him to just one more trick.

Baker 100Deals 13

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

This is awkward. With 8 points you must respond, but you cannot bid a new suit at the 2-level without 11 or more. Although you are far from balanced you must say 1NT.

You might as well not have worried. Partner jumps to 4♠ and you pass.

South would play 4♠.

North plays 4♠. East leads the ♥K.

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

That 1♦ loser is definite. So instead of guessing how many ♠ losers you have, just approach it from the viewpoint that you can afford 2 but not 3.

Board 2

South Deals
N-S Vul

♠ J T 9 2
♥ 8 6 2
♦ 8 7
♣ J 9 7 5

♠ K 6 3

♥ Q J

♦ A K 4 2

♣ A T 6 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q 8 5
♥ A 7 4
♦ Q T 9 6
♣ K 8 2

♠ A 7 4
♥ K T 9 5 3
♦ J 5 3
♣ Q 3

West	North	East	South
Pass	3♥	Pass	1NT
All Pass			3NT

3 NT by South

Baker 100Deals 14

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

You and partner do NOT play Jacoby Transfer Bids.

With 11 points you know you want to reach game since partner has at least 15. However, you aren't sure at this point just which game to reach. If you knew partner held 3♥s you'd choose 4♥ since you would have an 8-card Major fit. On the other hand, if you knew partner had only a doubleton ♥ you would choose 3NT, which would probably be better. So you jump to 3♥. This bid tells partner to "Pick a Game".

He picks 3NT.

South would play 3NT.

North plays 3NT. East leads the ♠J.

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

Although the ♦ and ♣ suits offer the possibility for creating a winner it is evident that you really need to bring in the ♥s. By driving out the ♥A you will establish the 4 winners that you need. The problem is that when you play ♥Q then ♥J a good defender will hold up his ♥A. You could get to dummy with the ♠A and continue ♥s, but you would no longer have a sure entry to get back to those winners.

There is an almost foolproof plan. Win the first trick with your ♠K (saving dummy's ♠A). Lead ♥Q, then ♥J, OVERTAKING WITH DUMMY'S ♥K. Now continue the ♥T driving out the ♥A. You will be able to reach the ♥ tricks with the ♠A.

Board 3

South Deals

None Vul

♠ K Q J T 8

♥ A Q

♦ 9 8 4

♣ K 9 6

♠ 9 5 4

♥ T 8 7 3

♦ A Q 6 2

♣ 7 5

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 6 2

♥ 5 2

♦ T 7 5 3

♣ A 8 4 3 2

♠ A 7 3

♥ K J 9 6 4

♦ K J

♣ Q J T

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

2♥ by North

Baker 100Deals 15

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

You may not have had a problem with this opening bid, but be assured that many would. The hand meets all the requirements for an opening 1NT bid, balanced distribution and 16 points. So lots of good players would open 1NT. However, there is the question of the 5-card Major. Another group of good players don't open 1NT when their hand contains a 5-card Major.

So let us agree that either could be right and say that you chose 1♥. West overcalls 1♠, partner says 2♥ and you pass.

South plays 2♥. West leads the ♠K.

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

You might get lucky in the trump suit and only lose one trick, but you can't count on it. Dummy's ♦ suit has two extra winners, but there is the problem of transportation. By the time you get to enjoy those two winners you might have already lost six tricks.

One thing should be crystal clear. If you now lead a trump the defenders will win and cash 2 ♠s. You can avoid this by waiting on the trumps and playing ♦K, then overtake the ♦J with dummy's ♦Q. Then play ♦A and discard a ♠. Now from dummy you can lead a ♥ and perhaps play your ♥K but even if it loses you will still make the contract.

Make sure you visualize how the play would have gone if you had played a trump to the second trick. When you see clearly the bad things that are likely to happen you will look harder for a remedy. When confronted with a hand such as this many beginning (or careless) players just automatically start trying to pull trumps. And many times they go down on hands that could have been made.

Board 4

South Deals
Both Vul

♠ Q J T 4
♥ Q T 9 3
♦ Q T 4 3
♣ 5

♠ A K 3

♥ K 8 6 5
♦ 9 7 6 2

♣ A J

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 8 7 6 2
♥ J
♦ A K J 8
♣ 7 6 4 2

♠ 9 5
♥ A 7 4 2
♦ 5
♣ K Q T 9 8 3

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	2♥

4♥ by North

Baker 100Deals 16

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

It is tempting to bid 3NT and hope partner can use your ♣ suit. But you have something very important in your hand - a 4-card ♥ suit.

So you bid 2♣. (Stayman, not your ♣ suit!) Partner replies 2♥. What do you say next?

He who knows, goes. You have 11 points and 4 ♥s. Partner has at least 15 points and 4 ♥s. So you bid the game.

South would play 4♥.

North plays 4♥. East leads the ♠Q.

North plays 4♥. East leads the ♠Q.

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

This PLAN looks awfully simple. Win the ♠, play ♥A, ♥K, then give up a ♥. When you get back in run the ♣s.

But when you play the second high ♥ West shows out.

Make another Plan, then

Let's start over. Play ♥K, then ♥A. West shows out. If you play another ♥ East will pull all the trumps and they will start winning ♦ tricks. Lots of ♦ tricks.

So don't lead the third ♥. Leave East with his two master trumps and start playing ♣ winners. East will eventually ruff in with one of his high trumps and perhaps take a ♦ trick. But you have trump control and can get in again and reach dummy with a ruff to continue ♣s. All East can do is get his one more trump.

This hand is much rarer - leaving TWO master trumps out. But you can see that it is the correct technique.