

For most players, the play of the hand is the most exciting part of the game. You and your partner have exchanged information through the bidding and have decided on what you both think is the best contract. Now one member of the partnership, the declarer, must try to take the required number of tricks. When you are declarer, you will often have to depend on lady luck to help *bring home the contract*. The more you learn about the play of the hand, the more frequently she will be on your side.

As declarer, it's tempting to start to play without making a plan. You can usually see a couple of tricks that can be taken right away, and you may feel that everyone's eyes are on you — waiting for you to do something. If you do start with no plan in mind, however, halfway through the play you will often find yourself looking longingly at winners in one hand with no way to reach them. Or you may realize after the deal is finished how you could have made your contract. Learn to take a few moments at the beginning of each deal to make a plan; it is well worth the effort.

There are four basic steps when making a plan, whether your goal is to put someone on the moon or play a bridge hand:

1. **Determine your objective.** Start by deciding exactly what you want to do. To put someone on the moon, your objective is to land the astronaut and return that person safely to earth. When playing a bridge hand, your objective is to fulfill your contract.
2. **Determine how close you are to your objective.** By assessing your current situation, see how far you must go to reach your goal. If you're standing on earth, you must travel 240,000 miles to reach the moon. If you're playing a contract that requires nine tricks and you have only seven, you'll need to find two more tricks to make the contract.
3. **Determine the resources you have available.** Once you know what you must do to meet your objective, look at the various resources at

your disposal that may help you meet it. Several alternatives may be available. You may have a manned satellite already in orbit, the materials to build a spaceship, or the technology to build a transporter (“Beam me up, Scottie”). At the bridge table, you may be able to promote an extra trick, take a finesse, or ruff a loser in dummy.

4. **Decide how to put it all together.** Select the best option from among the various choices. Plan to do things in the right order and prepare for any contingency. Should you build the spaceship first or train the astronaut first? When playing a hand, the best play in an individual suit may not be best when you take the whole deal into consideration.

To help remember the four steps, use the following PLAN:

1. **P**ause to consider your objective
2. **L**ook at your winners and losers
3. **A**nalyze your alternatives
4. **N**ow put it all together



Let's take a closer look at each of the steps in the PLAN.

PAUSE TO CONSIDER YOUR OBJECTIVE

The first step in the PLAN is to *Pause to consider your objective*. Whether you are playing your first hand of bridge or are a world champion, consider your goal. A seasoned player does this automatically but nevertheless does it. Considering your objective is as simple as reminding yourself of how many tricks you need to make the contract. However, there is a different focus depending on whether you, as declarer, are playing in a suit contract or in notrump.

In notrump, consider your objective from the point of view of how many tricks, or winners, you need. In 1NT, you need seven winners: the book of six tricks plus one. In 7NT, you need all 13 tricks: six plus seven.

In a suit contract, consider your objective from the point of view of losers, the number of tricks you can afford to lose. In a contract of 4♠, you can afford three losers. If the opponents take three of the 13 tricks available, you will still end up with 10. In a 6 contract, you can afford only one loser. If you lose one trick, you may still take the remaining 12 to make your contract.

It may seem simpler to count either winners or losers and not worry about whether the contract is in notrump or a suit. In a notrump contract, however, you can predict winners more easily because the opponents can't ruff them. It's not as easy to determine your losers since you have no trump suit to stop the opponents, and the number of tricks they take may depend on how long a suit they have.

In a suit contract, the effect of the trump suit generally makes it easier to focus on losers. The trump suit allows you to avoid losing tricks that you might have to lose at notrump. You can eliminate losers by ruffing them in dummy or discarding them on extra winners.

Remember, counting winners or losers is only a matter of perspective. There are times when you need to consider your potential losers in a notrump contract if you must give up the lead to the opponents. In a suit contract, you may need to look at the source of your winners. When you are starting to use the PLAN, though, count winners in notrump and losers in a suit contract.

The second step in the PLAN is to Look at your winners and losers. By doing this and comparing the result to the objective determined in the first step, you can see how much work you must do to reach your goal.

In a notrump contract, start by counting winners or sure tricks — those you can take without giving up the lead. If your objective is to take nine tricks and you can count seven winners, you need to find two additional tricks to make your contract.

How do you count winners? Start by looking at your combined (declarer's hand and dummy's hand) holding in each suit to decide how many winners, or sure tricks, you have. Then add up the total for all four suits. Consider these examples:

DUMMY: A K Q J Four sure tricks: the ace, the king, the queen, and the jack can be taken without giving up the lead.
DECLARER: 5 4 3 2

DUMMY: K Q J 10 This suit has a lot of potential. Before you can take any tricks, however, the opponents will get the lead with the ace. Therefore, count no sure tricks.
DECLARER: 5 4 3

Winners don't have to be all in the same hand. Compare this holding with the first example:

DUMMY: A K 5 4 You have four winners. Since both hands have the same number of cards, taking four tricks in any order won't be difficult.
DECLARER: Q J 3 2

The maximum number of winners you can count is the number of cards in the longer hand (*i.e.*, the hand that has more cards in the suit than the other hand):

DUMMY: A K
DECLARER: Q J
Although there are four high cards, only two tricks are available because that's the number of cards in the longer hand.

DUMMY: A K 3
DECLARER: Q J
Now there are three winners because the longer side is three cards in length. Only one high card will be wasted.

DUMMY: A K Q 3 2
DECLARER: J 10
You have five top cards: the ace, the king, the queen, the jack, and the 10. The longer side has five cards, so five winners are available in this suit.

You don't need all of the high cards if the opponents will have no cards left in the suit after you play your high cards:

DUMMY: A K Q J 2
DECLARER: 6 5 4 3
Since you have nine cards in the combined hands, the opponents can hold only four. After you play the ace, the king, the queen, and the jack, the opponents will have no cards left in the suit, and your 2 will be a winner. Count five winners in the suit.

DUMMY: A K 3 2
DECLARER: Q 8 7 6 5 4
Similarly, this suit combination will produce six winners.

DUMMY: A K 3
DECLARER: Q 8 7 6 5 4
This suit probably will produce six tricks, but one of the opponents may hold all four of the missing cards: J-10-9-2. Count three winners even though this suit will be one of the first places you look for extra tricks if you need them.

Let's count the number of sure tricks in an entire deal. The contract is 3NT. Your objective is to take nine tricks. How many winners do you have?

DUMMY
 ♠ 9 8 7
 A K Q
 Q J 6 4 2
 ♣ 9 8

DECLARER
 ♠ K Q J 10
 7 6 3
 A K 5 3
 ♣ A 7

There are no sure tricks in spades although there is potential for extra tricks after the ace is played. You can't count sure tricks yet, since you can't take them without giving the lead to the opponents. There are three heart winners: the A, the K, and the Q; five diamond winners: the A, the K, the Q, the J, and either the 2, the 4, or the 6 (the opponents have only four diamonds, so the 2, the 4, or the 6 will be a winner); and one club winner: the ♣A. The total is nine tricks. You have what you need to make your contract.

In a trump contract, start by counting your losers — the tricks you may have to lose to the opponents. If your objective is to make 4♠ and you can count four losers, you must find a way to eliminate one of your losers in order to make your contract.

How do you count losers? Counting losers is usually more challenging than counting winners. Start by looking at each suit in turn. Focus on your (declarer's) holding in the suit but look across at dummy to see if any high cards can help out. Then add up the losers in all four suits.

Consider the following examples, remembering to focus on declarer's holding:

Play of the Hand

DUMMY: Q 4
DECLARER: A K 3
There is one loser, the 3 in declarer's hand. Does dummy have any high-card help? Yes, the queen will take care of the 3, so count no losers in this suit.

DUMMY: 7 5 4
DECLARER: J 6 3
There are no winners in declarer's hand, and dummy can provide no help. Count three losers in this suit. The opponents can take only three tricks in the suit because you will use your trump suit to win the trick if they lead this suit a fourth time.

The number of losers in a side suit (a suit other than the trump suit) is never counted as more than the number of cards in declarer's hand. This is because it's assumed that declarer will play a trump if the suit is led. Declarer eventually may run out of trumps, but this isn't usually a concern when initially planning the play. This problem will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

The situation is different if declarer has more cards than dummy. Compare these examples:

DUMMY: 8 7 5 4
DECLARER: 3 2
Declarer has only two cards in the suit — with no high cards to help in dummy. Declarer counts two losers in the suit.

DUMMY: 3 2
DECLARER: 8 7 5 4
There are four losers. Even though dummy has only two cards, the focus is on declarer's hand.

When you have a sequence of cards in the combined hands and are missing one or more higher ranking cards, count your losers as the number of missing high cards. For example:

CHAPTER 1 — Making a Plan

DUMMY: K Q J
DECLARER: 9 4 2
Missing the ace, count only one loser.

DUMMY: Q 10 4
DECLARER: J 6 3
The ace and the king of the suit are missing. Count two losers.

DUMMY: J 8 4 3
DECLARER: 10 9 7 2
The ace, the king, and the queen are missing. Count three losers.

It's interesting to note the difference between counting winners and losers when you have a sequence of cards in a suit. You count only one loser when you have the king, the queen, and the jack, and yet you count no winners for the suit. A winner, by definition, is a sure trick — one you can take without giving up the lead. Keep in mind that the actual cards in the suit are the same in both cases. The change in perspective helps to simplify problem solving. It's easier to view the sequence of king, queen, and jack as having only one loser in a trump contract, even though, until the ace is played, they are technically all losers.

If you have only one high card by itself and the opponents have one or more higher cards, count it as a loser. Your high card may win a trick but count it as a loser when making your initial plan. For example:

DUMMY: K 3
DECLARER: 8 6
There are two losers in declarer's hand. Dummy has the king, which may be a trick, depending on which opponent has the ace. For now, count this suit as two losers.

DUMMY: 8 7 3
DECLARER: Q 6 2
Count this suit as three losers. True, the queen might win a trick, but that depends on where the king and the ace are. It's best to be cautious.

Sometimes the high cards are in broken sequences — you are missing one or more high cards. Look carefully at these suits to determine the number of losers. Consider these examples:

DUMMY: 9 7 2 You have one loser, the king. You may be able to eliminate this loser by trapping it, as you will see later. For now, count one loser.
DECLARER: A Q J

DUMMY: K J 10 You are missing two of the top five cards — the ace and the queen. Count two losers.
DECLARER: 8 7 5

DUMMY: K J 4 You are missing three of the top five cards — the ace, the queen, and the 10. It's possible to lose all three tricks, so count three losers.
DECLARER: 6 3 2

DUMMY: A Q 10 The ace will take a trick, but you are missing the king and the jack. Count two losers.
DECLARER: 7 4 2

Sometimes you need to consider both the high cards and the length of the suit. Look at this example:

DUMMY: K Q 7 6 You are missing the ace, the jack, the 10, the 9, and the 8. How many losers you actually have depends on which opponent has the ace

and how the missing cards are divided. If they are divided 3-2 (three in the opponent's hand, two in the other), you will lose at most two tricks and may lose only one. If they are divided 4-1, you lose two or three tricks. A conservative view would be two losers, and you plan in later steps to eliminate one of them.

Such combinations may be difficult to estimate when you are just

starting to play bridge. As you become more familiar with the various techniques for handling such card combinations, you'll find it easier to estimate your losers.

Let's count the losers in an entire deal. The contract is 4♠ so you can afford only three losers. How many losers do you have?

DUMMY

♠ K 4 3

A Q 2

6 4 3 2

♣ J 10 7

DECLARER

♠ Q J 10 8 7 6

6 3

A K

♣ Q 4 3

There is one loser in spades, the ♠ A. There are two low hearts in declarer's hand, but dummy has the A to take care of one of them. Dummy also has the

Q, but that may not prevent the loss of a trick to the K. Count one loser in this suit. There are no losers in diamonds since declarer has only two cards in the suit, the ♦ A and the ♦ K. After they have been played, declarer will be able to ruff diamonds if they are led. There are two losers in clubs since the ♣ A and the ♣ K are missing. The total is four losers — one more than you can afford.

As you develop your PLAN, it will become important to distinguish between two types of losers — quick and slow. A quick loser is one that the opponents can take as soon as they get the lead. A slow loser is one that they could take eventually but not immediately since you have one or more winners still left in the suit.

In the above hand, for example, the spade and club losers are quick losers. The opponents get to make the opening lead and are in a position to take the ♠ A, the ♣ A, and the ♣ K right away. The heart loser is slow. Since you have the ♥ A, the opponents can't take the ♥ K right away.

If you have too many quick losers, you don't want to give up the lead, since the opponents will be in a position to defeat your contract. If the

tricks are slow, you can afford to give up the lead if necessary since you can regain it before the opponents take too many tricks. As you will see in later chapters, differentiating between quick and slow losers often will tell you how you plan to play the hand. Here are more examples:

DEALER: K Q J This suit has only one loser but it's a quick loser. As soon as the opponents get the lead, they can take the ace.
 WESTER: 4 3 2

DEALER: A 4 3 The two losers in this suit are both slow, because if the opponents lead the suit, you can win the first trick with the ace. In Chapter 4, we'll look at how you might eliminate such losers before the opponents have a chance to take them.
 WESTER: 8 7 2

After completing the first two steps of your PLAN, you'll know what your objective is and how far you are from it. Sometimes, you'll have the exact number of tricks you need or no more losers than you can afford. In that case, you can skip over the third step and go right to *Putting it all together*. More often, you'll need to develop some extra winners or eliminate some losers to make your contract. The third step of the PLAN tells you to *analyze your alternatives*.

You can use a variety of techniques to develop the extra winners you need when playing in a notrump contract:

- TIP**
- Promoting high cards
 - Developing long suits
 - Finessing (leading toward the high card)

When analyzing your alternatives, look at the combined holding in each suit to see which technique may produce one or more of the extra tricks you need. In future chapters, you'll see how each method can be used to develop extra winners.

The techniques used in notrump can also be applied to suit contracts to help eliminate extra losers. Because of the effect of the trump suit, two additional methods are commonly used to eliminate losers:

- Ruffing losers in dummy
 - Discarding losers
- 

In later chapters, we'll see how to use these alternatives.

The last step of the PLAN reminds you to *Now put it all together*. You may have more than one alternative for developing the extra tricks you need or eliminating extra losers. Select the best alternative or combine your chances whenever possible. Even if you have the tricks you need, there are some pitfalls to watch out for. In later chapters, you will learn to be careful with entries between the two hands and to keep an eye on what the opponents are doing.

Even if you have all of the tricks you need, you should keep some things in mind when putting it all together.

Sometimes, you may find yourself trying to get more tricks than you need to make your contract. Look at this example. The contract is 3NT, and the opening lead is the ♣5.

DUMMY: A K Q 4 7 5 2
 K J 10
 A Q 7 6
 DECLARER: A 3 2
 K 8 6
 A Q 7 5 3
 3 2

You may be tempted to try to win the first trick with dummy's ♣Q. It seems like a good opportunity to get an extra trick. How are you to know whether this play is a good idea?

Before deciding on the play in a particular suit, make your PLAN. The first step tells you to *Pause to consider your objective*. You need nine tricks to make the contract of 3NT. The second step reminds you to *Look at your winners and losers*. Count your sure tricks: three spades, five diamonds, and one club — a total of nine winners. On this deal, the third step,

analyze your alternatives, is unnecessary since you already have enough tricks to meet your objective. Move to the fourth step, *Now put it all together*, and concentrate your energy on taking your nine winners.

Your PLAN shows that you can make the contract without playing ♣Q on the first trick. What could go wrong if you forgot to PLAN and yielded to the temptation to play the ♣Q? If the ♣Q were taken by your right-hand opponent's ♣K, RHO might lead a heart. Your ♠K could be trapped. You might lose four (or more) heart tricks along with the club trick and be defeated in a contract you could have made.

Always make your PLAN. If you have all of the tricks you need, take care before something goes wrong.

Sometimes you have to be careful of the order in which you take your tricks. Take a look at the following suit combination:

DUMMY: A Q J 2
 DECLARER: K 3

Counting winners, you, as declarer, have four sure tricks: the ace, the king, the queen, and the jack. When a suit is unevenly divided between your hand and dummy, you need to plan the order in which you play your winners. Suppose you start by winning a trick with dummy's

ace, playing the 3 from your hand. Next you lead dummy's 2 to your king. You have taken two tricks but now you have a problem. The queen and the jack are left in dummy. You must lead from your hand, but you have no cards left in the suit. Sometimes dummy will have a winner in another suit that will let you get to dummy, but you won't always be so fortunate. The secret is to start by winning the first trick with the high card from the short side. Win the first trick with the king in your hand, and then play the 3 to dummy's ace. Now, you are in the correct hand at the right time and can take the queen and the jack.

Examples:

DUMMY: J 10 2
 DECLARER: A K Q 4 3

To take five winners, start by winning the first two tricks with dummy's jack and 10. Then play dummy's 2 to your ace, king, and queen.

DUMMY: A K 3
 DECLARER: Q 2

Win the first trick with the high card in the short hand, the queen. Then play the 2 to dummy's ace and king.

If you are declaring a trump contract, you may lose an extra trick if an opponent plays a trump on one of your side suit winners. You can prevent this by playing the trump suit before taking your winners in the side suit. Draw the opponents' trumps until they have none left.

When to draw trumps will be discussed further in later chapters. For now, start by drawing the opponents' trumps if you have no more losers than you can afford.

While this book concentrates on the play of the hand, more frequently you will find yourself defending. One of the most important aspects of defense is the opening lead, since you must decide what to lead before

get to look at dummy. Here are a few guidelines to help you get started when leading against notrump contracts.

Because there is no trump suit in a notrump contract, once you get the lead as a defender and have established winners in a suit, you can cash them. Declarer is powerless to stop you. A defender's objective, therefore, is to establish enough tricks to defeat the contract, get the lead, and cash them. While high cards are a potential source of tricks, an equally important source is the small cards in long suits. You generally won't have enough high cards to defeat the contract right away, so you must work at establishing low cards as winners, using high cards to help you get the lead back.

With the advantage of the opening lead, you normally want to start your defense by establishing tricks in the longest suit in the combined hands — the longer the suit, the greater the potential for establishing low cards as winners. Unfortunately, you can't see your partner's hand when making the opening lead, so you must try to determine which suit your side's longest suit.

If your partner has bid a suit, you have some information about the suit. With nothing clearly better to do, lead your partner's suit. If the opponents have bid a suit, showing some length in the suit, avoid leading that suit. With no other clues, choose the longest suit in your hand. If you have a choice of long suits, pick the stronger suit.

Suppose you are leading against a contract of 3NT with the following hand:

♠ 10 9 8 7 Left to your own devices, you would choose your
 ♠ K longest suit and lead a spade. Your hope is to estab-
 ♠ 10 9 lish some of your spades as winners while keeping
 ♠ 4 2 your high cards in the other suits to help you regain
 the lead. If your partner has bid diamonds, you would
 lead a diamond instead.

Always keep your objective in mind. If the contract were 6NT, rather than 3NT, you would need only two tricks to defeat it. You would start by taking the ♠ A and the ♠ K.

Once you have selected the suit, decide which card in the suit to lead. If you have three or more high cards (A, K, Q, J, or 10) that are touching (e.g., K-Q-J-7-4, Q-J-10-7), lead the top card. Leading the top card of an honor sequence tells your partner that you have the next-lower card but don't have the next-higher card.

If, as is common, you don't have a sequence of touching high cards, lead a low card. For reasons we won't go into here, you lead your fourth-highest card if you have a suit of four or more cards (e.g., K-J-7-5, Q-10-8-6-3). Since you usually lead your longest suit against a notrump contract (picking the stronger suit if you have a choice), you might hear bridge players use the adage, "Lead the fourth highest from your longest and strongest suit against notrump." This is good advice if you have nothing better to guide you.

Here are some examples of choosing the opening lead against a 3NT contract with nothing to guide you.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>♠ A 3
 Q J 10 6 3
 9 5 3</p> | <p>Pick your longest suit, hearts. With three touching high cards, lead the top card, the ♠ Q.</p> |
| <p>♣ J 6 3</p> | |
| <p>♠ K J 6 3
 7 3
 J 9 4 2</p> | <p>With a choice of long suits, pick the stronger, spades. With no honor sequence, lead low, the ♠ 3.</p> |
| <p>♣ Q 6 5</p> | |

, 2
Q 4
K 10 8 7 4 2
A J 6 3

Pick your long suit, diamonds. Traditionally, you would select the fourth-highest card, the 7. At this stage in your bridge career, it wouldn't make much difference if you chose the 4 or the 2 instead.

To refresh your memory, here is a review of some of the bidding concepts covered in the first book in this series, *Bidding*, which may prove useful when bidding the practice deals.

HAND VALUATION

High-card Points		Distribution Points	
Ace	4 points	Five-card suit	1 point
King	3 points	Six-card suit	2 points
Queen	2 points	Seven-card suit	3 points
Jack	1 point	Eight-card suit	4 points

Opening the Bidding 1NT or One of a Suit

With fewer than 13 total points, pass.

With 16 to 18 points and a balanced hand, bid 1NT.

With 13 to 21 points:

With a five-card or longer suit:

- Bid your longest suit.
- Bid the higher ranking of two five-card or two six-card suits.

With no five-card or longer suit:

- Bid your longer minor suit.
- Bid the higher ranking of two four-card minor suits or the lower ranking of two three-card minor suits.

Take Note

Responses to Opening of 1NT

- 0 to 7 • Bid 2♣, 2♦, or 2♠ with a five-card or longer suit (2♣ is reserved for the Stayman convention*).
- Otherwise, pass.
- 8 or 9 • Bid 2NT (the Stayman convention* can be used to uncover an eight-card major suit fit).
- 10 to 14 • Bid 4♣ or 4♠ with a six-card or longer suit.
- Bid 3♣ or 3♠ with a five-card suit.
- Otherwise, bid 3NT (the Stayman convention* can be used to uncover an eight-card major suit fit).

*The Stayman convention will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Responses to Opening Bids of One of a Suit

- to 5 ◦ Pass
- to 10 **Responding to a major suit**
 - Raise to the two level with three-card support.
 - Bid a new suit at the one level.
 - Bid 1NT.

Responding to a minor suit

- Bid a new suit at the one level.
- Raise to the two level with five-card support.
- Bid 1NT.

to 12 **Responding to a major suit**

- Raise to the three level with three-card or longer support.
- Bid a new suit.

Responding to a minor suit

- Bid a new suit.
- Raise to the three level with five-card or longer support.

to 15 or more **Responding to a major suit**

- Jump to 2NT with a balanced hand.
- Bid a new suit.

Responding to a minor suit

- Bid a new suit.
- Jump to 2NT with a balanced hand.

When you are declarer, take the time to make a PLAN before you start to play:

1. **P**ause to consider your objective
2. **L**ook at your winners and losers
3. **A**nalyze your alternatives
4. **N**ow put it all together



Consider your objective in terms of the number of winners you must take or losers you can afford to make your contract. **In notrump contracts, count your winners. In trump contracts, count your losers.** If you need to develop extra winners or eliminate extra losers, look at each suit to see what alternatives are available. When putting it all together, take your tricks if you have enough to make the contract. Remember to **play the high card from the short hand first** and to **draw trumps if playing in a suit contract.**

When defending against a notrump contract, use the adage **fourth highest from your longest and strongest** to guide you when selecting an opening lead.

In a contract of 3NT, the objective is to take nine tricks. In a contract of 2♣, the objective is to lose no more than five tricks. Look at the following contracts and decide the objective, counting winners in notrump and losers in a trump contract.

- 1) 3♣
- 2) 6NT
- 3) 4♠
- 4) 1NT
- 5) 2

Count the number of sure winners in each suit — the tricks that can be taken without giving up the lead.

JIMMY:	1) AKQ	2) AJ	3) QJ75	4) A832	5) KQ
DECLARER:	42	KQ	AK432	K95	42
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Count the number of losers that declarer has in each suit — the tricks that could be lost to the opponents. Are the losers quick or slow?

JIMMY:	1) KQJ4	2) J1098	3) 9862	4) A5	5) K64
DECLARER:	98	5432	A5	9862	85
Losers:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Quick/Slow: _____

JIMMY:	6) Q42	7) K76	8) 7432	9) KQ5	10) AJ10
DECLARER:	983	J1093	AKJ	742	842
Losers:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Quick/Slow: _____

- 1) To lose no more than four tricks.
- 2) To take 12 tricks.
- 3) To lose no more than three tricks.
- 4) To take seven tricks.
- 5) To lose no more than five tricks.

- 1) Three sure tricks.
- 2) Two sure tricks since there are only two cards on each side of the table.
- 3) Five sure tricks. The opponents have only four cards in the suit and even if one opponent has all four cards, the 2 will still be a winner.
- 4) Two sure tricks.
- 5) No sure tricks. Promote a winner by giving up the lead.

- 1) One loser; quick.
- 2) Three losers; quick.
- 3) One loser; slow.
- 4) Three losers; slow.
- 5) Two losers; quick.
- 6) Three losers; quick.
- 7) Two losers; one quick and one slow.
- 8) One loser; slow.
- 9) Two losers; one quick and one slow.
- 10) Two losers; slow.

With which card would declarer win the first trick in each of the following suits?

DEALER: 1) A Q J 10 3 2) A 4 3) A J 4 4) Q 5 5) K Q 6
 K 2 K Q 5 K Q 7 3 A K J 7 A J 9

- 1) The king 2) The ace 3) The ace or jack
 4) The queen 5) It doesn't matter

Which card would the opening leader select from each of the following hands against a contract of 3NT?

1) ♠ J 6 3 2) ♠ 9 4 3) ♠ 10 8 6 5 2
 Q 7 J 10 8 6 A J 7
 K Q J 8 5 Q J 10 8 K 5
 ♣ 10 8 4 ♣ A 7 3 ♣ Q 5 2

- 1) K 2) Q 3) ♠ 5

As dealer, what would be the opening bid with each of the following hands?

1) ♠ K 9 7 2) ♠ A Q 3) ♠ A K J 5
 J 4 K 10 5 3
 Q J 9 8 4 K J 4 Q 10 7 5 3
 ♣ K 7 3 ♣ Q J 10 8 4 ♣ Q 9 4

- 1) Pass 2) 1NT 3) 1
 4) 1♠ 5) 1♣ 6) 1

4) ♠ Q 10 8 7 4 5) ♠ A J 5 3 6) ♠ K 8 4 2
 A K Q J 6 7
 A K 10 7 3 A 4 A Q J 5
 ♣ 6 ♣ Q 9 6 2 ♣ A K Q 4

Partner opens the bidding 1NT. What response should be made in each of the following hands?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1) ♠ J84
Q62
10853
♣ J93 | 2) ♠ 1086432
J5
96
♣ J109 | 3) ♠ K9
QJ8
J1083
♣ Q863 |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 4) ♠ A5
J108643
KQ6
♣ 52 | 5) ♠ KJ983
A42
72
♣ Q103 | 6) ♠ 72
K5
Q109752
♣ A42 |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Partner opens the bidding 1. What response should be made in each of the following hands?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1) ♠ J73
94
Q43
♣ 108762 | 2) ♠ 82
QJ5
J9642
♣ K83 | 3) ♠ Q964
A2
743
♣ Q952 |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 4) ♠ QJ10
62
K9763
♣ J105 | 5) ♠ 84
Q6
A832
♣ KQ1062 | 6) ♠ AK4
KJ65
10963
♣ 87 |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

1) Pass

2) 2♠

3) 2NT

4) 4

5) 3♠

6) 3NT

1) Pass

2) 2

3) 1♠

4) 1NT

5) 2♣

6) 3

(E-Z Deal Cards: #1, Deal 1 — Dealer, North)

Turn up all of the cards on the first pre-dealt deal. Put each card and dummy-style at the edge of the table in front of each player.

The Bidding

Neither North nor East has enough to open the bidding. With a balanced hand and 17 total points, what opening bid best describes South's hand?

West passes. North is the captain and decides the level and denomination of the contract. With 11 total points and no interest in the major suits, what should North's decision be?

Dealer:	♠ 7 5		
North	7 3 2		
	A Q 10 6 3		
	♣ A 9 2		
	♠ K Q J 10 6		♠ 9 4 3
	A 10 6		Q J 9 8 4
	9 7		2
	♣ 10 6 5		♣ J 8 7 4
	♠ A 8 2		
	K 5		
	K J 8 5 4		
	♣ K Q 3		



How will the auction proceed from there?

What will the contract be? Who will be the declarer?

The Play

Which player makes the opening lead? What will the opening lead be?

Declarer starts by making a PLAN:

1. **P**ause to consider your objective
2. **L**ook at your winners and losers
3. **A**nalyze your alternatives
4. **N**ow put it all together

After going through the four steps, how will declarer play the hand?

The Bidding

- South opens 1NT.
- North responds 3NT.
- Pass, pass, pass.
- The contract is 3NT. South is the declarer.

The Play

- West makes the opening lead of the ♠K.
- South needs nine tricks and has nine winners. South takes nine tricks and runs.

(E-Z Deal Cards: #1, Deal 2 — Dealer, East)

Turn up all of the cards on the second pre-dealt deal and arrange them as in the previous deal.

The Bidding

East has a balanced hand. Why can't it be opened 1NT? What would West bid?

South passes. Does West have a suit that can be bid at the one level? Why can't West bid a new suit at the two level? What will West respond?

How will the auction proceed from there?

What will the contract be? Who will be the declarer?

The Play

Which player makes the opening lead? What will the opening lead be?

Declarer starts by making a PLAN. After going through the four steps, how will declarer play the hand? In putting it all together, why must declarer be careful about how the club suit is played?

Dealer:	♠ Q 6		
East	K J 6 3 2		
	K 10 4		
	♣ 9 4 2		
♠ 10 5 2		♠ A 8 4 3	
9 7 4		A 10 5	
7 5 3		A 9 8 6	
♣ A K J 3		♣ Q 5	
	♠ K J 9 7		
	Q 8		
	Q J 2		
	♣ 10 8 7 6		

	N	
W		E
	S	

The Bidding

- East opens 1 ; there aren't enough points to open 1NT.
- West doesn't have a suit to bid at the one level; West can't bid a new suit, clubs, at the two level with only 8 points.
- West responds 1NT.
- Pass, pass, pass.
- The contract is 1NT. West is the declarer.

The Play

- North leads the 3.
- Declarer has seven winners, enough to make the contract, so declarer will take seven tricks.
- The ♣Q must take the first club trick so the club winners in declarer's hand are not stranded.

(E-Z Deal Cards: #1, Deal 3 — Dealer, South)

Turn up all of the cards on the third pre-dealt deal and arrange them as in the previous deal.

The Bidding

South doesn't have enough to open the bidding. With 17 points and a balanced hand, what will West open?

North passes. East is the captain. At what level does the partnership begin? What should the denomination of the contract be? What will East respond?

How will the auction proceed from there?

What will the contract be? Who will be the declarer?

The Play

Which player makes the opening lead? What will the opening lead be?

Declarer starts by making a PLAN. After going through the proper steps, how will declarer play the hand? In putting it all together, what precaution must declarer take?

Dealer:	♠ K9743		
South	7542		
	106		
	♣ K8		
♠ J52		♠ 106	
AQ9		KJ10863	
AQ8		KJ5	
♣ A973		♣ 62	
	♠ AQ8		
	—		
	97432		
	♣ QJ1054		

The Bidding

- West opens 1NT.
- The level the partnership belongs in is game; the denomination is hearts. East responds 4.
- Pass, pass, pass.
- The contract is 4. East is the declarer.

The Play

- The opening lead is the ♣Q from South.
- Declarer can afford three losers and has only three losers.
- Declarer must be careful to draw trumps so unexpected losers aren't created.

(E-Z Deal Cards: #1, Deal 4 — Dealer, West)

Turn up all of the cards on the fourth pre-dealt deal and arrange them as in the previous deal.

The Bidding

West doesn't have enough to open the bidding. What will North's opening bid be?

East passes. Does South have support for partner's major suit? What will South respond?

How will the auction proceed from there?

What will the contract be? Who will be the declarer?

The Play

Which player makes the opening lead? What will the opening lead be?

Declarer starts by making a PLAN. Why can declarer skip to the fourth question in the plan after answering the first two questions? Why may declarer be tempted to delay drawing trumps and play another suit? Why isn't this a good idea?

Dealer:	♠ K Q J 10 3		
West	A Q 5		
	9 4		
	♣ 8 6 3		
♠ A 7		♠ 9 5 2	
9 7 6 4 3 2		J 8	
A J 6		K Q 10 2	
♣ 9 4		♣ K Q J 10	
	♠ 8 6 4		
	K 10		
	8 7 5 3		
	♣ A 7 5 2		



The Bidding

- North opens 1♠.
- South can support partner's major and bids 2♠.
- Pass, pass, pass.
- The contract is 2♠. North is the declarer.

The Play

- East leads the ♣K.
- Declarer has five losers and can afford five losers. Declarer doesn't need to look for ways to eliminate the losers.
- Declarer may not want to give up the lead.
- If declarer doesn't draw trumps, the opponents may ruff one of the winners.