

Play in Notrumps

In all questions below, you are West as the declarer. North makes the opening Lead. Unless indicated, there has been no interference by the opposition.

1. Plan the play to make the contract.

West	East	Bidding	West	East
♠ AK8	♠ 643		1NT	All pass
♥ 742	♥ 963			
♦ KQ74	♦ JT2			North leads ♠Q
♣ 863	♣ AK72			

West has four sure tricks (two spades and two clubs). To make the contract, the other three tricks need to come from diamonds.

Win the lead and play on diamonds first to establish these winners

2. What is your plan to make the contract ? In particular, what do you play at trick two?

West	East	Bidding	West	East
♠ AT8	♠ K64		1NT	2NT (invitational)
♥ KJ6	♥ 74		3NT	All pass
♦ QJ6	♦ AT742			North leads ♥10 to South's ace.
♣ KT4	♣ A32			South continues with the ♥8

Count your winners. There are five immediate winners (two spades, one diamond and two clubs). The lead suggests your ♥K will also make, so you can see six tricks.

The best chance for the other three tricks is in diamonds by taking the finesse.

On trick two, **do not** play the ♥K. Let North win and play another heart. This is because South may have the ♦K and only three hearts. If you take the ♥K on trick two and the finesse fails, South probably still has a heart to get back to partner and if North had five hearts, you will go light ! Therefore you win the heart on trick three, then take the diamond finesse.

If South has ♦K and no more hearts, you make nine tricks before the opposition get back in.

If South still has a heart, then North only had four, so you still make your contract. Try it

3. What is your plan? Which suit will provide you with most of the necessary tricks? When you win a heart trick, in which hand do you win and why?

West	East	Bidding	West	East
♠ AK4	♠ J82		1NT	3NT
♥ A63	♥ K92		All pass	
♦ 82	♦ KQ763			North leads ♥Q
♣ J7532	♣ A6			

There are five immediate winners (two spades, two hearts and a club).

Diamonds offer some hope of four tricks if you lead towards the ♦KQ hoping North has the ace. Do not lead a diamond from the East hand.

It is probably wise to duck the first lead then take the second heart with the Ace in your hand.

Two reasons for this. You keep an entry in Dummy and you can then play up to the $\spadesuit KQ$. If North plays low and you diamond honour holds, return to your hand with a spade and lead a second diamond. If North plays low, win in Dummy and play the suit again hoping North had three diamonds to the ace. Now Dummy makes four diamonds.

4. What is your plan. Which card do you play from your hand at trick 1 and why ?

West		East		Bidding	West	East
\spadesuit	A76	\spadesuit	J2		1 \clubsuit	1 \diamond
\heartsuit	AJ	\heartsuit	K87		2NT	3NT
\diamondsuit	KQ7	\diamondsuit	JT943		Pass	
\clubsuit	A9842	\clubsuit	K65		North leads $\spadesuit K$	

You have 5 sure tricks outside diamonds. Duck the first two spade tricks to try and cut the defenders' communication. You must establish four diamond tricks by forcing out the $\diamond A$. You have to hope the $\diamond A$ is not in the hand with a long spade suit.

5. What is your plan ? Do you win the first trick ?

West		East		Bidding	West	East
\spadesuit	96	\spadesuit	A532		Pass	1 \diamond
\heartsuit	KT62	\heartsuit	8		1 \heartsuit	1 \spadesuit
\diamondsuit	Q5	\diamondsuit	AKJ87		1NT	2NT
\clubsuit	KJT52	\clubsuit	A74		3NT	All Pass North leads $\spadesuit K$

Your plan should be to win the $\spadesuit A$ on the 3rd round, discarding a heart. Now take your five diamond tricks discarding another heart and two clubs from your hand. Also watch the discards to see if either defender discards a club. If someone does, they are unlikely to hold the $\clubsuit Q$, so finesse the other opponent for the $\clubsuit Q$. NB: After 1 \diamond by East, West (tempting though it may be) should not bid 2 \clubsuit as this will show 10 or 11 HCP (they passed the first round so cannot be any more).

6. What is your plan ?

West		East		Bidding	West	East	South
\spadesuit	AQ4	\spadesuit	62		1 \diamond	1 \heartsuit	(1 \spadesuit)
\heartsuit	A7	\heartsuit	JT632		2NT	3NT	All Pass
\diamondsuit	AT742	\diamondsuit	KJ3				
\clubsuit	AT6	\clubsuit	KJ4		North leads $\spadesuit 3$ and South plays the $\spadesuit K$		

With seven certain tricks including two in spades, you need four diamond tricks for your contract. As South has bid, they are likely to have most of the missing HCP. Therefore, play the $\diamond K$, then run the $\diamond J$, finessing South for the $\diamond Q$. Even if you lose to the $\diamond Q$, you still have a spade hold and will make your contract.

7. What is your plan ? Which suit do you play at trick 2 ?

West		East		Bidding	
♠	KQ3	♠	A9	West	1♦
♥	A8	♥	K6	East	3♦ (10–12 4+♦ and no major)
♦	AT872	♦	KJ63	West	3NT
♣	QJ4	♣	T9852	East	All pass

North leads ♥Q

You have five tricks in the major suits and two in diamonds. Your extra two tricks need to come from diamonds and NOT clubs, as you can afford to lose the lead only once more before the opponents cash their heart tricks.

With nine diamonds missing the queen, play AK. You will always will make your contract and if the queen falls, you make ten tricks.

8. What is your plan ? Do you win the lead at trick 1 ? When you do win the heart trick, what card do you lead to the next trick ?

West		East		Bidding	
♠	KQJ75	♠	62	West	1♠
♥	AK8	♥	432	East	2♣
♦	J62	♦	AKQ5	West	3NT
♣	92	♣	KQ84	East	All pass

North leads ♥Q

Take the first trick and cross to dummy with a diamond and play up to the spade honours. If the spade honour wins, take the ♦J then the rest of diamonds in dummy, before playing towards the spade honours again.