



Overview

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Information from the Auction

Even simple auctions can tell you a lot

- ♣ Where are the HCPs? The cards?
- ♣ What do we know about distribution?
- ♣ Did partner act? O/calls, Doubles?

<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1♠	P	4♠	P
P	P		



<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1♥	P	2♣	P
2♠	P	4♠	P
P	P		

<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1♦	P	1♥	P
2♣	P	2♠(!)	P
3NT	P	P	P

Information from the Auction, Dummy, and the Opening Lead

Partner's Lead

1. Honour promises touching honour beneath in trumps, two touching honours beneath against no trumps
2. Small card is fourth highest with honour at top
3. Middle is looking for strength in your hand and not asking for return (or high/low?)



Planning the Defence

Decide early what suit to count.

From the hands you can see, what card is not on display and matters to you?

Remember partner's lead and keep a card to lead back

Are you going to face a finesse through your hand? Decide now what you will play and play SMOOTHLY when the time comes.



Third Hand Play

Third Hand Plays High

If your partner leads a low card from a suit, play a high card from your hand to force a high card from declarers' hand. This will hopefully promote one or more cards in your partners hand as winners.

For Example:

	Dummy	
	♥ 9 7 4	
Partner leads		You
♥ 3		♥ Q 8 6

Play the ♥Q. If partner has led from, say, ♥ K J 5 3, then your ♥Q will force out declarers ♥A, setting up partners ♥ K J 5.

Hint at sequences from the bottom:

	Dummy	
	♥ 9 7 4	
Partner leads		You
♥ 3		♥ J 10 6

Play the ♥10. This card denies the ♥9.
The ♥J would deny the ♥10.



Second Hand Play

Second player plays low

If Declarer leads a low card from his hand towards Dummy, do not 'rush in' with a high card.

For example:

	Dummy
	♥ K J
You	
♥ A 4	
	Declarer leads
	♥ 6

Declarer may be missing the Queen and Ace and has to guess the position of both cards. If you rush in with the ♥A, you solve declarer's problem. If you play the ♥4, declarer may guess wrongly and finesse the ♥J which will lose to your partners' ♥Q. You will then win your ♥A later.



Cover an Honour with an Honour

The full rule usually reads: "If you can equally well cover a second honour, then wait and cover the second honour."

Most players know this rule, so when a queen is led from queen-jack they withhold their king, but they may not withhold their ace when a king is led from king-queen. If you can duck smoothly, you can obtain some great results – and deciding on your play before the lead is made will allow you to play in tempo and also, with luck, fool the declarer.

For example:

	Dummy	
	♥ K Q 10	
♥ J 9 3		♥ A 8 4 2
	Declarer leads	
	♥ 7 6 5	

Declarer leads the ♥5 and plays the king from dummy; if you win the ace, then declarer will finesse your partner's jack and make two easy tricks.

If you duck smoothly on the first round, you give declarer a dilemma: from his point of view it probably looks as if West has the ace, so he may well lead towards dummy again and put up the queen, assuming that it will win. That will not be the case, as you play your ace and your partner takes the third trick with his jack.



Working with Partner

Returning partners' suit

If your partner made the opening lead, then unless there is a good reason for doing otherwise, it is usually good form to return partners' suit if you gain the lead during play of the hand, if only to maintain partnership harmony.

It is, however, very important in no-trumps to return partners' suit as you will be trying to establish that long suit. Even if your own cards in this suit are poor, remember that it is your partners' long suit that you are trying to establish, so even if your only remaining card is the 2, lead it to help your partner.



Lead through Dummy's strength

During the play of the hand, you may find yourself back on lead but you have now seen Dummy. Your choice of lead will therefore be influenced by the cards in Dummy. It often pays to lead through high cards in Dummy in the hope that partners' high cards can win.

Dummy

♥ K J 5

You (on lead)

♥ 8 7 6

You hope that partner may have the ♥ A Q. If declarer has the ♥ A Q then you will not have lost anything. Alternatively,

Dummy

♥ A K 5

You (on lead)

♥ 8 7 6

Leading through dummy's ♥ A K 5 is unlikely to give away tricks.



Lead up to Dummy's weakness

If you are leading through Declarer, then it is often better to lead a suit in which Dummy is weak.

Dummy

♥ 7 4 2

You (on lead)

♥ 9 8 6

You are hopefully leading through Declarer's strength. Maybe partner's high cards in this suit can beat Declarer's high cards.

Hold up play in Defence

This is the same principle as hold-up play when you are Declarer and most often applies in no-trump contracts.

Dummy

♦ K Q J 10 9

You

♦ A 4 3

Declarer leads

♦ 7

Declarer is looking for tricks in the Diamond suit. You may not know how many diamonds Declarer has, but refuse to play your ♦A until the third round, and you will restrict Declarer to two Diamond tricks.

Play ♦A on first round, and Declarer makes four Diamond tricks.



Frozen Suits

A “frozen” suit is one where the honours are scattered around the four hands. It is in no one’s interest to lead the suit because it is likely to “damage” their holding.

North

♥ A 9 7

West

♥ J 4 3

East

♥ K 10 8

South

♥ Q 6 5 2

Try not to open up frozen suits

Switching to a new suit in general usually costs half a trick.

Leading the same suit is usually safe and often beneficial.

The opponents may then be forced to lead the frozen suit and your side may benefit.

Endplay

Did you count?

♣ Watch partner’s discards. What are they keeping?