

## §62. Third Hand Play (The Rule of Eleven).

### Notes on the basic principles to be taught in this section.

- This chapter is all about the application of the **Rule of Eleven** by the defenders. (Using it by declarer is not mentioned here).
- The **Rule of Eleven** needs explaining and the phrase **Read the Lead** is used a lot as well. The **Rule of Eleven** states, "Subtract the pips on the card led from 11, the result gives the number of cards in the other three hands".

Four hands need setting up. They are all full deals.

**Hand 1** is a deal where North plays in 3NT. It is Hand 1 in the student notes, rotated 90°.

West can **Read the Lead** by applying the **Rule of Eleven**. Assuming East has led fourth-highest and not second-highest from trash, North has no card higher than the ♠6. That means West can take the lead and return the ♠10, unblocking the suit.

There is no danger that North started with ♠9 × × and that this defence would concede a Spade trick.

**Hand 2** is a deal where South plays in 2♠. It is Hand 2 in the student notes, rotated 90°.

The bidding may or may not be pertinent here. East deals and it goes:

West	North	East	South
2♥	Pass	1NT	Dble
		Pass	2♠

West leads the ♥5 and declarer calls for the ♥9 from dummy (hoping West has led from ♥Q 10 × × × or ♥K 10 × × ×). What should East do? If South started with ♥Q × it might be best to grab the ♥K and switch to Clubs. The **Rule of Eleven**, though, tells East that South has no Heart higher than the ♥5 ( $11 - 5 = 6$ ), so playing the ♥10 is completely safe...

**Hand 3** is a deal where West plays in 3NT. It is Hand 3 in the student notes.

North leads the ♠7 against 3NT and dummy plays low. What is South's correct play? It may appear right to play the ♠J (finessing against the dummy) but that's wrong. The **Rule of Eleven** tells South that West has no Spade card higher than the ♠7 ( $11 - 7 = 4$ ), so South should play the ♠6, allowing North to retain the lead and play Spades again. North-South take the first four Spades and the ♥A. Playing the ♠J gives North-South no chance of beating 3NT.

**Hand 4** is a deal where East plays in 3NT. It is Hand 4 in the student notes, rotated 180°.

The bidding may or may not be pertinent here. West deals and it goes:

West	North	East	South
2♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

South leads the ♠7 and East takes the ♠K over North's ♠J. It is important to note that South is in the dark here; East would play the ♠K from ♠K Q × as well, so it may be necessary to put North on lead to play a second round of Spades.

East plays on Diamonds and South holds off for two rounds. On the third round North has to make a discard. What should it be?

The answer is that North should throw the ♠Q! Why? Well the **Rule of Eleven** has told North that East has only one card higher than the ♠7 and that must be the ♠K (which was played at trick one). South doesn't know that Spades are running but North does. Chucking the ♠Q passes the good news onto his partner.

Failure to chuck the ♠Q may mean South switches to a Heart or a Club, hoping North has an entry and can play a Spade back.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hand 1</b></p> <p>North plays in 3NT; ♠6 lead.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ 5 3 2 ♥ A 9 5 ♦ A Q 6 4 ♣ K J 3</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ K 9 7 6 4 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ J 2 ♣ 9 5 2</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A 10 8 ♥ J 7 6 4 ♦ 10 9 7 3 ♣ 7 6</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ Q J ♥ Q 10 2 ♦ K 8 5 ♣ A Q 10 8 4</p> </div> </div>	N	W     E	S	N	W     E	S	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hand 2</b></p> <p>South plays in 2♠; ♥5 lead.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ 7 2 ♥ A J 9 ♦ 10 7 4 2 ♣ 8 6 5 3</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ J 6 4 3 ♥ K 10 7 ♦ A 9 5 ♣ K Q J</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ 10 5 ♥ Q 8 6 5 3 ♦ Q 6 3 ♣ 9 7 4</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A K Q 9 8 ♥ 4 2 ♦ K J 8 ♣ A 10 2</p> </div> </div>	N	W     E	S	N	W     E	S
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hand 3</b></p> <p>West plays in 3NT; ♠7 lead.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ Q 10 8 7 ♥ J 6 2 ♦ J 4 ♣ 10 7 5 2</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ K 4 3 ♥ K 8 7 ♦ K Q 8 7 2 ♣ K 4</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ 5 2 ♥ Q 5 4 ♦ A 9 5 ♣ A Q J 6 3</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A J 9 6 ♥ A 10 9 3 ♦ 10 6 3 ♣ 9 8</p> </div> </div>	N	W     E	S	N	W     E	S	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hand 4</b></p> <p>East plays in 3NT; ♠7 lead.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ Q J 4 ♥ J 10 9 8 ♦ 8 3 ♣ K J 9 8</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ K 6 5 ♥ A K 4 ♦ K 4 ♣ A 10 5 4 2</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ 9 3 ♥ Q 3 2 ♦ Q J 10 9 7 6 ♣ Q 3</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A 10 8 7 2 ♥ 7 6 5 ♦ A 5 2 ♣ 7 6</p> </div> </div>	N	W     E	S	N	W     E	S
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## §62. Third Hand Play (The Rule of Eleven).

**By the end of this chapter you should understand the following terms:**

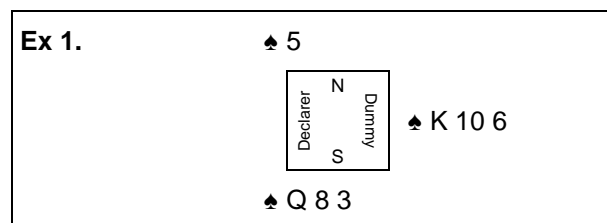
**Read the Lead:** A phrase used to implore third player to work out what his partner has led from. This may involve the application of the *Rule of Eleven*.

**The Rule of Eleven:** An arithmetical calculation applicable when the opening lead is the fourth-highest. By deducting the value of the card from eleven it is possible to determine how many cards are held in the other three hands.

This chapter is all about third hand play in defence and the application of the **Rule of Eleven**. The basic idea comes to us from the days of whist, discovered (so it is believed) by one R. F. Foster around 1890.

The **Rule of Eleven** states, "Subtract the pips on the card led from 11, the result gives the number of cards, higher than the card led, in the other three hands".

It may be easier to see this by example. Suppose you are South and see the following layout. North leads the ♠5 against a contract and you have good reason to suspect West has the ♠A:

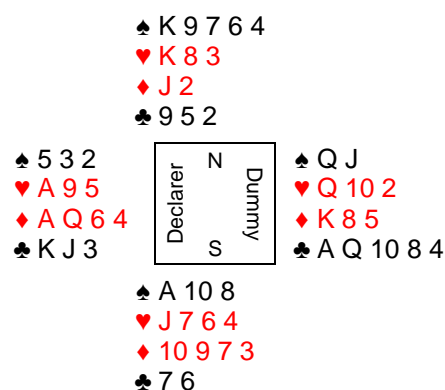


You can apply the **Rule of Eleven** here.  $11 - 5 = 6$ , so East, South and West between them have six cards higher than the ♠5. You can see five of them (the ♠K Q 10 8 6), so West's only high Spade card would be the ♠A. With that in mind, you should play the ♠8, expecting that to draw West's ♠A.

Let's look at some full deals now, all from the perspective of a defender sitting South. Here, in Hand 1, you are defending 3NT after the uninformative sequence 1NT – 3NT. Partner leads the ♠6 and you can see your hand and dummy (East). Can you **Read the Lead**? How should you defend?

### Hand 1

West plays in 3NT.  
North leads the ♠6.



You may assume that North has led his fourth-highest Spade, so you are able to apply the **Rule of Eleven**.  $11 - 6 = 5$ , so that means there are five Spades higher than the ♠6 in the East, South and West hands. You can, though, see them all, so West has only low Spades. This means you are quite safe in taking the ♠A and returning the ♠10, making sure that the suit is not *blocked*.

This way (and only this way) the defenders take the first five tricks to beat 3NT.

Note that it might have been that North had led from a poor Spade suit (♠9 6 3 2, say). Well, if that were the case then 3NT was probably secure in any case and returning the ♠10 probably would have done little harm.

In Hand 2 (overleaf) you are defending 2♣ having seen your opening 1NT bid been Doubled by West and North run to 2♥. Partner (relieved, perhaps, at not having to toil away in a Doubled part-score) leads the ♥5 and declarer calls for dummy's ♥9.

Should you grab the ♥K and hasten to switch to Clubs or should you play the ♥10? How might you tell?

**Hand 2**

West plays in 2♠.  
North leads the ♥5.

♠ 10 5			
♥ Q 8 6 5 3			
♦ Q 6 3			
♣ 9 7 4			
♠ A K Q 9 8	N	Dummy	♠ 7 2
♥ 4 2	Declarer	S	♥ A J 9
♦ K J 8			♦ 10 7 4 2
♣ A 10 2			♣ 8 6 5 3
♠ J 6 4 3			
♥ K 10 7			
♦ A 9 5			
♣ K Q J			

Try to **Read the Lead** by applying the **Rule of Eleven**.  $11 - 5 = 6$ , so East, South and West between them have six higher Hearts than the ♥5. You can see all of them (the ♥A K J 10 9 7) so West has nothing at all in the suit. You can play the ♥10, entirely confident that it will win the trick.

By continuing the ♥K at trick two, you kill the dummy and ensure declarer eventually loses a Spade, a Heart, two Diamonds and two Clubs for one down.

How might you defend 3NT here after West opens 1NT and East raises to 3NT? North leads the ♠7

**Hand 3**

West plays in 3NT.  
North leads the ♠7.

♠ 5 2			
♥ Q 5 4			
♦ A 9 5			
♣ A Q J 6 3			
♠ Q 10 8 7	N	Dummy	♠ K 4 3
♥ J 6 2	Declarer	S	♥ K 8 7
♦ J 4			♦ K Q 8 7 2
♣ 10 7 5 2			♣ K 4
♠ A J 9 6			
♥ A 10 9 3			
♦ 10 6 3			
♣ 9 8			

You can **Read the Lead** by applying the **Rule of Eleven**.  $11 - 7 = 4$ , so East, South and West between them have four higher Spades than the ♠7. You can see all of them (the ♠A K J 9) so West has nothing at all in the suit.

You should play the ♠6, entirely confident that the ♠7 will win the trick and that North will be able to continue the Spade attack from his side of the table.

Finally, try this tricky deal. East opens a weak 2♦ and West takes a punt at 3NT. North leads the ♠7 on which you play the ♠J and West the ♠K. West attacks Diamonds and North holds off his Ace until the third round. You have to discard – what should you throw? It is important to note, by the way, that North is in the dark here; West would play the ♠K from ♠K Q × as well as from his actual holding, so from North's perspective, it may be necessary to put you on lead to play a second round of Spades.

**Hand 4**

West plays in 3NT.  
North leads the ♠7.

♠ K 6 5			
♥ A K 4			
♦ K 4			
♣ A 10 5 4 2			
♠ A 10 8 7 2	N	Dummy	♠ 9 3
♥ 7 6 5	Declarer	S	♥ Q 3 2
♦ A 5 2			♦ Q J 10 9 7 6
♣ 7 6			♣ Q 3
♠ Q J 4			
♥ J 10 9 8			
♦ 8 3			
♣ K J 9 8			

The answer is that you should throw the ♠Q! Why? Well the **Rule of Eleven** has told you that West has only one card higher than the ♠7 and that must be the ♠K (which was played at trick one). You know that Spades are running but North doesn't. Chucking the ♠Q passes the good news onto your partner.

## §62. Quiz on Third Hand Play (The Rule of Eleven).

Here are three defensive problems for you to try. They are not easy!

In each case you are **South**, defending against West's contract. Your first act is to **Read the Lead**.

The Preliminary Analysis talks you through the first trick or two. What is your best defence?

**Q1.**      ♥7

Declarer	North	♠K J 8 2
	Dummy	♥9 3
South		♦Q 9
		♣K J 9 7 5

♠10 7 6 3  
♥Q J 4  
♦K J 8 2  
♣8 4

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3NT	All Pass
3NT by West		Opening lead: ♥7	

1. 15-16 points, balanced.

How should you defend against 3NT?  
Your partner (North) leads the ♥7.

**Preliminary Analysis.**

Dummy plays low on the opening lead and you play the ♥J, won by declarer's ♥K.

Can you read the layout of the Heart suit by applying the **Rule of Eleven**?

At trick two, declarer attacks Clubs by leading the ♣Q. That holds, so he plays the ♣10 and follows with a low Club, on which partner plays the ♣A.

You have to make a discard at trick four. What should it be? Remember, North does not know how the Hearts are lying.

**Q2.**      ♥7

Declarer	North	♠10 6 2
	Dummy	♥8 4
South		♦A 7 6 2
		♣A 10 8 6

♠8 7 5  
♥A Q 2  
♦J 10 9  
♣7 5 4 2

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♥	2♠	3♥
3♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
3♠ by West		Opening lead: ♥7	

How should you defend against 3♠?  
Your partner (North) leads the ♥7.

**Preliminary Analysis.**

These competitive auctions are hard to judge, and you must hope that your 3♥ bid has pushed West overboard.

Can you read the layout of the Heart suit by applying the **Rule of Eleven**?

The Club suit in dummy is ominous and looks likely to provide a source of tricks for declarer.

Have you any defensive Plan?

**Q3.**      ♣5

Declarer	North	♠A J 8 5
	Dummy	♥A J 9 2
South		♦Q J 3
		♣4 2

♠K Q 4 2  
♥K 8 7 4  
♦10 9 8  
♣K 9

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	2♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
2♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass
3NT by West		Opening lead: ♣5	

1. Stayman.

How should you defend against 3NT?  
Your partner (North) leads the ♣5.

**Preliminary Analysis.**

You play the ♣K at trick one and it holds the trick, declarer following with the ♣7.

Can you read the layout of the Club suit by applying the **Rule of Eleven**?

How many points does partner hold, given West has announced 12-14?

What is your defensive Plan?

## Answers.

A1.

<p>♠ A Q 9 ♥ K 6 5 ♦ A 10 5 3 ♣ Q 10 3</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Declarer</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	Dummy	Declarer	S	<p>♠ 5 4 ♥ A 10 8 7 2 ♦ 7 6 4 ♣ A 6 2</p>	<p>♠ K J 8 2 ♥ 9 3 ♦ Q 9 ♣ K J 9 7 5</p>
N	Dummy						
Declarer	S						
<p>♠ 10 7 6 3 ♥ Q J 4 ♦ K J 8 2 ♣ 8 4</p>							

You are defending 3NT and partner leads the ♥7 to your ♥J and declarer's King.

The **Rule of Eleven** tells you that West started with only one card higher than the ♥7 (11 – 7 = 4 and you can see three cards higher than the ♥7: the ♥9 in dummy and the ♥Q J).

Thus, you can deduce that North started with ♥A 10 8 7 × (it is unlikely that West has four Hearts, given the bidding).

Declarer plays three rounds of Clubs and North holds up his ♣A until the third round, hoping for an indicative discard. Partner doesn't know what to do – from his perspective declarer may have started with ♥K Q × and he may need to put you on play with an Ace to return a Heart through West's remaining ♥Q ×.

To remove the scales from partner's eyes, you must throw away the ♥Q. Now even the most obtuse partner knows to run off his winning Hearts.

A2.

<p>♠ K Q J 9 3 ♥ 10 5 ♦ Q 8 4 ♣ K Q 3</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Declarer</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	Dummy	Declarer	S	<p>♠ A 4 ♥ K J 9 7 6 3 ♦ K 5 3 ♣ J 9</p>	<p>♠ 10 6 2 ♥ 8 4 ♦ A 7 6 2 ♣ A 10 8 6</p>
N	Dummy						
Declarer	S						
<p>♠ 8 7 5 ♥ A Q 2 ♦ J 10 9 ♣ 7 5 4 2</p>							

You are defending 3♠ after a competitive auction and partner leads the ♥7. You should be able to see that you have to make tricks in Diamonds and Hearts to beat this one.

The **Rule of Eleven** tells you that West started with only one Heart higher than the ♥7 – and that card cannot be the ♥K as North would hardly lead the ♥7 from a suit headed by the ♥J 10 9 7. To make partner's life easy, you must play the ♥Q at trick one.

At trick two you play the ♦J, on which West plays low and dummy takes the ♦A. Declarer plays a trump, so partner wins and plays another Heart. You take the ♥A and a second Diamond, through the ♦Q ×, completes the *coup de grâce*.

Had you taken the ♥A at trick one and played back a Diamond, partner would have found it next to impossible to play a low Heart when on play with the ♠A.

A3.

<p>♠ 10 9 3 ♥ Q 10 5 ♦ A K 6 ♣ Q J 8 7</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Declarer</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	Dummy	Declarer	S	<p>♠ 7 6 ♥ 6 3 ♦ 7 5 4 2 ♣ A 10 6 5 3</p>	<p>♠ A J 8 5 ♥ A J 9 2 ♦ Q J 3 ♣ 4 2</p>
N	Dummy						
Declarer	S						
<p>♠ K Q 4 2 ♥ K 8 7 4 ♦ 10 9 8 ♣ K 9</p>							

You are defending 3NT and partner leads the ♣5 to your ♣K and declarer's ♣7.

The **Rule of Eleven** tells you that West started with four Clubs higher than the ♣5 (11 – 5 = 6 and you can only see two higher Clubs than the ♣5, both in your hand).

With West known to have four good Clubs (they must be good if the ♣7 is the lowest) and North known to have a maximum of 4 points (if West has 12-14 points, North's allocation is 2-4) there is little point in pursuing Clubs.

Best defence is to exit in Diamonds and wait patiently. Declarer will take two Spade finesses and a Heart finesse; each time you are on lead you exit with a passive Diamond.

Eventually, when you have four tricks stacked in front of you (two Spades, one Heart and a Club) you return a Club, and partner gleefully takes his Ace.

Were you to return a Club at trick two, your innocent partner might **duck** declarer's ♣J, playing you for ♣K 9 8. The right defence – for a different hand.

## §62. Example hands 1 to 4.

**Hand 1** Love all, dealer North

<p>♠ 8 5 ♥ K 5 4 ♦ A 10 9 6 3 2 ♣ 8 6</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		S	<p>♠ A K Q 2 ♥ 6 2 ♦ Q J 5 ♣ A K Q 4</p>	<p>♠ 7 6 3 ♥ Q J 8 7 ♦ 8 4 ♣ 10 7 5 3</p>
N		E							
W		S							

West	North	East	South
	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
3NT by East		Opening lead: ♥7	

East reaches 3NT after opening his 4-4-3-2 hand with 21 points 2NT. South has little to do but try the ♥7 as an opening lead and now the defence can beat the contract – if North can **Read the Lead**. Dummy should play low (there is no rush to play the ♥K) and North can apply the **Rule of Eleven**.  $11 - 7 = 4$ , and North can see four cards higher than the ♥7 split between dummy and his own hand. Playing the ♥9 (or, even worse, the ♥A) would hand the contract to East on a plate. The right card is the ♥3, allowing South to retain the lead to play another Heart at trick two. North-South take four Heart tricks and can wait for the ♦K. Now, South's lead may be from ♥8 7 x x, but if that were the case playing low wouldn't cost.

**Hand 2** North-South game, dealer East

<p>♠ 9 7 6 4 ♥ 7 5 3 ♦ J 6 2 ♣ K J 6</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		S	<p>♠ A 10 8 ♥ 10 9 8 ♦ 8 3 ♣ A 9 5 3 2</p>	<p>♠ K 5 2 ♥ A Q J 6 ♦ Q 9 4 ♣ Q 8 4</p>
N		E							
W		S							

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
3NT by South		Opening lead: ♠7	

North-South reach 3NT in rapid fashion and West, with nothing attractive to lead, tries the second-highest from rubbish lead of the ♠7. In theory this could be fourth-highest (see Hand 1) but East can read its true nature by applying the **Rule of Eleven**.  $11 - 7 = 4$  and yet East can see *five* cards higher than the ♠7 split between dummy and his own hand. This tells him that West's lead is **not** fourth-highest and therefore Spades is a dry well. There is no point in playing the ♠A and returning the suit, nor in inserting the ♠10 (both plays would give declarer a cakewalk to his contract). The right defence is to take the ♠A and switch to Clubs. As the cards lie, East-West can cash five tricks there, beating 3NT by two.

**Hand 3** East-West game, dealer South

<p>♠ 5 3 2 ♥ A Q 3 ♦ A 10 6 4 ♣ A 6 5</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		S	<p>♠ Q J ♥ K J 7 ♦ K Q 7 5 3 ♣ J 9 2</p>	<p>♠ K 10 7 ♥ 9 8 6 5 2 ♦ 9 2 ♣ Q 7 4</p>
N		E							
W		S							

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass
3NT by West		Opening lead: ♠6	

Another 1NT – 3NT sequence (telling the defence little). North leads the ♠6 and South has to **Read the Lead**. Assuming North has led his fourth-highest Spade and not the second-highest from tripe, the **Rule of Eleven** tells South that West has no Spade higher than the ♠6 ( $11 - 6 = 5$  and South can see all five). That means South can take the ♠K and return the ♠10 to unblock the suit. Were South to return the ♠7 at trick two, the suit would be tangled up and West would romp home with his contract. Note that if West had started with ♠9 x x, South would have had to return the ♠7 at trick two, win the third Spade and put North on lead somehow to run his Spades. South, though, can judge that this is not the case.

**Hand 4** Game all, dealer West

<p>♠ 10 8 7 4 ♥ Q 9 7 ♦ A J 9 2 ♣ K 7</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		S	<p>♠ J 6 2 ♥ J 5 3 ♦ Q 10 8 7 ♣ 8 4 3</p>	<p>♠ Q 9 ♥ K 8 4 ♦ K 4 3 ♣ A J 9 6 2</p>
N		E							
W		S							

West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	
3NT by North		Opening lead: ♦7	

North reaches 3NT here and this deal is the brother of Hand 1. Holding not very much, East tries his luck with the ♦7 lead. Bullseye! Well, only if West can **Read the Lead**. Dummy should play low and West should play...? Well, if East has led from ♦8 7 x x then it doesn't really matter what West does as North has the ♦Q 10. However, if East has led his fourth-highest Diamond, the **Rule of Eleven** tells West that North has puny Diamonds, and certainly no card higher than the ♦7. Accordingly, West should play the ♦2 at trick one, allowing the ♦7 to hold. With East still on lead, the defence can cash the first four Diamond tricks before sitting back and calmly waiting for the ♠K. Five losers means North is one off in 3NT.

## §62. Example hands 5 to 8.

**Hand 5** North-South game, dealer North

<p>♠ A J 7 ♥ 9 7 6 3 ♦ Q J 10 6 4 ♣ J</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ Q 5 3 ♥ A J 10 8 ♦ K 3 ♣ K 9 4 2</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ K 10 9 ♥ K Q ♦ 9 7 5 ♣ A Q 10 7 3</p>		<p>♠ 8 6 4 2 ♥ 5 4 2 ♦ A 8 2 ♣ 8 6 5</p>					

West	North	East	South
3NT	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
3NT by East		Opening lead: ♠6	

East plays in 3NT and South has a fairly dismal collection to lead from. You may as well lead a Spade – and the approved card is the ♠6, the second-highest from muck. Dummy plays the ♠9 and North...? Now, with this combination it is normal to *finesse against the dummy* by playing the ♠J, but something doesn't add up. The **Rule of Eleven** tells North that there should be five cards higher than the ♠6 in the West, North and East cards – but North can see six. As in Hand 2, this tells North that his partner has led from a rubbishy suit and that Spades are simply not worth pursuing. With dummy looking strong, North should take the ♠A and switch to the ♦Q, hoping to gain traction there. It does – two off.

**Hand 6** East-West game, dealer East

<p>♠ A 9 4 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ A K Q 8 2 ♣ Q 8</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ Q J 8 6 5 3 ♥ Q J ♦ 7 4 ♣ K 10 5</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ 7 ♥ 8 6 4 3 ♦ 9 6 ♣ A 9 7 6 4 2</p>		<p>♠ K 10 2 ♥ A K 10 9 ♦ J 10 5 3 ♣ J 3</p>					

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	Pass
3NT by South		Opening lead: ♣6	

A familiar bidding sequence to an age-old contract. West leads the ♣6; declarer surveys the dummy gravely and calls for the ♣8. How do you defend, East? Well, you should **Read the Lead** by applying the **Rule of Eleven**.  $11 - 6 = 5$  and you can see four Clubs higher than the ♣6. South has one higher card, therefore, and that cannot be the ♣A. Why not? Because, with a holding of ♣A × × opposite ♣Q ×, declarer would play the ♣Q from table. The right play, therefore, is to play the ♣K and not to *finesse against dummy* by playing the ♣10. Having got trick one correct, you must return the ♣10 and not the lazy ♣5, blocking the suit. This way, East-West take the first six Club tricks for two off.

**Hand 7** Game all, dealer South

<p>♠ K 5 ♥ A K Q 10 ♦ K J 10 4 ♣ A 7 2</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ A 10 7 6 2 ♥ 9 5 3 2 ♦ 6 ♣ 10 6 3</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ Q 9 4 ♥ J 7 4 ♦ A 8 3 ♣ Q J 8 5</p>		<p>♠ J 8 3 ♥ 8 6 ♦ Q 9 7 5 2 ♣ K 9 4</p>					

West	North	East	South
Pass	2NT	Pass	Pass
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
3NT by North		Opening lead: ♠6	

North-South reach 3NT after North has shown 20-21 points and East leads the ♠6. Dummy plays small and West has to decide what to do. Playing the ♠Q would be right if partner had led from ♠A K × × but is that possible? A count of points shows that East's allocation is a miserable 3-4, so it is impossible that East has as many as 7. The **Rule of Eleven** tells West that North has just one card higher than the ♠6, ( $11 - 6 = 5$  and West can see four of them) and that simply has to be the ♠A or the ♠K. So, with that in mind, West should *finesse against the dummy* by playing the ♠9. When on lead with the ♦A, West has to play the ♠Q and then return another Spade, defeating 3NT by a trick.

**Hand 8** Love All, Dealer West

<p>♠ 8 3 ♥ A 10 8 6 2 ♦ A 6 2 ♣ 7 6 4</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ K J 9 ♥ 9 4 ♦ K Q J 7 5 4 ♣ Q 9</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ A Q 6 ♥ K 5 3 ♦ 9 8 3 ♣ A 10 5 3</p>		<p>♠ 10 7 5 4 2 ♥ Q J 7 ♦ 10 ♣ K J 8 2</p>					

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass	3NT	Pass
3NT by West		Opening lead: ♥6	

North leads the ♥6 against the familiar 3NT contract and this goes to the ♥J and ♥K. Note that West would (or should) win the ♥K if he had started with ♥K Q ×, so North is in the dark as to the Heart layout. West starts on Diamonds and North should hold up his ♦A for a round or two, both to cut dummy adrift and for South to make a telling discard. What should South throw on the second round of Diamonds? He knows the Heart layout by Reading the Lead and applying the **Rule of Eleven**.  $11 - 6 = 5$  and South can see four Hearts bigger than the ♥6. The ♥K is, therefore, the only Heart West can have bigger than the ♥6. To alert North to the layout, South should pitch the ♥Q, to reveal the position to his partner.