

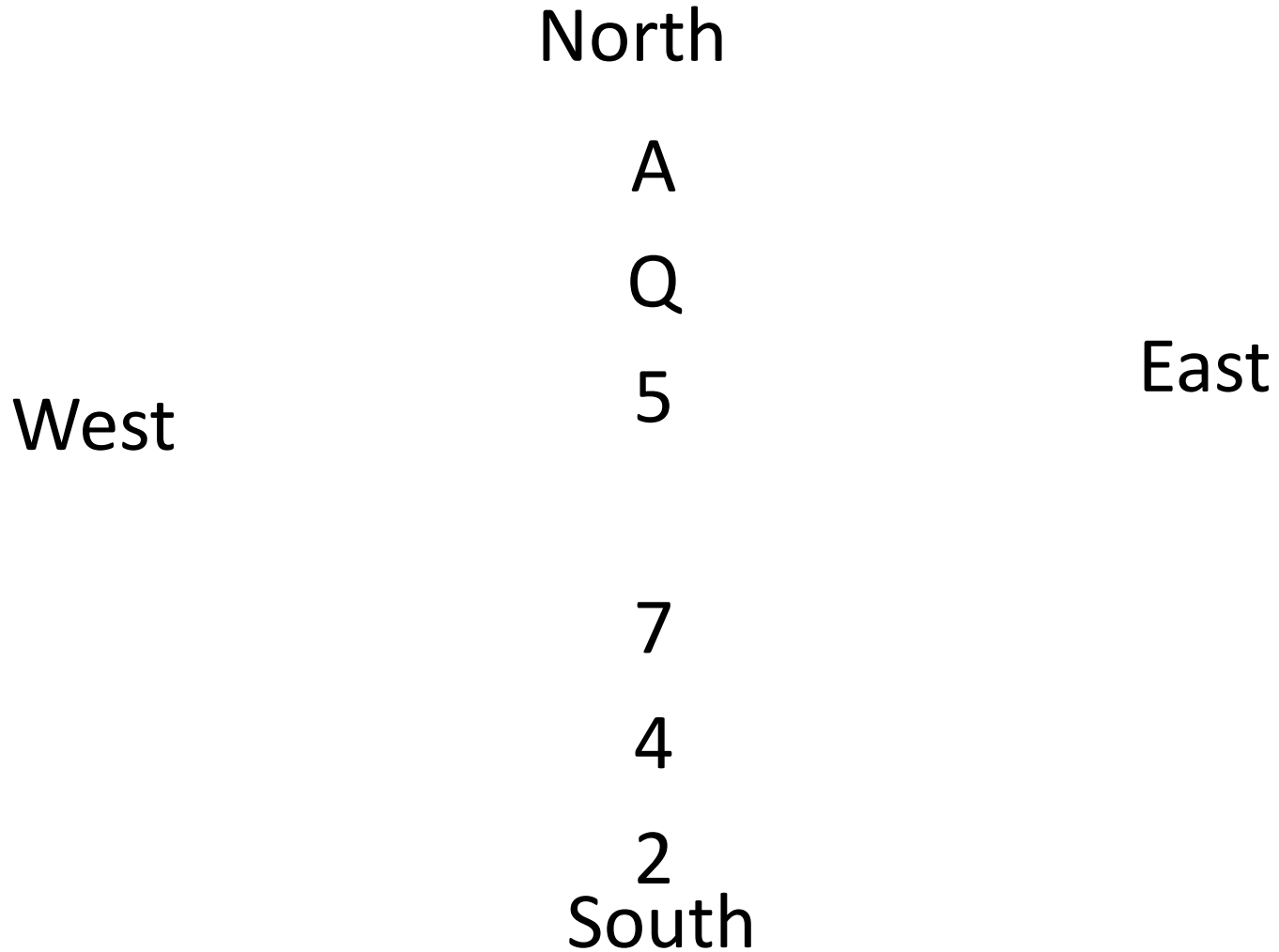
Tips For Handling Card Combinations



Tip 1: Make a Plan

- In play of the hand books, card combinations are usually discussed considering the holding in just one suit.
- To be most effective as a declarer, you must consider the card combination in light of your overall plan for the hand.


Consider the Following Combination



Consider this Combination in Light of an Entire Hand

Contract 4



 Q 10 8 4

 9 6 4


 A Q 7

 6

 A 5 3


 5

 K 8 3

 K J 10 8 3

 A K J 7 5 2

 K Q J

 J 10 5


 9 6 4

 A 9

A New Example

Contract 6



 10 9 8 3

 J 8

 Q J 9 2

 K

 A Q 2

 K Q J 7 6 5 2

 A 3

 A K 10

 4

Tip 2: Combine Your Chances

- If you need to develop a trick to make your contract and there is only one way to do it, that's what you do.
- But often, a declarer will be presented with a choice of options.

Consider These Two Holdings



A

Q

3



7

5

2



Q

7

3




A

5

2

Combining Chances Ex. a


Contract
6 NT

 9 8 3

 K 5

 Q 8 5

 7

 A Q J 10 5

 A Q 3

 A Q J 2

 A 7 4

 K 9 6

Combining Chances Ex. b

Contract
3 NT

 7 5 2

 K Q 7

 K Q 6 2

 10 8 4

 K

 A 8 6 2

 A 5 3

 A 9 7

 A Q 6


Combining Chances Ex. c

Contract
3 NT

 8 7 2

 A Q 9

 A K J 6

 J 10 9

 5

 K 6

 K 5 3

 10 7 3 2

 A K 4

Tip 3: Take the Play That Gives the Best Odds

- Often a declarer is faced with two opportunities to get an additional trick, but cannot try them both.
 - When that happens you must select the play that gives you the best odds for success.
 - That, of course, means you must know something about bridge probabilities.
- There are too many card combinations to memorize the odds for all of them.
- But there are some guidelines you should remember.

Percentages You Should Know

of Opponent's

Cards	Most likely	Next likely
2	1-1 52%	2-0 48%
3	2-1 78%	3-0 22%
4	3-1 50%	2-2 41%
5	3-2 68%	4-1 28%
6	4-2 48%	3-3 36%
7	4-3 62%	5-2 31%
8	5-3 47%	4-4 33%

Some Common Card Combinations

North

A

Q

4

South

5

3

2

2 tricks

50%

North

K

10

South

5

2

1 trick

50%

North

A

J

10

South

5

3


2


2 tricks

75%

Know the Odds Ex. a

Contract
3 NT

 A

 8 5 3 2

 9 7 6 3

 7 6 4 2

 Q

 K 8 4




 A Q 5

 A K Q

 A K 9 3

Know the Odds Ex. b

Contract
3 NT

 A 5 3
 A J 10 2
 9 7 6

 Q

 Q 8 4

 K 8 4


 7 5 3

 A K J 3

 A K 2

Know the Odds Ex c

Contract
4 spades

 J 5 2

 5 3 2

 A Q 7 6

 7 6 2

 K

 A K Q 10 3

 8 7 6

 K 4 2

 A Q

Know the Odds Ex. d

Contract
3 NT

 A 5

 A 8 4 2

 A 9 7 6 4

 Q 8

 Q

 K 8 4

 Q 7 5

 K 5 3

 A K 3

Tip 4: Know When To Play a High Card

- In some card combinations, declarer can lead an honor card to begin a finesse.
- In other card combinations, declarer may have an honor to lead but it would be incorrect to do so.

Consider These Card Combinations

North

A

5

4

South

Q

J

10

7

North

A

5

4

South

Q

8

3

2

North

A

5

4

South

Q

J

3

2

Consider These Card Combinations

North

A

5

North

A

Q

4

South

Q

J

South

J

8

3

2

Consider These Card Combinations

North

A

K

6

5

South

J

10

4

North

A

7

6

5

South

J

10

3

2

Consider These Card Combinations

North

A

Q

10

5

South

J

9

2

Know the Odds Ex. d

Contract
3 NT

♠ Q 4 3

♥ A 8

♦ Q J 6 4

♣ Q J 8 6

♥ Q

♠ J 10 9 8

♥ K 6 2

♦ A 5 3

♣ A K 5

Tip 5: Use the Ruffing Finesse

- When you have a choice between a simple finesse and a ruffing finesse, it is usually best to try the ruffing finesse.
- Even if the ruffing finesse fails, it saves a trick.

Consider This Card Combination

North

A

Q

J





10


South



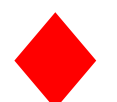

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Ruffing Finesse Ex. a

Contract
6 Hearts

 A 7 4 3
 K 8 4
 A Q J 10
 K J


K

 9 8 5
 A Q J 10 6 2
 3
 A Q 2