

DRAWING TRUMPS 1.

Usually it is important to take out your opponent's trumps before they can win tricks which should be rightly yours.

Their small trumps should not be taking tricks that you had expected to win with your aces and kings.

So, if you have high cards *outside* the trump suit, and especially if a side suit is long and solid, you should draw trumps as early as possible.

On this first hand you are playing in 4♠ on a diamond lead. At first it looks as though you will lose two heart tricks and two diamond tricks.

If you recognise that your club suit not only produces five tricks, but it also gives you the opportunity of throwing two losers (the ♦6 & ♦5) from the south hand, you will make eleven tricks, *(providing you draw the opponent's trumps before you run your club suit.)*

♠ AQ7
♥ 76
♦ A92
♣ KJ432

4♠
Lead
♦K

♠ KJ832
♥ J9
♦ 865
♣ AQ5



♠ AJ9
♥ Q42
♦ 864
♣ QJ106

♠ 10
♥ 653
♦ AKQJ10
♣ A842

4♥
by South
Lead ♣Q

♠ 8762
♥ AKJ107
♦ 3
♣ K95

♠ KQ543
♥ 98
♦ 9752
♣ 73

Over the years top bridge players have work out the mathematical odds on all sorts of hand layouts. It is an accepted fact that is you have an 8 card fit, the remaining 5 cards in that suit will break 3-2 nearly 70% of the time

On this hand you appear to have three losers. One spade loser, ♥Q and a club. The hearts break 3/2. Easy?

It is, providing you don't win the first trick with the ♣A, to try the doomed heart finesse. Defenders will lead a diamond **before** you have drawn trumps and you will have no further entry to those lovely diamond tricks.

Win with ♣K, and cash ♥A & ♥K. Now play ♦3 to the ♦A.

Keep playing diamonds until they ruff with the ♥Q.

Your ♣A gets you back to the diamonds!

♠ 87
♥ 962
♦ QJ102
♣ J1064

♠ 10932
♥ 84
♦ AK83
♣ AQ5

7♠
by South
Lead ♦Q

♠ AKQJ5
♥ AK74
♦ 9
♣ K82

♠ 64
♥ QJ105
♦ 7654
♣ 973

Your first **Grand Slam**. (Where you must win all 13 trick!)

Realise that in the south hand you have two losing hearts. How can you avoid losing them?

ANSWER - One will go on the ♦K, **and the other will be ruffed!**

Win ♦A,
Play ♠2 towards ♠A,
Cash ♠K and notice that both opponents follow suit. *(That means that all the opponent's trumps have been drawn.)*

Play ♥A, ♥K, and ruff the ♥7 with ♠9.

Well Played!

ESTABLISHING TRICKS.

There are a number of ways of establishing winning tricks with cards that are not yet winners.

Drive out opponent's aces

♠ A 8 7 ♥ 9 8 ♦ A 5 ♣ K Q J 10 6 5	<div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">3NT</div>	♠ K 9 6 ♥ A K 5 2 ♦ K 8 6 3 ♣ 4 2
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♥Q lead. East is in NT hoping to make 9 tricks. Once east has driven out the opponent's ♣A s/he will make five tricks in the suit.

This should be done immediately, while the aces and kings **guard** the other suits

Drive out opponent's aces and kings

♠ A 8 7 ♥ 9 8 ♦ A 5 ♣ Q J 10 6 5 3	<div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">3NT</div>	♠ K 9 6 ♥ A K 7 2 ♦ K J 6 3 ♣ 4 2
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♥3 lead. East is hoping to make game in NTs. and will need to force out the ace and the king of clubs whilst retaining an entry to reach them.

The temptation to grab your aces and kings must be resisted, and this time if you lost the ♠A and ♦A before establishing your clubs, you would be unable to reach them!

Ducking early

♠ 8 7 4 ♥ 9 8 ♦ 5 4 ♣ A K 8 6 5 3	<div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">3NT</div>	♠ K Q 6 ♥ A Q 5 2 ♦ K 10 8 3 ♣ 4 2
	♣ J 10 7	
	♣ Q 9	

East plays in NTs on a heart lead.

You need five club tricks, but you have no outside entries to dummy. The opponents have five clubs between them, so one defender will have at least three. Playing the ♣A & ♣K first will mean that you can never get to your established winners. What about playing the ♣4 to the ♣3 first? This ducking technique maintains your contact with the dummy hand.

In a suit contract you can use the trump suit to establish winners.

Establish winners by ruffing

♠ 10 4 ♥ Q J 10 3 ♦ Q 8 7 3 ♣ Q 10 9	<div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">6♠</div>	♠ K J 8 7 ♥ A 4 ♦ A 5 ♣ K 8 6 5 3
♠ A Q 5 2 ♥ 9 8 2 ♦ K 9 4 2 ♣ A 2		♠ 9 6 3 ♥ K 7 6 5 ♦ J 10 6 ♣ J 7 4

South is trying to make 12 tricks in spades. West leads ♥Q (Top of a sequence)

North wins with ♥A in dummy and draws trumps in three rounds.

South now plays ♣A. Then ♣2 to dummy's ♣K.

When declarer ruffs a 3rd club, he notices that each opponent followed suit. This means that they each started with three clubs and that ♣6 and ♣5 are now **established** as winners.

Play ♦2 to the ♦A.
 Play ♣6 and throw ♥8
 Play ♣5 and throw ♥9

Declarer only loses ♥4 at the end and makes his 12 tricks

CASHING YOUR TOP TRICKS

Your first task as declarer is always to see whether or not you have sufficient top tricks to make your contract. (**Top tricks** are those that can be won immediately, at any time during the play). e.g

A J 8
 [] Here you have only one top trick.
7 5 2

A 9 4
 [] Here you have two top tricks.
K 5 2

A K 8 Here you have two top tricks.
 []
7 5 2

A K 4 Here you have three top tricks.
 [] (Even though it looks like four)
Q J 2

Remember that when you are declarer you are playing with 26 cards (not 13) because the cards in dummy can add to your collection of winners.

Can you count the top tricks here? On each occasion the hand is played without trumps and the lead from west is ♥2

♠ A 3 2
 ♥ A 5 4
 ♦ 5
 ♣ A Q J 9 4 2

1

♠ K 8 7
 ♥ K Q 8
 ♦ A J 10 4
 ♣ K 7 5

♠ A 7 5
 ♥ A 9 4
 ♦ 10 6 5 2
 ♣ A Q

2

♠ K Q J 3
 ♥ K Q 8
 ♦ J 9 8
 ♣ K 7 2

♠ A Q
 ♥ 9 6 5 4
 ♦ K 3
 ♣ A 9 8 4 2

3

♠ K 8 7
 ♥ A Q 8
 ♦ A J 10 4
 ♣ K 7 5

Top tricks

Top tricks

Top tricks

Unblocking

Simply means - getting your high cards out of the way. You will hear me say MANY TIMES "Play your top honours from the short hand **FIRST!**"

In hand 1, play ♣K FIRST then low to ♣A. By the time you play ♣Q & ♣J, opponents will have no more clubs which means that your ♣4 & ♣2 will be established winners!

More on page 9!

Establishing Winners

West leads ♥Q

♠ A 3 2
 ♥ A 5 4
 ♦ 5
 ♣ K Q J 6 4 2

4

♠ Q 8 7
 ♥ K 9 8
 ♦ A J 10 4
 ♣ 10 7 5

Playing without trumps, the opponents lead ♥Q. You are hoping to make at least nine tricks, but you can only count four top tricks. One spade, two hearts, one diamond and as yet, no clubs

So you have to **ESTABLISH** some further winners. Recognise that once the ♣A has been taken by the opponents, you will have five club WINNERS.

After winning the ♥K play the ♣10 immediately, (*while you still have control of the other suits*) and keep playing clubs until the ace is forced out.

Isn't Bridge an easy game?!

MAKING EXTRA TRICKS BY RUFFING

As you have discovered there are two different types of contract you can play.

1. **Contracts where there are NO trumps.**
2. **Contracts where there IS a trump suit.**

How do you choose which to play?

Choose NTs

- a. when you have all the suits well guarded. Otherwise your opponents may run five or six tricks in your unguarded suit before you can cash your own winners.
- b. when you have no eight card major suit fit and no interest in ruffing to gain extra tricks.

Choose suit contracts

- a. when you have a good trump fit (4-4 or 5-3) Particularly major suits. This usually means that you have short suits in each hand that will allow you to make extra tricks by ruffing.
- b. when you need trumps to control an enemy suit. *With no honours in a suit you can ruff with a small trump.*

<p>♠ 93</p> <p>♥ KQJ92</p> <p>♦ 10986</p> <p>♣ AK</p>	<p>♠ J1065</p> <p>♥ 8</p> <p>♦ AJ4</p> <p>♣ J9643</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p>♠ AKQ2</p> <p>♥ A64</p> <p>♦ KQ7</p> <p>♣ 875</p>	<p>♠ 874</p> <p>♥ 10753</p> <p>♦ 532</p> <p>♣ Q102</p>
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If south played this contract in a NT game, west would lead the ♥K. (Top of a sequence)
 You can take four top spade tricks, three top diamonds and ♥A. Eight tricks in all. As soon as you play clubs the defenders can cash four hearts and two clubs.
 You cannot make game in NTs -

but you do have an eight card major suit fit.
 How would 4♠ play?

Ruffing

Well you still have the top eight tricks as before, but can you see that you can make two extra tricks by ruffing your two little hearts *before* drawing trumps.
 Win ♥A and ruff ♥4 immediately.
 Play a small trump to the ♠A and ruff ♥6.
 Return to hand with another trump. Draw the last trump.
Notice that you have made six tricks from the trumps. Ten tricks in all.

<p>♠ 93</p> <p>♥ A1032</p> <p>♦ 109862</p> <p>♣ K5</p>	<p>♠ J1065</p> <p>♥ 8</p> <p>♦ AJ4</p> <p>♣ J9643</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p>♠ AKQ2</p> <p>♥ 654</p> <p>♦ KQ7</p> <p>♣ A87</p>	<p>♠ 874</p> <p>♥ KQJ97</p> <p>♦ 53</p> <p>♣ Q102</p>
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Creating a ruffing opportunity

A similar hand but this time you do not have the ♥A.
 Look at the south hand as the master hand.
 You could lose two clubs and three hearts.

The opening lead is ♦10 (*Top of a sequence*).
 Win with ♦A and play ♥8.
 Opponents win and switch to a trump, because they know what you are going to do.
 Win and ruff ♥5 Come back to hand with ♦K
 Ruff the last heart. You only lose 1 heart, and 2 clubs

Don't be afraid of giving the lead away early in the game!

PLAY TOWARDS HONOURS

ace
 jack king
 queen

It looks natural to play your high cards first to win tricks, but this is not the best way of making the most tricks. If each of the four players had only one card each, the highest card would obviously win. In this instance the ace will always win whoever leads.

A 5
 J 2 K 4
 Q 3

With two cards in each hand, the second best card (the king) will usually win the second trick if it is playing *after* the ace.
 BUT - If east has to lead, E/W will not make a trick! Try it.

A 5
 K 4 J 2
 Q 3

When the king is positioned *before* the ace, the king can often be captured by the ace.

Second hand plays low (A generalisation, but usually correct).

Here, if south leads the 3, west must play low - *the 4, not the king.*

On this layout, if north or south lead, E/W will make either the king or jack!

BUT Cover an honour with an honour (A generalisation, but usually correct)

If south leads the queen, west must play the king.

Although it will lose to the ace, it will **establish** partner's jack as a winner.

If west does not **'cover'** the queen, it will win, and so will the ace!

IF WEST LEADS the king, E/W side will not make either of the tricks.

The king is captured by the ace and the queen in south's hand will win the second trick.

If west leads the 4, to north's 5 - east's jack and south's queen, the ace will win the 2nd trick.

IF EAST LEADS the jack, south will try to win with the queen, west will play the king and north the ace.

North will now win the second trick with the 5.

What will happen if east leads the 2? Yup, still no tricks for E/W.

As you can see, having to lead is often a disadvantage. Playing last is best!

Play towards your honours

You are south!

1.

K 3
 A 5 Q 6
 4 2

2.

K 3
 Q 5 A 6
 4 2

1. You will never make a trick, if you play the king from the north hand. If you lead *from* the south hand, *towards* the king, you will make a trick.

2. If the ace is in the east hand, you cannot make a trick.

Unless of course east is foolish enough to lead the ace !

3.

KQ5
 A87 J1096
 432

4.

KQ5
 876 AJ109
 432

3. You will only make one trick, if you play the king from the north hand. If you can lead from the south hand twice, *TOWARDS* the king/queen, you will make two tricks whenever the ace is in the west hand.

4. You will only make one trick if east has the ace!

Unless of course east is foolish enough to lead the ace !

As declarer, the general principle is to lead towards your honours.

5.

AQ
 K4 J2
 43

5. You will only make one trick if you play your ace from the north hand. If you lead from the south hand, *towards* the ace and queen, you will make two tricks, *if you finesse the queen.*

As a defender DO NOT LEAD unprotected aces.

THE FINESSE

A Finesse is an attempt by declarer to win a trick with a card that is lower than a card held by the defenders.

Suppose that west, when announcing their HCPs, declared 12 HCPs and more importantly east announced 2 HCPs. You would KNOW that the king of clubs (worth 3 HCPs) is in the west hand.

Even if west announced 10 HCPs and east announced 5 HCPs the odds are in favour of west holding ♣K

In the real game of bridge you may not know how many HCPs east holds, but if you were to play the ♣A immediately you would ALWAYS lose to the ♣K at the next trick - WHOEVER has it.

♣ A Q J [] ♣ 7 3	♣ A Q 10 [] ♣ J 7 3	♣ A J 10 [] ♣ Q 8 3	♣ A Q 6 [] ♣ J 10
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On each example here south can make all three tricks *if* the king is in the west hand. This is achieved by playing *towards* your top honours and risking the 2nd top card if west plays low!

♣ A Q J *How the finesse works!*
♦ 6
♣ K 8 6 [] South leads the ♣7.
 If west plays the ♣8, we ask dummy to play ♣Q! If it wins -
♣ 7 3 We return to south *in another suit* (diamonds in this example) and repeat the finesse.
♦ A Obviously if west plays the king we win with the ace.

On the hand below, can you see how declarer can make six club tricks?

Declarer, south, plays this contract in No Trumps. West leads ♠5 which declarer wins.

If declarer plays the ♣10 from the south hand, west *might* play the ♣K.

If he does, win with ♣A. Play the ♣Q and then the ♣J. E/W will have none left and you will make the 9, 4 and 2 for six tricks.

If, when declarer plays the ♣10 from the south hand, west plays low, declarer will play the ♣2 from dummy and of course the ♣10 holds the trick (*wins*)!

Declarer can now play the ♣7 and if west still plays low, ♣Q is played from dummy. This will win the trick. Then the ♣A drops ♣K and declarer makes **six club** tricks!

If we simply play the ♣A from the north hand or the ♣5 to the ♣A, we will only make five tricks in clubs! Obviously if east has the ♣K we will only make five tricks, but playing the finesse gives us a 50/50 chance of making an **extra** trick. Remember this technique!

	<i>Dummy</i>	
	♠ 8 3 2	
	♥ 10 8 5	
	♦ 5	
	♣ A Q J 9 4 2	
♠ Q 9 6 5 4	[]	♠ J 10 7
♥ Q J 3		♥ 9 7 6 2
♦ K 8		♦ Q J 8 7 6
♣ K 6 3		♣ 8
<i>Defender on lead</i>		♠ A K
		♥ A K 4
		♦ A 10 9 4 2
		♣ 10 7 5
		<i>Declarer</i>