

Board 1 Dealer N Vul none

N E S W
 p p 1♥ p
 3♥ p 4♥ all pass

Play low in second position

1		♠ 874	Dir: N
		♥ Q964	Vul: None
♠ AK106	♦ AQ6	♠ J532	
♥ 1072	♣ K94	♥ 5	
♦ 82		♦ J10974	
♣ A1032		♣ J75	
11	♠ Q9		
11 3	♥ AKJ83		
15	♦ K53		
	♣ K86		
		♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
		N - 1 3 - 2	
		S - 1 3 - 2	
		E 1 - - 2 -	
		W 1 - - 2 -	

West should start with the ♠A and continue with ♠K and another spade.

Declarer will trump the third round, draw trumps and (best) cash the three diamonds, ending in the South hand, then lead a small club.

West must play low on that trick. North's ♣K will win the first round but West will later get two tricks with the ♣A10.

If West were to play ♣A (or ♣10) that would present declarer with two club tricks and the contract.

Board 2 Dealer E Vul NS

E S W N
 p 2♠ all pass

Lead short suit against a trump contract

3rd hand play lowest of "equal high" cards

2		♠ K	Dir: E
		♥ J973	Vul: N-S
♠ 6532	♦ J1075	♠ 84	
♥ Q864	♣ KQJ3	♥ A105	
♦ Q864		♦ AK9	
♣ A		♣ 97642	
11	♠ AQJ1097		
8 11	♥ K2		
10	♦ 32		
	♣ 1085		
		♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
		N 1 - - 1 1	
		S 1 - - 1 1	
		E - 2 2 - -	
		W - 2 2 - -	

West should look to trump some clubs by leading the singleton ♣A then a red card to give partner the lead.

East will win with ♥A or ♦K (note those particular cards!) respectively and return a club.

West should note the ♥A denies the ♥K so if he had led a heart before he will know South has the best heart so a diamond should be led next.

But if West's first lead after ♣A was a diamond East's ♦K (when it wins) shows the ♦A so another diamond lead is required.

Board 3 Dealer S Vul EW

S W N E
 1NT all pass

lead from K rather than A

3		♠ 109	Dir: S
		♥ 109	Vul: E-W
♦ K972	♠ QJ87		
♣ KQ1063	♥ QJ87		
♠ A532	♦ 104		
♥ K532	♣ 974		
♦ J853			
♣ A			
8	♠ K64		
12 6	♥ A64		
14	♦ AQ6		
	♣ J852		
		♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
		N 3 2 - - -	
		S 3 2 - - -	
		E - - 3 3 -	
		W - - 3 3 -	

Other things being equal the preferred lead is the suit **not** headed by the ace.

When the ♥2 is led, South takes East's ♥J (not ♥Q!) with ♥A and leads a club to set up that suit.

West wins and leads ♥K and another heart won by East. (That order is so East is on lead when the last heart is taken).

East then leads ♠Q (♠QJ98 is effectively a *solid* sequence as dummy's ♠109 will be smothered) and East-West get four more spade tricks.

If the opening lead was a spade declarer would still have the ♥A after losing to the ♣A and not lose any heart tricks.

Board 4 Dealer W Vul all

W N E S
 p 1NT p 4♠
 all pass

Play low in second position

4		♠ 954	Dir: W
		♥ A73	Vul: Both
♦ A73	♠ 763		
♣ KQ54	♥ 98		
♠ 8	♦ KQJ52	♠ KQJ5	
♥ KQJ52	♦ 982	♣ J1093	
♦ 982			
♣ A862			
13	♠ AKQJ102		
10 7	♥ 1064		
10	♦ 1064		
	♣ 7		
		♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
		N - - - 3 2	
		S - - - 3 2	
		E 2 - - - -	
		W 2 1 1 - -	

West leads ♥K and declarer will win, draw trumps, and lead a club.

West must play low on this trick! "But what if declarer's club is a singleton and I lose my ♣A?" might be asked.

Actually it **is** a singleton and the ♣A is lost, but to win ♣A immediately will enable declarer to discard two red suit losers on the ♣KQ later.

So losing the ♣A is more than compensated for by winning two diamond tricks.

Note if South did have two clubs and one less red card 4♠ would be unbeatable.

Board 5 Dealer N Vul NS

N	E	S	W
1♣	p	1♠	p
2♠	p	4♠	all pass

Don't lead away from an ace

5		♠ J754	Dir: N
		♥ AJ9	Vul: N-S
		♦ K	
		♣ QJ1085	
♠ 3		♠ Q109	
♥ K863		♥ Q104	
♦ A10752		♦ QJ93	
♣ 763		♦ 942	
12		♠ AK862	
7	7	♥ 752	
14		♦ 864	
		♣ AK	
		♠ 3	
		♥ 3	
		♦ 3	
		♣ 2	
		NT	

West is likely to find the best lead by elimination. Not clubs (bid by opponents) or trumps (not a good choice with a singleton) and of the red suits prefer the "king" suit over the "ace" suit (see Board 3).

Here the heart lead sets up two tricks for E-W *and* removes an entry to dummy.

Leading the ♦A or a black suit allows declarer to discard two heart losers on the clubs after drawing two rounds of trumps and leading ♣AK.

But if West leads a *small* diamond away from the ace: *disaster!* East-West will make only one trick (a trump) and declarer makes 6♠!

Board 6 Dealer E Vul EW

E	S	W	N
p	1NT	p	3NT
all pass			

Third hand play high but lowest of a sequence of "equal-highest" cards

6		♠ 1086	Dir: E
		♥ A104	Vul: E-W
		♦ KQJ	
		♣ KQ104	
♠ K7532		♠ QJ4	
♥ 863		♥ QJ92	
♦ 965		♦ 10732	
♣ A5		♣ 92	
15		♠ A9	
7	6	♥ K75	
12		♦ A84	
		♣ J8763	
		♠ 4	
		♥ 2	
		♦ 2	
		♣ 2	
		NT	

West should start with the longest suit and lead ♠3, the fourth card of the suit when there is no sequence. East must play ♠J, lowest of card of "equal highest".

Playing ♠J doesn't confirm or deny also holding ♠Q but West can "see" ♠Q in East's hand when declarer has to use the ♠A to win the trick.

After winning with the ♣A West leads a *small* spade. East wins ♠Q then leads his last spade giving E-W four spade tricks.

Board 7 Dealer S Vul all

S	W	N	E
1♣	p	1♠	p
1NT	all pass		

Avoid leading opponents bid suit

7		♠ AK63	Dir: S
		♥ 984	Vul: Both
		♦ 963	
		♣ 632	
♠ 72		♠ Q985	
♥ AQ5		♥ K63	
♦ J854		♦ KQ72	
♣ J854		♣ 97	
7		♠ J104	
8	10	♥ J1072	
15		♦ A10	
		♣ AKQ10	
		♠ 5	
		♥ 5	
		♦ 5	
		♣ 5	
		NT	

West should lead ♦4, the fourth of the longest suit. Although the clubs are similar they should be excluded being the suit declarer has bid.

Declarer has only 6 tricks and the seventh could come from either a finesse in one of the black suits or for the ♣J to drop within three rounds.

None of these works and East West will make one (at least) black-suit trick along with three in each red suit.

An initial lead of a club would present declarer with their seventh trick.

Board 8 Dealer W Vul none

W	N	E	S
p	1♥	p	2♣
p	2♦	p	3♣
all pass			

Lead suit nobody has bid Play low in second position

8		♠ 10864	Dir: W
		♥ AK52	Vul: None
		♦ AK32	
		♣ 2	
♠ KJ2		♠ A73	
♥ Q973		♥ 1084	
♦ 10986		♦ Q75	
♣ 95		♣ A1084	
14		♠ Q95	
6	10	♥ J6	
10		♦ J4	
		♣ KQJ763	
		♠ 8	
		♥ 8	
		♦ 8	
		♣ 8	
		NT	

As spades is the only unbid suit the ♠2 is likely to be West's best lead. A spade continuation gives E-W the first three tricks and there will be two trump tricks to follow. That is provided East plays the ♣4 when the club is led from the table. If East plays the ♣A the second trump trick disappears and 3♣ will be made.

East should not even play the ♣8 as an astute declarer will then have a chance to avoid a second club loser by promoting the ♣7.