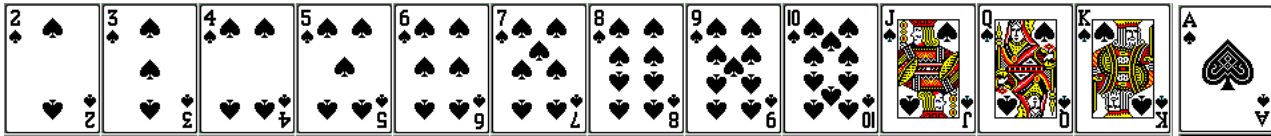


## §1 Preliminaries

### Introduction: Tricks and Trumps

The ranking of the cards in each of the four suits (♠, ♥, ♦, ♣) is the same:

The **two** is the lowest card, then the **3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Jack, Queen, King, Ace**.

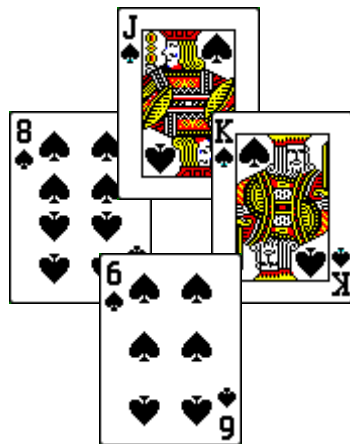


All games in the whist family (including bridge and minibridge) use the principle of **tricks** and **trumps**.

#### A Trick.

A trick is a collection of cards containing one card from each player, usually played into the centre. Tricks are always played **clockwise**. Except when a **trump** has been played, a trick is won by the highest card belonging to the suit that was led – that is, to the same suit as the first card played in that trick.

In all cases in all whist-based game the primary rule for all players is to **follow suit** – that is: play a card of the suit led.

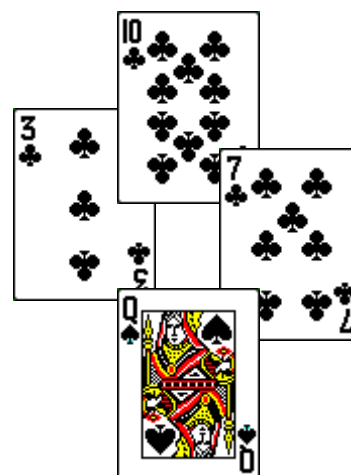


Here we see a typical *trick*. One of the four players has led a card – let us say the player sitting with the ♠8. The next three players have, in turn, *followed suit* with the ♠J, the ♠K and the ♠6.

The highest card here is the ♠K so that player wins the trick – the four cards are gathered in and given to that player. In a partnership game the trick may be kept by either partner.

Here we see another example of a trick. This time a Club was led – the ♣3. The next two players *followed suit*, but the last player had no Clubs left. When a player cannot follow suit he may play any card.

However, here the trick is won by the player who contributed the ♣10. The fact that the ♠Q is the highest ranked card in this example trick is irrelevant. “A *trick is won by the highest card belonging to the suit that was led*”



The player who wins a trick always leads to the next one.

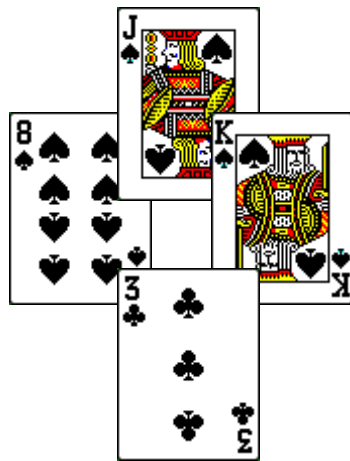
## Trumps and the Trump Suit.

A **trump** is any card belonging to the **trump suit**.

The *trump suit* is determined before each hand is played and may be any of the four suits. How a trump suit is determined is a topic for another time and place – each card game may have its own way of setting trumps. You will see how trumps are determined in various cards games later.

A trump card beats any card belonging to the suit led. You may only play a trump if you are unable to **follow suit**. If two (or more) players are unable to follow suit one might **overtrump** the other.

The highest ranked card in the whole pack is the **Ace of trumps**.



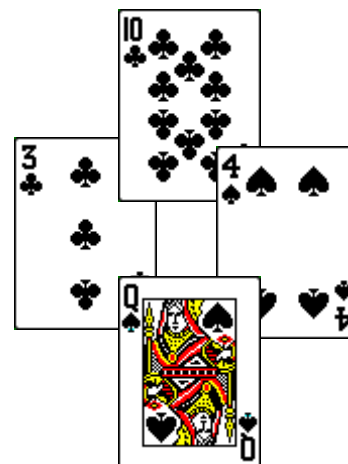
Here, **Clubs** are trumps.

The ♠8 has been led and doubtless the player with the ♠K expected to win the trick. However, the last player to play has no Spades in his hand and was able to play a trump card.

All trumps outrank all “plain cards” (non-trumps) so in this instance the ♣3 wins the trick.

In the example to the right it is **Spades** that are trumps.

The ♣3 has been led and the next player, able to follow suit, has played the ♣10. The third player has no Clubs and has tried to win the trick by trumping it (also known as *ruffing* it) with the ♠4. However, the last player to play also has no Clubs and he has played a higher trump than the ♠4 – in this case the ♠Q. The trick is won, therefore, by the ♠Q.



Note that it is perfectly fair (indeed, sensible) to lead trumps, if you so wish.

## §1.1 Card Games Based on Tricks & Trumps

### 1. Knock-out Whist.

**Players** – two to seven people can play

**Objective** – each player aims to win as many tricks as possible.

**Deal** – One player deals out the cards face down, one at a time and in a clockwise direction until each player has **seven** cards. The remaining cards are put face down in a pile in the centre. Each time the cards are dealt, the number dealt to each player is decreased by one.

**Play** – The top card of the centre pile is turned over and this determines the trump suit for the first hand. The player to the dealer's left then starts the first trick by playing any card he chooses. Each player in turn then plays a card, **following suit if he can**. If a player cannot follow suit, he may choose either to play a trump or to **discard** any other card into the centre. When all seven tricks have been played anyone who has not won a trick has been eliminated from the game.

The **dealer** collects all the cards, shuffles them, and deals **six** cards to each remaining player. The winner of the most tricks in the first round chooses the trump suit and plays the first card in the second hand. Play continues in this way – with players without tricks dropping out at the end of each hand.

**End** – The first player to win all the tricks in a single hand is the overall winner. If play continues to the seventh hand, each player will have only one card. There will be only one trick, and the winner of this trick wins the game.

### 2. Nomination Whist.

**Players** – three to seven people can play

**Objective** – each player aims to win a specific number of tricks, a number that they have nominated.

**Deal** – One player deals out the cards face down, one at a time and in a clockwise direction until each player has **seven** cards. The remaining cards are put face down in a pile in the centre. Each time the cards are dealt, the number dealt to each player is decreased by one.

**Play** – The top card of the centre pile is turned over and this determines the trump suit for the first hand.

The player to the dealer's left then nominates how many tricks he thinks he is going to make. It is perfectly valid to say, "no tricks". Each player in turn says how many tricks he will make. Finally, the dealer has to make his nomination, but he may not make the total number of nominated tricks add up to the number available.

*[Example. There are four players with seven cards each, thus there will be seven available tricks. Player one nominates three tricks, player two nominates one trick and player three nominates two tricks. Thus, with six tricks already nominated, the dealer may not nominate one trick. He will, in practice, have to nominate either no tricks or two tricks].*

The player to the left of the dealer starts the first trick by leading any card he chooses. Each player in turn then plays a card, **following suit if he can**. If a player cannot follow suit, he may choose either to play a trump or to **discard** any other card into the centre.

**Scoring.** Players receive one point for every trick they make plus a bonus of ten points if they make precisely the number of tricks that they nominated.

**End** – The first player with the highest score is the winner

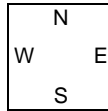
**Variations:** Instead of trumps being determined by the turn of a card, dealer nominates trumps. He may also nominate **No-trumps**.

## The Game of Minibridge.

### §1.2 Introduction to Minibridge.

Minibridge and Contract Bridge are **partnership** games for four players, based on the game of whist. That means that they are games of **tricks** and **trumps**, with play proceeding clockwise around the table. Some deals, however, can be played without any trump suit, in what is called **No-trumps**.

The four players are called North, East, South and West so that North-South are partners against East-West. The table is represented as a diagram in the following way:



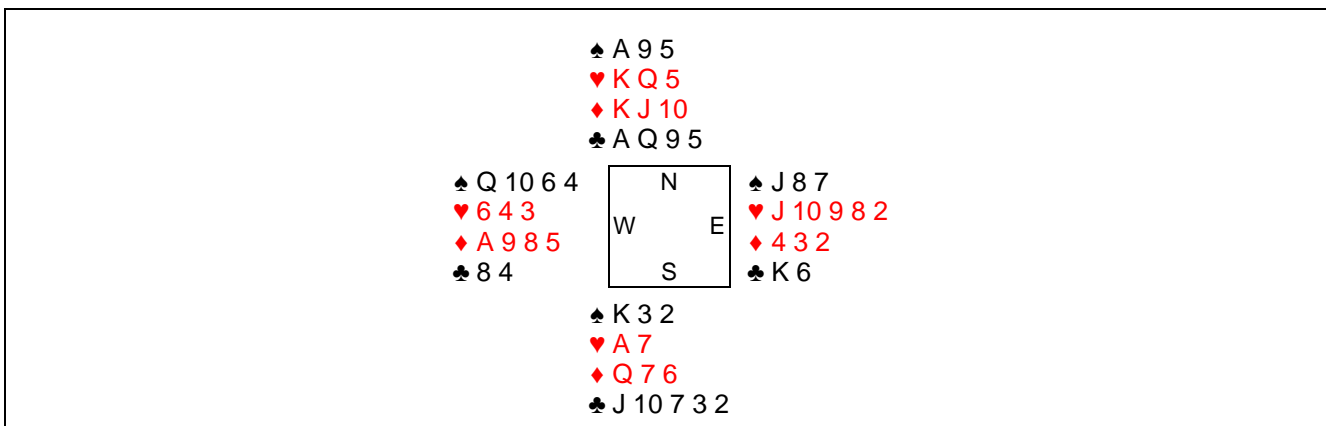
A full pack of 52 cards is dealt out so that each player receives a hand of 13 cards. Players should sort their hands out into suits to make things easier for themselves (although the rules don't say that you have to!)

In all bridge books (and newspaper articles) hands are represented in diagrams similar to the following:

♠ A 9 5  
♥ K Q 9  
♦ K J 10  
♣ A Q 9 5

Note that the order of the suits is always shown as above: – Clubs are lowest, then Diamonds, then Hearts and the “top” suit is Spades. (If it's helpful to you then the order is alphabetical going “upwards”).

A full deal might look something like this:



After sorting their hands out into suits all players assess their hands according to the following formula:

Every Ace	4 Points
Every King	3 Points
Every Queen	2 Points
Every Jack	1 Point

The North hand above, for example, comes to 19 points:

♠ A 9 5	4 points
♥ K Q 9	5 points
♦ K J 10	4 points
♣ A Q 9 5	6 points
Total:	19 points

In the full deal shown above the distribution of points is as follows:

West	North	East	South
6	19	5	10

Note, in passing, that there are **10** points in each suit and **40** points in the whole pack.

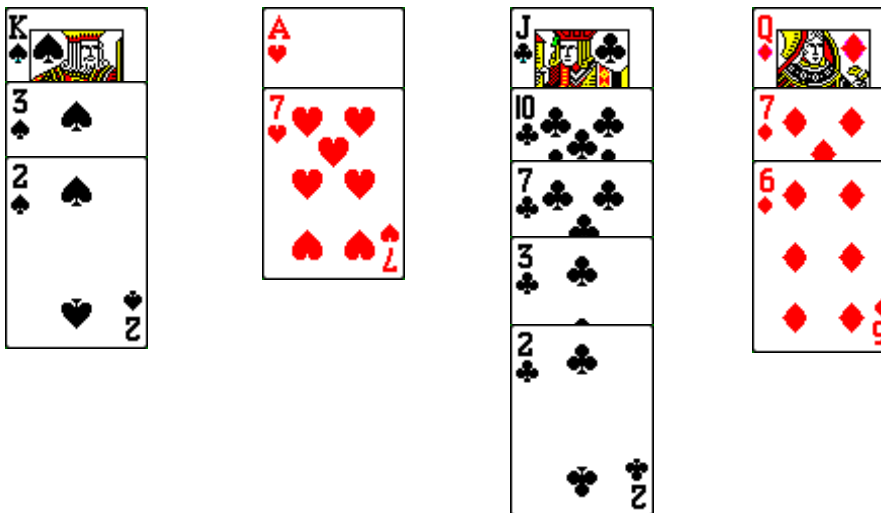
If North had been the dealer then that player would have been the first to announce his hand by saying, "I have 19 points". Then East, the next player around the table clockwise, would say, "I have 5 points", then South would say, "I have 10 points" and finally West would say, "I have 6 points". At this point everyone should use some mental arithmetic to check that the four numbers add up to 40. If they don't... try counting the points again!

The partnership with the most points gains control of the hand and has the privilege of **playing the hand**. (If each partnership has 20 points the deal is a wash-out and the cards are re-dealt).

In the example on the previous page the partnership with the greater number of points is clearly North-South. The player from the stronger partnership with the better hand becomes the **declarer** and his partner becomes the **dummy**. (If both players of the stronger partnership have the same number of points the first person to state his points becomes declarer.)

In the previous example **declarer** is North. The partner of declarer (in this instance, South) displays his hand face upwards on the table as dummy. Dummy's role is to be little more than a robot, following his partner's instructions.

At this stage we will have all hands played without a trump suit (known, logically enough, as **No-trumps**). Later on this will change. Here, South arranges his hand on the table in columns, so it looks a little like this:



Although the example above has the suits arranged in the sequence Spades, Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, (black-red-black-red) there is, in fact, no rule that says you have to display the suits in any particular order. The actual obligations are to place the dummy hand face upwards in columns and to order each suit from the highest at the top down to the lowest at the bottom.

After the dummy has been displayed the player to declarer's left has to make the *opening lead*. In this example that player is East. He places a card (his choice) on the table face up and the game commences. The object is for each side to win as many tricks as possible.

Declarer is in total charge of his side's 26 cards; dummy takes no further part in the game, other than doing what he is told. Dummy's cards are nominated by declarer and dummy can do nothing except play the card that his partner tells him to. Declarer can use a form of shorthand such as "small" to mean "play the lowest card in that suit, please partner" and similar circumlocutions.

As in all types of whist-based games, play is clockwise. The hand that won the last trick leads to the next trick. If dummy won the trick, dummy has to lead to the next trick although, naturally, it is declarer who has to make the choice of which card to lead.

Players make a record of how many tricks are won by each side. The total number of tricks won must, of course, total 13. So, as an example, if North-South end up with nine tricks, East-West must have made four tricks.

Four deals follow, all played in No-trumps.

## Hands for §2: Introduction to Minibridge (Play in No-trumps).

**Hand 1**

Dealer North

<p>♠ Q J 6 2 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ 10 3 ♣ Q J 10 3</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">N</td><td style="width: 50%;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">W</td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%;"></td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	<p>♠ 9 8 4 ♥ A K 3 ♦ A K Q J ♣ 9 8 5</p>	
N									
W	E								
	S								
<p>♠ A K 3 ♥ Q 4 2 ♦ 9 4 2 ♣ A 6 4 2</p>		<p>♠ 10 7 5 ♥ J 10 9 7 ♦ 8 7 6 5 ♣ K 7</p>							

West	North	East	South
13	6	17	4

East-West have the majority of the points with East holding the best hand at the table. East therefore becomes **declarer** and West becomes the **dummy**.

South leads the ♥J (top-of-a-sequence) and East has to make as many tricks as he can. It should be possible to make ten tricks, which can be *cached* immediately. These ten tricks are (in some convenient order): two Spades, three Hearts, four Diamonds and a Club. As a point of technique, declarer should cash his tricks in one suit before switching to another and not "butterfly" by switching from one suit to another at random. When you have decided which suit to play on – stick to it!

**Hand 2**

Dealer East

<p>♠ 7 2 ♥ 10 8 6 4 ♦ K J 9 ♣ A Q 10 8</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">N</td><td style="width: 50%;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">W</td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%;"></td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	<p>♠ 9 8 4 ♥ K Q 2 ♦ 8 6 4 ♣ 6 5 3 2</p>	
N									
W	E								
	S								
<p>♠ K Q J 10 6 ♥ A 5 3 ♦ 7 5 3 2 ♣ 4</p>		<p>♠ A 5 3 ♥ J 9 7 ♦ A Q 10 ♣ K J 9 7</p>							

West	North	East	South
10	10	5	15

North-South hold the majority of the high cards so they become the partnership that plays the hand. With 15 points it is South who becomes **declarer** and North who puts his hand down as **dummy**.

West leads the top-of-a-sequence ♠K and South has to make at least seven tricks. That should be simple enough a task as there are four Clubs, three Diamonds and a Spade for a total of eight tricks. Note that there are only three Diamond tricks despite North-South holding all of the ♦A K Q J 10 9 between them (and, in the same vein, only four Club tricks despite all of the ♣A K Q J 10 9 8 7 being held between the North-South hands). *C'est la vie*.

**Hand 3**

Dealer South

<p>♠ 7 6 4 2 ♥ A K Q ♦ Q J 4 ♣ K Q 4</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">N</td><td style="width: 50%;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">W</td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%;"></td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	<p>♠ 5 ♥ J 10 9 7 5 4 ♦ 6 5 ♣ 10 8 6 3</p>	
N									
W	E								
	S								
<p>♠ A K Q J 8 ♥ 2 ♦ 10 8 7 2 ♣ 9 7 5</p>		<p>♠ 10 9 3 ♥ 8 6 3 ♦ A K 9 3 ♣ A J 2</p>							

West	North	East	South
10	17	1	12

North-South hold the majority of the high cards, so they become the partnership that plays the hand. With 17 points it is North who becomes **declarer** and South who puts his hand down as **dummy**.

The deal is played in No-trumps with East to lead. Now, it is normal for East (who is "blind", remember) to lead the ♥J (top-of-a-sequence) hoping that West has some Hearts and that East-West will make tricks there. No such luck and North will take advantage of his luck by making three Hearts, four Diamonds (if he plays the suit to best advantage) and three Clubs for a total of ten tricks. "If only you'd have led a Spade", says West, sorrowfully. True, but East didn't know.

**Hand 4**

Dealer West

<p>♠ 8 5 3 ♥ 10 8 ♦ 10 7 6 ♣ K Q J 9 6</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">N</td><td style="width: 50%;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">W</td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%;"></td><td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	<p>♠ A 9 7 4 ♥ A Q 4 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ 10 7 2</p>	
N									
W	E								
	S								
<p>♠ 6 2 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ A K Q J 8 ♣ A 8 5</p>		<p>♠ K Q J 10 ♥ J 9 7 6 5 ♦ 9 5 ♣ 4 3</p>							

West	North	East	South
17	6	10	7

East-West just have the majority of the points with West holding the best hand at the table. West therefore becomes **declarer** and East becomes the **dummy**.

North leads the ♣K (top-of-a-sequence) against West and that player has to make at least seven tricks. There are nine "easy ones" (a Spade, three Hearts, four Diamonds and a Club) and West should be able to make a tenth one as well. After he has played off his four top Diamonds he should note that no one has any of the suit left, making his ♦8 the master Diamond. When he leads that it makes the tenth trick, of course...

### § 1.3 Playing with a Trump Suit.

§1 was about playing hands without a trump suit. This section is about playing with a trump suit.

Let's look at an example hand to see the process in action. North is the dealer and the cards are dealt as follows:

♠ A 10 4	Dealer	♠ A 10 4
♥ J 5 3 2		♥ J 5 3 2
♦ K Q J 7		♦ K Q J 7
♣ J 3		♣ J 3
♠ J 9 6 3	♠ N	♠ K Q 7
♥ K 10 4	W	♥ A Q
♦ 10	E	♦ 9 5 4 2
♣ A K 9 7 2	S	♣ Q 8 6 5
♠ 8 5 2		♠ 8 5 2
♥ 9 8 7 6		♥ 9 8 7 6
♦ A 8 6 3		♦ A 8 6 3
♣ 10 4		♣ 10 4

North (the dealer) starts off in the usual way by announcing his hand, "I have 12 points" and then each player in turn (going clockwise) announces his hand in a similar way. You should see that the points in this deal are distributed like this:

West	North	East	South
11	12	13	4

Here, on this particular deal East-West have more points than North-South (24 points to 16). So, East-West is the partnership that plays the hand and can *nominate the trump suit*. As East has more points than West it is East who becomes **declarer** and West who becomes the **dummy**.

**Dummy**, as in the play in No-trumps, must arrange his hand neatly, face upwards on the table. In this case West arranges his hand in columns to look a little like this:

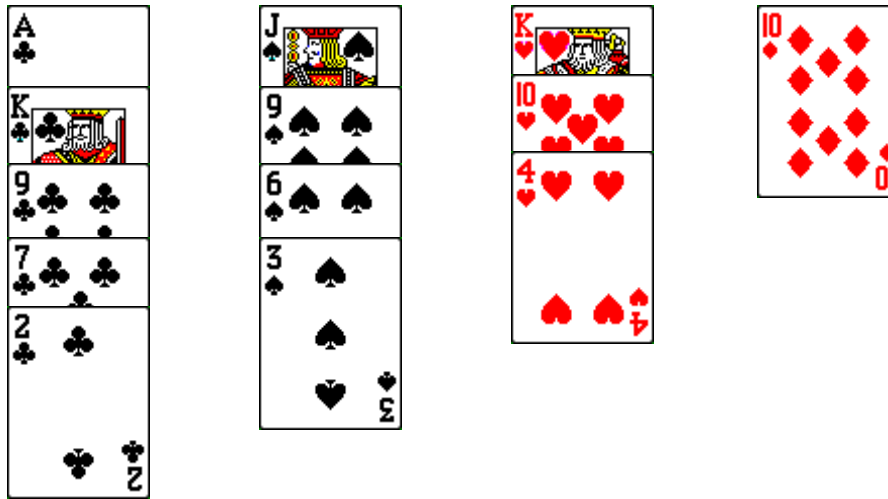
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Again, as in §2, there is no statutory order in which the suits must be displayed. Here West has chosen to order his cards Spades, Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs when he exposes them but there is no rule that says he has to do it in precisely this way.

Declarer (East, remember), after looking at both his own hand and dummy, *nominates trumps*. In the deal above declarer wants Clubs to be the trump suit as the East-West hands have nine Clubs between them. East does this by saying "I nominate Clubs" or "Clubs are trumps". Note that No-trumps is a poor place to play as North-South might be able to take a lot of Diamonds with East powerless to stop them.

Once trumps have been nominated the dummy (West) places the entire trump suit (in this case, Clubs) to his right – declarer's left – so that dummy now looks something like this (see top of next page):





South, the player to declarer's left, now chooses a card to lead and play commences.

On this deal you should note that North-South could only take one trick in Diamonds – if they were to lead a second round of the suit dummy would trump (or *ruff*) it. A trump suit is useful on those hands where declarer and dummy have a lot of trumps between them and there are *singletons* and *voids* about.

In general, a trump suit is chosen when a partnership has at least eight cards between them of a suit as this gives the opponents only five cards in the trump suit. If a partnership has only seven trumps between the two hands, then the opponents have six trumps and the play of the cards can become very tricky.

The “rule” therefore is to choose long suits as your trump suit, with *length* triumphing over *strength*. As an example of this have a look at this deal, with only the North-South cards shown:

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

Here, North-South have 21 points to their opponents' 19 and South is declarer. What suit would you like to be trumps? Firstly, note that playing the hand in No-trumps is very dodgy. East-West could take a number of tricks in Spades (how many tricks we can't tell) and at least two tricks in Diamonds.

So, South should choose a trump suit. You might think Hearts (or even Clubs) is best but in point of fact that is an illusion. Without doubt the right trump suit is Diamonds where North-South have nine cards.

On some layouts North-South might only lose two Diamond tricks (can you see how that might happen?) although they may well lose all of the ♦A K Q. They will also lose the ♠A K but no more tricks in Spades. That makes five losers in all (and eight tricks gathered in). Now, if Hearts or Clubs were trumps then the opponents would have more trumps than the declaring side and East-West will, for sure, score at least one trick with their extra trump.

So, to repeat, the rule is *length before strength*.

The four hands that follow are all played in a trump suit. Declarer just has to choose the best trump suit on each deal.



## Hands for §3: Introduction to Minibridge (Play in a Trump suit).

**Hand 1**

Dealer North

♠ A K Q 10 8 7 ♥ A K 5 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ 7	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ 4 2 ♥ 9 4 ♦ 9 7 ♣ A K Q J 10 4 3	
N	E						
W	S						
♠ 6 ♥ 8 7 6 3 2 ♦ K Q J 6 5 ♣ 6 2		♠ J 9 5 3 ♥ Q J 10 ♦ A 10 8 ♣ 9 8 5					

West	North	East	South
6	16	10	8

North-South hold the majority of the high cards and North has the highest number of points. North therefore becomes the **declarer** and South becomes the **dummy**.

After a look at dummy (a glance should be enough!) North should select Spades as trumps as North-South have ten (very good) cards there. East leads the ♣A and North has to see how many tricks he can make. As it happens, North should emerge with ten tricks, leaving East-West with just three. *What would happen in No-trumps?* The answer is that East could take (cash) the first seven tricks in Clubs, meaning that North would be unable to make more than six.

**Hand 2**

Dealer East

♠ 7 6 3 ♥ 7 6 ♦ 9 7 6 4 3 2 ♣ J 4	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ A K Q ♥ 5 4 2 ♦ K Q J ♣ 7 6 5 2	
N	E						
W	S						
♠ 10 8 4 ♥ A K Q J 10 9 ♦ A 5 ♣ 8 3		♠ J 9 5 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ 10 8 ♣ A K Q 10 9					

West	North	East	South
14	1	15	10

East-West have the majority of the points with East holding the best hand at the table. East therefore becomes **declarer** and West puts down his hand as **dummy**.

When West's hand is put face upwards on the table East can see that there is a very good trump suit for the partnership in Hearts, even though declarer doesn't have much in that suit himself. After East nominates Hearts as trumps South leads the ♣A. East should be able to make eleven tricks with North-South managing just two. *What would happen in No-trumps?* South would cash the first five Club tricks, leaving East to mop up the remaining eight tricks.

**Hand 3**

Dealer South

♠ A 8 4 ♥ K 9 8 2 ♦ J 7 ♣ K 9 5 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ K 5 3 ♥ Q J 7 4 ♦ 9 5 4 3 2 ♣ 6	
N	E						
W	S						
♠ Q J 10 2 ♥ 10 6 3 ♦ A K Q 8 ♣ 4 2		♠ 9 7 6 ♥ A 5 ♦ 10 6 ♣ A Q J 10 8 7					

West	North	East	South
12	11	6	11

North-South hold the majority of the high cards, so they become the partnership that plays the hand. Note that North and South have the same number of points but as South was the first player to announce his points (as dealer) it is South who becomes the **declarer** and North who has to be **dummy**.

After a look at the exposed dummy hand South has an easy time in selecting Clubs as the trump suit as North-South have ten cards there. West should lead the ♦A and South has to see how many tricks he can make. As it happens South should make nine tricks. *What would happen in No-trumps?* East-West would cash the first five Diamonds, leaving eight to South.

**Hand 4**

Dealer West

♠ A K Q J 6 5 ♥ 10 8 7 ♦ 4 ♣ 9 7 6	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ 4 3 2 ♥ K 6 4 ♦ J 9 7 6 5 ♣ 10 3	
N	E						
W	S						
♠ 10 8 7 ♥ A 5 2 ♦ A K Q 10 8 ♣ A 4		♠ 9 ♥ Q J 9 3 ♦ 3 2 ♣ K Q J 8 5 2					

West	North	East	South
17	10	4	9

East-West just have the majority of the points with West holding the best hand at the table. West therefore becomes **declarer** and East becomes the **dummy**.

When East's hand is displayed for all to see it is clear to West that his side's best trump suit is Diamonds. After West has nominated that suit as trumps, North will lead the top-of-a-sequence ♠A and declarer has to make as many tricks as he can. West should manage eight tricks, leaving North-South with five. *What would happen in No-trumps?* North would cash the first six Spade tricks, leaving West to make the last seven tricks when he finally gained the lead.

## §1.4 Mixed Trumps and No-trumps.

In this section we look at deals where declarer has a choice of whether to play in a trump suit or in No-trumps. What would sway declarer's choice of *strain*?

Let's have a look at a typical deal, but only the North-South cards.

<p>♠ Q 7 5 ♥ A K 4 ♦ 8 7 6 2 ♣ A 3 2</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">Declarer</td></tr> </table> <p>♠ A K J 8 ♥ Q 8 5 ♦ A 9 3 ♣ 9 6 4</p>	Dummy		W	E	Declarer	
Dummy						
W	E					
Declarer						

If you were South (declarer) what strain would you nominate? Spades? Hearts? Diamonds? Clubs? No-trumps? And *why*?

The answer is: declarer should nominate **No-trumps**. Firstly, note, that North-South have no eight-card (or longer) *fit* in any trump suit – that argues against making any suit trumps. Secondly, note that the North-South hands are *balanced*. This is a common term used in minibridge (and bridge) and it denotes a hand without a long suit and without any singletons or any voids. If you would like to be technical here, then it is usually applied to hands with a *suit pattern* of 4·3·3·3 or 4·4·3·2.

Here, both North and South have 4·3·3·3 shapes. Balanced hands usually play better in No-trumps than with a trump suit. Finally, note that North-South have *stoppers* in all suits. This means that the opponents cannot lead a suit and run off tricks there. Essentially, North-South control all four suits.

If you can count your tricks in advance maybe you can see that South can make nine tricks on this deal; he has four Spade tricks, three Heart tricks and two Aces.

Now, by contrast, have a look at this hand:

<p>♠ 5 ♥ K 8 7 2 ♦ A Q 9 5 ♣ 8 7 5 3</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">Declarer</td></tr> </table> <p>♠ 10 6 4 2 ♥ A Q J 10 9 ♦ K J ♣ J 4</p>	Dummy		W	E	Declarer	
Dummy						
W	E					
Declarer						

Here, South should nominate Hearts as trumps. Why? Well, neither North nor South is *balanced* (if we are being technical, South has a 5·4·2·2 shape and North has a 4·4·4·1 shape), North-South do have a nine-card *fit* in a suit (Hearts) and North-South do not have *stoppers* in either Clubs or Spades (meaning that East-West could take an unknown number of Club and Spade tricks before South gets a look in).

Here, a trump suit *controls the hand*. If East-West decide to lead Spades then North (dummy) can trump the second round, allowing East-West only one trick in Spades. If East-West lead Clubs South can trump the third round, allowing the opponents only two tricks in Clubs.

The four hands that follow are mixed. Declarer has to decide whether to nominate a trump suit or No-trumps.

## Hands for §4: Introduction to Minibridge (Mixed Trumps and No-trumps).

**Hand 1**

Dealer North

<p>♠ K Q J 8 7 5 ♥ A K Q ♦ 10 8 6 ♣ 2</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ 4 ♥ 10 9 8 5 3 ♦ J 2 ♣ A K Q 7 6</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ 3 2 ♥ J ♦ K Q 9 7 4 ♣ J 10 9 5 4</p>		<p>♠ A 10 9 6 ♥ 7 6 4 2 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 8 3</p>					

West	North	East	South
7	15	10	8

North-South hold the majority of the high cards and North has the highest number of points. North therefore becomes the **declarer** and South becomes the **dummy**.

After a look at dummy North should select Spades as trumps as North-South have a ten-card *fit* there. East should lead the ♣A and North has to see how many tricks he can make. As it happens, North should emerge with ten tricks, leaving East-West with just three. Note that North must lead off some trumps as his first play otherwise East-West may make a cheap trick with the ♠2 by trumping a Heart. No-trumps would allow East-West to take the first five tricks.

**Hand 2**

Dealer East

<p>♠ 9 6 3 2 ♥ 5 4 ♦ A Q 9 8 ♣ 10 9 3</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ A K Q ♥ K J ♦ J 6 5 3 ♣ 8 7 6 2</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ J 10 8 7 ♥ A Q 10 8 7 6 ♦ None ♣ J 5 4</p>		<p>♠ 5 4 ♥ 9 3 2 ♦ K 10 7 4 2 ♣ A K Q</p>					

West	North	East	South
8	6	14	12

East-West have the majority of the points with East holding the best hand at the table. East therefore becomes **declarer** and West puts down his hand as **dummy**.

When West's hand is put face upwards on the table East can see that there is a very good trump suit for the partnership in Hearts, even though declarer doesn't have much in that suit himself. After East nominates Hearts as trumps South leads the ♣A. East should be able to make ten tricks, although South will have the first three. Again (as in Hand 1), East should take care to play off some Hearts to get rid of North-South's trumps as early as he can.

**Hand 3**

Dealer South

<p>♠ K J 2 ♥ J 9 5 3 ♦ A 6 ♣ Q 10 9 2</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ 10 3 ♥ K 8 7 4 ♦ 7 5 4 2 ♣ K 7 3</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ 9 8 6 5 ♥ A Q ♦ J 10 9 8 ♣ A J 4</p>		<p>♠ A Q 7 4 ♥ 10 6 2 ♦ K Q 3 ♣ 8 6 5</p>					

West	North	East	South
12	11	6	11

North-South hold the majority of the high cards, so they become the partnership that plays the hand. However, North and South have the same number of points. Because South was the first player to announce his points (as he is dealer) it is South who becomes the **declarer** and North who has to put up with being the **dummy**.

After a look at the exposed dummy hand South has an awkward decision but should select No-trumps as the North-South hands are *balanced* (there is no good trump suit). This type of deal can be difficult but declarer does have three Diamonds and four Spades to make, so he should record at least seven tricks.

**Hand 4**

Dealer West

<p>♠ K Q J 9 ♥ J 7 5 2 ♦ 6 3 ♣ J 10 9</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">N</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ 8 5 ♥ A 8 4 ♦ K Q 10 4 ♣ 7 6 3 2</p>	
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ 6 3 ♥ K Q 9 ♦ A J 9 7 5 ♣ A K 4</p>		<p>♠ A 10 7 4 2 ♥ 10 6 3 ♦ 8 2 ♣ Q 8 5</p>					

West	North	East	South
17	8	9	6

East-West just have the majority of the points with West holding the best hand at the table. West, therefore, becomes **declarer** and East becomes the **dummy**.

When East's hand is displayed for all to see it is clear to West that his side's best trump suit is Diamonds. After West has nominated Diamonds as trumps North will lead the ♠K (top of a sequence) and declarer has to make as many tricks as he can. Declarer should manage ten tricks, leaving North-South with three. North-South should be able to take two tricks in Spades immediately and, eventually, a trick in Clubs.

## §1.5 Suit combinations.

Almost all hands in all forms of bridge contain *suit combinations*. A suit combination is just the way a suit may be distributed between two hands. It is rare, in fact, that a suit is dealt between two hands so that all the high cards are in one hand. This example, however, is where all the high cards *are* in one hand:

Ex. 1	♣ 4 3 2			
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>Declarer</td></tr> </table>	Dummy	W E	Declarer
Dummy				
W E				
Declarer				
	♣ A K Q J 10			

Here, in Example 1, it should be easy to see that there are five tricks in Clubs. Because all of South's Clubs are *equals* it doesn't matter in which order South plays them. Change the cards around a little, however, so that the high ones are not in the same hand:

Ex. 2	♣ J 10 2			
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>Declarer</td></tr> </table>	Dummy	W E	Declarer
Dummy				
W E				
Declarer				
	♣ A K Q 4 3			

Here, in Example 2, there are also five *cashable* tricks in this suit.



Can you see that this is so? Please note that there is a correct way to play this suit and, naturally enough, an incorrect way. You should lead a *low* card (the ♣3 or the ♣4) to North's ♣10 (or ♣J), play off the other Club honour in the North hand and then lead the ♣2 to the ♣Q. What would happen if you don't do this?

What happens if you lead the three top Clubs from South? Can you see that this play would *crash* the Club honours?

Can you see *why* this might matter?

*Crashing honours* is, generally speaking, a very bad idea. It happens when declarer takes his eye off the ball and plays two high cards to the same trick. Another (frequent) example happens in a suit layout as in Example 3:

Ex. 3	♣ K 4 3			
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>Declarer</td></tr> </table>	Dummy	W E	Declarer
Dummy				
W E				
Declarer				
	♣ A Q J 2			

Here, an inattentive declarer (South in this case) plays off the ♣J and ♣Q as his first two plays in the suit. Now, suddenly, he is on the horns of a dilemma as the remaining cards would be:

Ex. 3b	♣ K			
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Dummy</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>Declarer</td></tr> </table>	Dummy	W E	Declarer
Dummy				
W E				
Declarer				
	♣ A 2			

If South now plays the ♣A he *crashes* the ♣A and ♣K on the same trick, with no guarantee that the ♣2 will be the boss Club. On the other hand, if South leads the ♣2 to the ♣K the lead is with North and the ♣A is with South. In many deals the ♣A will be stranded and may never make a trick.

Correct technique is to play the ♣K first and then a low Club to South's remaining ♣A Q J. Then four Club tricks are easy.

With this idea in mind can you play the following combinations correctly so that you make the stipulated number of tricks? Assume that the first lead comes from the South hand.

Q1: Make four tricks from this holding:

♣ A K 3
Dummy W E Declarer
♣ Q J 7 2

Q2: Make four tricks from this holding:

♣ Q 7
Dummy W E Declarer
♣ A K J 5

Q3: Make five tricks from this holding:

♣ A 4
Dummy W E Declarer
♣ K Q J 10 6

Q4: Make five tricks from this holding:

♣ A K 2
Dummy W E Declarer
♣ Q J 10 5 3

Q5: Make four tricks from this holding:

♣ A Q 7 4
Dummy W E Declarer
♣ K J 2

Q6: Can you see a guiding principle here in these *suit combinations*?

### Answers.

A1: Lead the ♣2 to North's ♣K, cash the ♣A and then lead the ♣3 to South's remaining ♣Q J.

A2: Lead the ♣5 to North's ♣Q and follow with the ♣7 to South's remaining ♣A K J.

A3: Lead the ♣6 to North's ♣A and then lead the ♣4 to South's remaining ♣K Q J 10.

A4: Lead the ♣3 to North's ♣K, then cash the ♣A. Now lead the ♣2 to South's remaining ♣Q J 10.

A5: Lead the ♣K first, follow that by cashing the ♣J. Now lead the ♣2 to North's remaining ♣A Q.

A6: It is *generally* right to play the **high cards from the short suit first**.

In the four hands that follow the emphasis is on "*Play the high cards from the short suit first*".

In each case you have to make a **Grand Slam** (that is: make all thirteen tricks).

## Hands for §5: Suit combinations.

### Hand 1

Dealer North

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

West	North	East	South
4	21	5	10

North becomes declarer and could choose trumps to be either Hearts or Diamonds or, in fact, he could choose No-trumps. To avoid unpleasant surprises (such as an opponent trumping one of your winners) North should nominate **No-trumps**. East will lead the top-of-a-sequence ♣Q and declarer's target is all thirteen tricks. Care however must be taken with regard to cashing the tricks in the right order. Win the Club lead and then play off the Ace and King of one of the red suits (*play the honours from the short suit first*) followed by the rest of the tricks in that suit. Now repeat the process with the other red suit. That's the first eleven tricks and the top Spades are still to come.

### Hand 2

Dealer East

<p>♠ 9 8 7 6 2 ♥ 4 ♦ Q 10 9 8 6 ♣ 9 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></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N		E	W				S		<p>♠ A 3 ♥ K Q J 10 6 ♦ A 7 4 ♣ A K 3</p>	<p>♠ K Q J 10 4 ♥ A 5 ♦ 5 3 2 ♣ 8 7 2</p>
N		E										
W												
	S											

West	North	East	South
10	2	21	7

This time East, holding a remarkable 21 points, is declarer. As with the previous deal, one partnership has significantly more points than their opponents and once again the partnership should select **No-trumps** just in case North-South could take an immediate ruff. South leads the top-of-a-sequence ♣Q and declarer's aim is to rake in all the tricks. Winning the Club lead in his hand declarer should play off the ♠A (*play the honours from the short suit first*) and follow with a low Spade, cashing all of dummy's five-card suit (Be careful. Do not throw a Heart away!) Now dummy can cash the ♥A and East can follow with all the Heart winners. This way East will be left with two Aces as his last two cards.

### Hand 3

Dealer South

<p>♠ K Q 4 ♥ A J 10 8 5 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ 9 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></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N		E	W				S		<p>♠ None ♥ 9 7 6 3 2 ♦ 8 4 3 ♣ K J 8 6 2</p>	<p>♠ A J 10 8 5 ♥ K Q 4 ♦ A K ♣ A 5 3</p>
N		E										
W												
	S											

West	North	East	South
5	10	4	21

Now you can see the theme you can understand the point of this hand. South is declarer and North-South have to make all thirteen tricks in **No-trumps**. Of course, you *might* select Spades or Hearts as trumps but No-trumps is usually best if you have the tricks. The opening lead is the top-of-a-sequence ♦Q and declarer should count his tricks. Five Hearts, five Spades and three top tricks in Clubs and Diamonds makes thirteen. What can go wrong? Well, you just have to be careful to play the suits in the correct way (*play the honours from the short suit first*). That is, when cashing your tricks in Hearts and Spades you must play the King and Queen off first, followed by the low card.

### Hand 4

Dealer West

<p>♠ None ♥ Q J 10 9 ♦ 9 8 7 5 3 ♣ 10 5 4 3</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N		E	W				S		<p>♠ A Q 10 7 3 ♥ 7 ♦ K Q 6 ♣ 8 7 6 2</p>	<p>♠ K J 6 ♥ A K 6 2 ♦ A J 10 4 2 ♣ A</p>
N		E										
W												
	S											

West	North	East	South
20	3	11	6

This time we find West with a very good hand – half the points in the pack, in fact. Once again, **No-trumps** should be the selected denomination and thirteen tricks should be the aim. North will lead the top-of-a-sequence ♥Q and declarer should be able to see five Spade tricks, five Diamond tricks and three top tricks in the form of the Ace-King of Hearts and the ♠A. So, win the Heart lead, cash the ♠K and the ♠J (*play the honours from the short suit first*), cash the rest of the Spades (do not throw Diamonds away! The small Hearts are rubbish and can be safely discarded), play off the ♦K and the ♦Q and finally follow with the rest of the Diamonds. That should bring home the bacon.

## §1.6 Bridge Preliminaries.

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

- Bidding:** Auction, Contract, Dealer, Double, Major suits (♥ and ♠), Minor suits (♣ and ♦), No-trumps, Opener, Overcall, Pass (No Bid), Rank of the suits, Redouble, Slams (Small Slam, Grand Slam).
- Play:** Declarer, Defenders, Dummy, Opening lead, Overtrick, Undertrick.
- Scoring:** Above the line, Below the line, Game, Part-score, Penalty, Rubber, Vulnerable.

Bridge is a whist-derived game played by four players in two opposing partnerships. As in minibridge, the game is based on the principles of *tricks and trumps*, although some deals may be played in *No-trumps*.

The four players are referred to by compass positions and are therefore called *North, East, South* and *West* where North-South are in partnership opposed by East-West.

The game is similar to minibridge in that there is a phase of the game where tricks are taken; the play is clockwise and everybody must observe the *following suit* rule common to all whist-based games.

Where bridge and minibridge differ is there is an initial phase where players vie for the right to nominate trumps. In addition, they have to set a target number of tricks for each side. This phase is known as the *auction*.

The suits in bridge have a very important *ranking*, which is set out below:

Spades	♠
Hearts	♥
Diamonds	♦
Clubs	♣

In all bridge books (and newspaper articles) deals are represented as in Hand 1 (below) where, in every case, the diagrams have the suits arranged in the order Spades, Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs.

There have been plenty of examples in the previous section on minibridge.

### Hand 1.

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

If you have nothing better to do with your time you can check that the deal above is legitimate.

Each hand must have thirteen cards, there must be thirteen Spades, thirteen Hearts, thirteen Diamonds and thirteen Clubs on view and no card may appear twice (and, of course, no card can be missing). To check this thoroughly can be extremely tedious!

In fact, many books and newspaper articles on bridge contain errors in hand layouts, often by having the same card appear twice (and, therefore, a card missing). This is largely due to the difficulty of proofreading such deals, or (at least) the sheer tedium of poring over a large numbers of such deals.



## The Mechanics of the Game.

There are two phases to the game, firstly the *auction* (also known as the *bidding*) where each player in turn can bid (or *Pass*) and, secondly, there is the *play*.

In the play phase there is a *contract* (determined by the auction) which will indicate the trump suit, who will play the hand (the *declarer*), which of the *defenders* will make the *opening lead*, who will place his hand face upwards on the table (the *dummy*) and, finally, how many tricks each side requires.

The auction starts with the *dealer* and proceeds clockwise around the table with each player in turn making a bid or Passing.

The first player to make a bid other than Pass is called the *opener*. Each bid of the auction (and the contract itself) consists of two parts: the number of tricks to be made and the trump suit (or *No-trumps*).

The form that this takes is that each bid consists of a number (between one and seven inclusive) and a suit (or No-trumps) so, for example, a player might make the bid of "Two Hearts", written in shorthand form as 2♥.

Since it is not allowed to contract to make fewer than half the total number of available tricks (which is, of course, thirteen) each bid must be for *more than six tricks* so a bid of "Two Hearts" (or 2♥) is an attempt to make *eight* tricks with Hearts as trumps.

In order to work out how many tricks are required simply add six to the bid. Thus, a contract of 3♦ requires nine tricks to be successful, 4♠ requires ten tricks and so on. Clearly, the highest level bid is 7 somethings which contracts for all thirteen tricks. A contract of 6 somethings is called a *small slam* and a contract of 7 somethings is known as a *grand slam*.

In order for a bid to overcall a previous bid it must either be of a higher level (i.e. more tricks) or be of higher *rank* (or both). The table from the previous page has to be modified here to include No-trumps:

No-trumps	NT
Spades	♠
Hearts	♥
Diamonds	♦
Clubs	♣

Each bid of the auction must out-bid or *overcall* the previous bid.

Thus, for example, a bid of 1♠ will be sufficient to overcall 1♥ since Spades outrank Hearts. However, to overcall 1♥ with Diamonds you would have to bid 2♦. As another example 3♣ will overcall 2♦, but 2♦ would be enough to overcall 2♣.

If a player does not want to bid, he may *Pass* or, more unusually and in certain circumstances, he may *Double* or *Redouble*.

Note that it is not necessary for an auction to proceed in minimum steps. As one of many possible examples: if North bids 1♥, East may, if he so wishes, bid 3♠.

Apart from on the first round of bidding the auction is terminated by three consecutive Passes; at this point the last positive bid of the auction is established as the *contract* and the play phase begins.

Below is a sample auction with North the dealer.

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♥	1NT	2♥	3♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The dealer gets to bid first, remember; here he chooses to Pass.

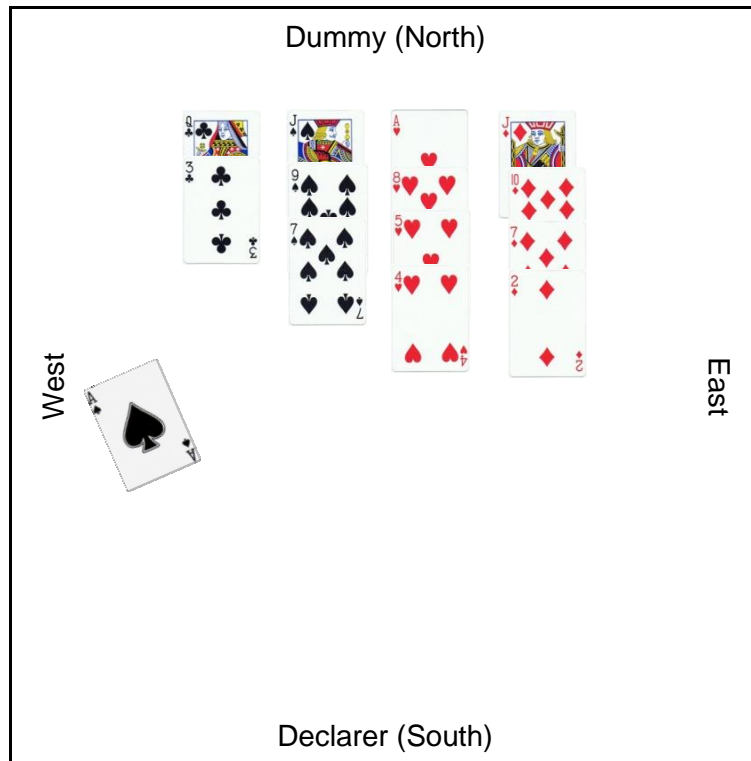
In this case the *contract* would be 3♣, played by South who becomes the *declarer* with West to lead and North to become the *dummy*.

There are targets for both sides: South needs to make nine tricks (or more) to make the contract, East-West (the *defenders*) need five tricks (or more) to *break* the contract.

On every hand at bridge there is a target for each side. There is a target for the side making the declaration and a different target for their opponents who are trying to prevent the declaring side from achieving that target.

Once the contract has been established the player to the left of declarer makes the opening lead by facing one of his cards. Let us say that the opening lead is the ♠A.

At this point dummy faces his hand. This is similar to the procedure to that of minibridge; dummy arranges his cards in columns so that the table looks something like this:



There are two points to note. Firstly, the opening lead is made before dummy is displayed (by contrast, dummy is displayed before the opening lead in minibridge).

Secondly, whilst it is mandatory for dummy's cards to be arranged top to bottom, high to low as shown above there is no particular statutory order for the suits to be displayed from left to right. However, where the contract is in a trump suit it has to be placed on dummy's right-hand side (declarer's left).

As in minibridge, the play of dummy's cards is at the behest of declarer and dummy must act as a robot, playing the exposed cards exactly as he is told, without grimacing!

Declarer must call for the cards rather than touch them (especially, he shouldn't "paw" the dummy, that's a revolting habit!) but he can use shortened terms such as "small, please", indicating that he would like dummy to play the smallest card in the led suit.

Dummy does have the right to prevent an irregularity. He can tell declarer which hand is on lead and he can stop an inattentive partner from *revoking* (failing to follow suit).

## Scoring at Bridge.

You need to understand the scoring method. A blank score sheet is shown on the right, with a horizontal line roughly two-thirds of the way down the page. This is known as “*the line*” (!) and the area above is “*above the line*”. Not surprisingly the area below the line is known as – er – “*below the line*”.

Contracts bid and made score below the line and *overtricks* and *undertricks* score above the line. (As do “honours”, slam bonuses and rubber bonuses).

You need 100 (or more) points below the line to score a *game* and you need two games to win the *rubber*. (Although it is possible to win two games but lose overall.) A game can be made up from two or more *part-scores* or in one fell swoop with a *game contract*.

The ranking of the suits in bridge is associated with the scoring:

No-trumps	NT	40, then 30, 30, 30 etc per <b>bid</b> trick.
Spades	♠	Major suits 30 points per <b>bid</b> trick.
Hearts	♥	
Diamonds	♦	Minor suits 20 points per <b>bid</b> trick.
Clubs	♣	

We	They
Above the line	
Below the line	

As an example: a successful contract of 2♥ would score 60 (that is: 2 × 30) points *below the line*. A successful contract of 3NT would score 100 (that is: 40 + 30 + 30) points *below the line*. Note that a contract of 2♥ making nine tricks would score 60 points below the line and 30 points above the line.

It follows that contracts of 3NT, 4♠, 4♥, 5♦, 5♣ are all *game contracts* (because they are worth 100 points or more to be scored below the line). Contracts which score less than 100 points below the line (there are many examples of these including 1♦, 2NT, 4♣) are known as *part-score* contracts.

A pair that has scored a game (and are therefore half-way towards winning the rubber) is said to be *vulnerable*. The explanation for this term comes from the table of *penalties* for undertricks:

Down	Non-vulnerable		Vulnerable	
	Undoubled	Doubled	Undoubled	Doubled
1	50	100	100	200
2	100	300	200	500
3	150	500	300	800
4	200	800	400	1100
5	250	1100	500	1400

If someone has Redoubled the final contract, then the Doubled scores are themselves doubled. (Huge penalties like these can prove expensive. **Very** expensive). Notice that a player can only Double an opponent's contract and can only Redouble a contract of his own side if an opponent has Doubled it.

There are bonuses for winning the rubber. These are: **700** for a two-game rubber (i.e. winning by two games to nil) and **500** for a three-game rubber (i.e. winning by two games to one)

Slam bonuses are quite attractive but remember you have to bid the slam to get the rewards:

	Non-vulnerable	Vulnerable
Small Slam	500	750
Grand Slam	1000	1500

Finally, there are points for *honours* although in many forms of bridge they have been abandoned. These points are scored above the line. Just for completeness sake they are listed here:

In a <b>trump</b> contract: {	a holding of 4 out of the 5 top honours in one hand:	= 100
	a holding of all 5 out of the 5 top honours in one hand:	= 150
In <b>No-trumps</b> :	a holding of all four aces in one hand:	= 150

These bonuses are available to both the declaring side and to the defenders.

## Scoring at Bridge: An Example Rubber.

Here is an example rubber to help you understand the scoring. The four players are, as always, North, South, East and West, playing as North-South against East-West. As it happens the rubber took nine hands to complete.

	Score	Comments
<b>Hand 1</b> North-South bid 3♥ and make 10 tricks.	30 above the line 90 below the line to NS.	A <i>part-score</i> of 90 to NS. The <i>overtrick</i> is also worth 30 points.
<b>Hand 2</b> East-West bid 4♠ and make 8 tricks.	100 above the line to NS.	A <i>penalty</i> to NS. Two <i>undertricks</i> at 50 points each.
<b>Hand 3</b> East-West bid 2NT and make 8 tricks.	70 below the line to EW.	A <i>part-score</i> of 70 to EW.
<b>Hand 4</b> North-South bid 3♦ and make 12 tricks.	60 above the line 60 below the line to NS.	The NS <i>part-score</i> is converted into a game. NS are now <i>vulnerable</i> .
<b>Hand 5</b> North-South bid 5♦ and make 8 tricks.	300 above the line to EW.	A <i>penalty</i> to EW. Three <i>vulnerable undertricks</i> at 100 points each.
<b>Hand 6</b> East-West bid 3NT and make 9 tricks.	100 below the line to EW.	A <i>game contract</i> bid and made. Both sides are now <i>vulnerable</i> .
<b>Hand 7</b> East-West bid 4♦ and make 9 tricks.	100 above the line to NS.	A <i>penalty</i> to NS. Each <i>undertrick</i> when <i>vulnerable</i> costs 100 points.
<b>Hand 8</b> North-South bid 1NT and make 8 tricks.	30 above the line 40 below the line to NS.	A <i>part-score</i> bid and made with one <i>overtrick</i> .
<b>Hand 9</b> East-West bid 5♣ and make 11 tricks.	100 below the line to EW.	EW have made two <i>games</i> so the rubber is now over.

East-West are entitled to a bonus for winning the rubber. This is worth 500 points since they won by two games to one. (Had they won by two games to none the bonus would have been 700 points.)

NS	EW
30	
100	
60	
100	500
30	300
90	70
60	100
40	100

The final score-sheet should look like the one on the left.

Now that the rubber is over **all** the scores in both columns are added up. The totals come to 1070 points to East-West and 510 points to North-South, making an aggregate of 560 points to East-West.

It is important to realise that completing the rubber does not necessarily mean that the side that scored the two games turned out to be the winners.

As an example, suppose that on Hand 4 North had bid and made a grand slam in Diamonds, scoring 140 below the line and 1000 above the line. Now when the rubber is totted up it is North-South who would have won by 460 points, despite the fact that their opponents have completed the rubber.

Those players who like to play for money now settle up and the next rubber commences. However, money bridge is rare these days and what usually happens is that a rubber restarts with different partnerships. There are two ways this may be done. One is simply to rotate the partnerships, the other is to *cut for partners*. Here, each player takes a card at random from a pack and the players with two highest cards form a partnership against the players with the two lowest cards. The bridge ranking of the suits plays a part here in the cut. If two players cut a card of the same rank then Spades rank higher than Hearts rank higher than Diamonds rank higher than Clubs.

For example, in a cut-for-partners game of rubber bridge, Alan picks the ♦7, Belinda the ♠Q, Colin the ♦Q and Delia the ♣A. The two highest cards are the ♣A and the ♠Q so the partnerships would be Belinda and Delia against Alan and Colin. In this case the ♠Q outranks the ♦Q because Spades outrank Diamonds.

This method is also used when there are more than four players wanting to play, everyone selects a card and the lowest card sits out, the others forming two partnerships. As a point of fact, the player with the highest card (here it is Delia) can select which chair to sit in. Some players are very superstitious about such things...!

## Scoring at Rubber Bridge: Quiz.

Try scoring these rubbers yourself. The answers are on the following page.

### Number 1.

<b>Hand 1.</b>	North-South bid 4♠ and make 12 tricks.
<b>Hand 2.</b>	East-West bid 3NT and make 10 tricks.
<b>Hand 3.</b>	North-South bid 4♥ and make 8 tricks.
<b>Hand 4.</b>	East-West bid 3♦ and make 10 tricks.
<b>Hand 5.</b>	North-South bid 4♠ and make nine tricks.
<b>Hand 6.</b>	East-West bid 1NT and make 10 tricks.

### Number 2.

<b>Hand 1.</b>	East-West bid 3♣ and make 8 tricks.
<b>Hand 2.</b>	North-South bid 1NT and make 8 tricks
<b>Hand 3.</b>	East-West bid 2♠ and make 9 tricks.
<b>Hand 4.</b>	East-West bid 2♥ and make 7 tricks.
<b>Hand 5.</b>	North-South bid 2NT and make 8 tricks.
<b>Hand 6.</b>	North-South bid 4♠ and make 9 tricks.
<b>Hand 7.</b>	North-South bid 3NT and make 7 tricks.
<b>Hand 8.</b>	East-West bid 3♥ and make 9 tricks.
<b>Hand 9.</b>	North-South bid 1NT and make 7 tricks.
<b>Hand 10.</b>	East-West bid 3♦ and make 8 tricks.
<b>Hand 11.</b>	North-South bid 3♥ and make ten tricks.

**Number 3.\*** This is a much harder example as it contains bonuses for *honours* and *slams* and a nasty penalty for a Doubled contract.

<b>Hand 1.</b>	North-South bid 4♠ and make 11 tricks.
<b>Hand 2.</b>	North-South bid 5♦, get Doubled and make 7 tricks (very expensive!)
<b>Hand 3.</b>	North-South bid 2♥ and make 9 tricks. North has ♥A Q J 10.
<b>Hand 4.</b>	North-South bid 2NT and make 7 tricks.
<b>Hand 5.</b>	East-West bid 6♠ and make 12 tricks. West has ♠A K Q J 10.
<b>Hand 6.</b>	North-South bid 1NT and make 9 tricks.
<b>Hand 7.</b>	East-West bid 3NT and make 7 tricks.
<b>Hand 8.</b>	North-South bid 2♦ and make 7 tricks.
<b>Hand 9.</b>	North-South bid 2♥ and make 11 tricks.

Number 1.	
NS	EW
<b>Totals:</b>	
Preliminaries	

Number 2.	
NS	EW

Number 3.	
NS	EW

Totals:  
Preliminaries

## Answers.

Number 1.	
NS	EW
	500
	90
	100
	20
	200
60	30
120	
	100
	60
	40

<b>Totals:</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1140</b>
<b>Aggregate:</b>	<b>960 to East-West</b>	

Number 2.	
NS	EW
700	
30	
50	
50	200
30	100
50	30
40	60
70	
40	90
90	

<b>1150</b>	<b>480</b>
<b>670 to North-South</b>	

Number 3.	
NS	EW
500	
90	
200	100
60	150
100	500
30	100
30	1100
120	
60	180
40	
60	

<b>1290</b>	<b>2130</b>
<b>840 to East-West</b>	

## Hands for §6: Bridge Preliminaries.

**Hand 1** Dealer North

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	2♥
4♣	Pass	Pass	Pass
4♣ by East		Opening lead: ♥A	

North, as dealer with a wretched hand, Passes. East, with 14 points, opens 1♠ and South overcalls with 2♥ (1♥ would not be sufficient to outbid 1♠ as Spades outrank Hearts). West, with 13 points, decides to go for a **game contract**, so bids 4♣. (Remember: a game is 100 points below the line; Spades are worth 30 points per bid trick and 4 × 30 makes 120). There are then three Passes to end the auction. East is declarer and has to make at least ten tricks, North-South are the defenders with South making the opening lead. North-South will have to take four tricks to beat the contract of 4♣. South leads the ♥A and then (and only after the opening lead has been made) West arranges the dummy neatly on the table.

**Hand 2** Dealer East

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

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	All Pass
2♥ by West		Opening lead: ♣A	

East is the dealer on this hand and hence starts the auction. Since he has a below average hand (only 7 points) he Passes, as does South (9 points). West (14 points) opens the bidding with 1♥. North Passes and East, who likes Hearts, raises his partner to 2♥. West does not fancy trying for a **game contract**, so he lets the bidding die in a **part-score**. Making eight tricks (or more) will score 60 points (that is: 2 × 30) below the line. Any overtricks (worth 30 points each) will be scored above the line. West is declarer, East is the dummy and North must select the opening lead. The actual choice of opening lead is the ♣A. East-West need just eight tricks to make their contract, North-South need six tricks to defeat them.

**Hand 3** Dealer South

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

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

South is the dealer, so he has the first bid. He has no really good suit to make trumps, so he decides to bid 1NT. (You will see how many points South is showing in a later lesson). West Passes and North decides to play for a **game contract** in No-trumps by bidding 3NT. (He might bid Diamonds, but they only score 20 points a trick, whereas No-trumps scores much better – and only nine tricks are need for game in this strain). 3NT is the contract with West to lead, the choice here being the ♥J (top-of-a-sequence). North is the dummy with South, declarer, having to make at least nine tricks. East-West need five tricks to stop declarer from fulfilling his contract.

**Hand 4** Dealer West

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♦	1♠	Pass	4♣
4♣ by North		Opening lead: ♦10	

West is the dealer, so he bids first. With his exactly average hand (10 points) he Passes as do North and East. This is the only time in bridge that the auction is not ended by three consecutive Passes. South opens the bidding in fourth position with 1♣. West, able to bid cheaply over 1♣, overcalls 1♦. North is entitled to join in the fun, so he responds to his partner with 1♠. South likes Spades a lot, so he raises his partner to 4♣, which is a **game contract**. North is declarer, East has the opening lead (and chooses the ♦10) after which South becomes the dummy. North-South need ten tricks to make their contract, East-West need four tricks to defeat it.



## Hands for §6: Bridge Preliminaries.

**Hand 5** Dealer North

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

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

North is the dealer, so bids first. With only 4 points he has nothing to say, allowing East to open the bidding. That player tries 1NT with his balanced hand and South Passes over that. West tries for a game contract with a raise to 3NT and that duly ends the auction. (3NT, you should remember, scores 40+30+30, making a total of 100 points below the line). South leads the top-of-a-sequence ♠K and East has to count his tricks. He should see that he has nine winners (to wit: one Spade, one Heart, three Diamonds and four Clubs). Is there a problem? Yes, a small one; in playing Clubs East must be careful to *play the honours from the short suit first*. He must play the ♣J and then follow with the ♣A K Q.

**Hand 6** Dealer East

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

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
4♠ by South		Opening lead: ♥Q	

East doesn't have enough (only 8 points) to open the bidding. South has 15 points and opens 1♠ with his good five-card suit. After West Passes, North has enough to raise Spades. Too good for 2♠ and not good enough for a raise to game (4♠) North compromises with a raise to 3♠. This invites South to bid game if he wishes and to Pass if he doesn't. With a significantly better than minimum opening bid, South accepts the invitation and advances to game. West leads the top-of-a-sequence ♥Q and dummy is exposed. South can see ten tricks (five Spades, one Heart and four Diamonds). The catch? After winning trick one South must play out some Spades to eliminate the trumps from the East-West hands.

**Hand 7** Dealer South

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

West	North	East	South
			1♣
1♦	1♠	2♦	2♠
2♠ by North		Opening lead: ♦J	

South is the dealer, and he has an opening bid (13 points). His best (as in longest) suit is Clubs, so he opens 1♣. The deal becomes competitive in that all four players decide to join in. West overcalls with 1♦, North responds to his partner's opening bid with 1♠, East supports his partner's Diamonds and South, in turn, raises his partner's Spades. East-West decide that they are outgunned (the side with Spades usually wins the auction!) and 2♠ becomes the final contract. East leads the ♦J and North can make a fair number of tricks simply by trumping everything in sight (Clubs in hand and Diamonds in dummy). Declarer should emerge with nine tricks, although eight would be perfectly satisfactory.

**Hand 8** Dealer West

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
4♥ by West		Opening lead: ♠A	

West is the dealer, and he has a fine hand (17 points and a lovely long Heart suit). He opens 1♥ and, as in the previous deal, the bidding becomes competitive. North overcalls 1♠, East, although only holding 5 points, has enough to raise his West's Hearts, South has enough to raise North's Spades and now it's back to West. Knowing of Heart support opposite, West decides to play for a game contract by jumping to 4♥. North-South are silenced by this and 4♥ wins the auction. North leads the ♠A and East displays his weak dummy. Nonetheless, it has features that West regards as gold-dust – four trumps, a singleton Diamond and the ♣Q. Declarer can lead Diamonds and trump them in dummy, losing two tricks.

