

U3ABC03 Practice Session

Welcome!

Here is a list of all 16 hands available to play in today's MiniBridge Practice Session. It tells you useful stuff like the cards in each hand, the High Card Points, the "correct" contract and lead. It also explains how to play each hand – **don't worry too much about any of this!** The explanations are quite detailed, they are there if you want them, but don't feel bad if they make no sense right now or the play is totally different to how you played the hands. You're just getting started; these first few practice sessions are more about getting used to playing on your computer, meeting the other students and your instructors.

Bridge is a great game, but it can be overwhelming, so much to think about. Don't worry, it will get easier. We're here to help it all make sense. Don't worry about making mistakes, we all do. We're always happy to explain or answer questions. Remember, you're playing with other people who are just starting out, too. Let's have fun together!

-Ed

Boards 1 – 4: MiniBridge No Trump contracts

North East South West

14 8 13 5

♠ A6
♥ QJT9
♦ AK62
♣ 643

♠ 973 ♠ QJT85
♥ 854 ♥ A73
♦ QJ8 ♦ T95
♣ QT95 ♣ J2

♠ K42
♥ K62
♦ 743
♣ AK87

Board: 1 Dealer: North Lead: ♠Q #9

We have 27 points so we choose game in No Trumps. East leads ♠Q (top of sequence). We can see 6 top winners: 2♠, 0♥, 2♦, 2♣.

We can make 3 Heart tricks by driving out the ♥A but must do this before cashing our winners in the other suits, so we can get the lead back before the defence set up their long suits.

East South West North

13 10 9 8

| | | | |
|--------|---------|--------|--|
| | ♠ 87 | | |
| | ♥ KJ86 | | |
| | ♦ KJ9 | | |
| | ♣ 6432 | | |
| ♠ 432 | | ♠ AK5 | |
| ♥ A52 | | ♥ T43 | |
| ♦ A765 | | ♦ 432 | |
| ♣ J75 | | ♣ AQT9 | |
| | ♠ QJT96 | | |
| | ♥ Q97 | | |
| | ♦ QT8 | | |
| | ♣ K8 | | |

South West North East

17 6 10 7

| | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--|
| | ♠ J92 | | |
| | ♥ AJ32 | | |
| | ♦ AT6 | | |
| | ♣ T42 | | |
| ♠ 764 | | ♠ A83 | |
| ♥ 865 | | ♥ QT9 | |
| ♦ 983 | | ♦ J752 | |
| ♣ KQJ7 | | ♣ 865 | |
| | ♠ KQT5 | | |
| | ♥ K74 | | |
| | ♦ KQ4 | | |
| | ♣ A93 | | |

Board: 2 Dealer: East Lead: ♠Q #10

We have 22 points so we choose part score in No Trumps (7 tricks).

South leads ♠Q (top of sequence). We can see 5 top tricks: 2♠, 1♥, 1♦, 1♣.

The simplest way to make two more tricks (to make the contract) is to drive out ♣K before cashing the winners in other suits. Cash the ♣A and play another Club. This ensures three Club tricks. We make 2 Spades, 1 Heart, 1 Diamond, and 3 Clubs.

If you've already played a few MiniBridge hands you might spot a way to try for 8 tricks. After winning the first trick with ♠A, you could cross to dummy's ♦A and lead ♣J.

If North covers with ♣K, win with ♣A and you now have 8 tricks. If North plays low, play low from hand and you'll still be able make 8 tricks if North has ♣K.

This is an example of a repeated finesse.

Before embarking on this approach it's important to check that it's OK to release dummy's ♦A before playing on Clubs. On this hand it is: even if South has all six missing Diamonds he'll be unable to cash more than five tricks and we'll still make our contract.

In practice South wins the first round of Clubs with ♣K, so we have to be content with making our 7 tricks – our contract exactly.

Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: ♣K #11

We have 27 points so we choose game in No Trumps.

West leads ♣K (top of sequence). We can see 6 top winners 0♠, 2♥, 3♦, 1♣.

We can set up three Spade tricks by driving out the ♠A before cashing the winners in other suits.

We make 3 Spades, 2 Hearts, 3 Diamonds, and 1 Club.

If you've already played a few hands of MiniBridge you might be worried that the opponents would win too many Club tricks when they're on lead with ♠A.

We can reduce the chance of this happening by allowing West's ♣K to win the first trick. It's OK to win the Club continuation. This hold-up play (also known as "ducking") means that if West has five Clubs East will have none left when he gains the lead with ♠A.

In practice West has only 4 Clubs, so the hold-up play isn't required here.

West North East South

15 10 7 8

♠JT962

♥AT8

♦J42

♣A9

♠AK5

♥QJ632

♦AT

♣J32

♠Q74

♥94

♦9875

♣KQT6

♠83

♥K75

♦KQ63

♣8754

Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: ♠J #12

We have 22 points so we choose part score in No Trumps (7 tricks).

North leads ♠J (top of sequence. We can see 4 top winners 3♠, 0♥, 1♦, 0♣).

We can make 7 tricks by driving out the ♣A before cashing the winners in other suits. This provides three extra tricks in addition to the four top winners identified above.

It's not important here, but it's a good idea to win the first trick in hand. Dummy's ♠Q is its only entry outside Clubs and if we play it at trick 1 the opponents could deprive us of our third Club trick by withholding their ♣A until the third round.

Boards 5 – 8: MiniBridge Suit contracts

North East South West

16 16 7 1

♠KQJT

♥K42

♦7

♣AK754

♠864

♥876

♦JT962

♣93

♠A92

♥QJT3

♦AKQ54

♣8

♠753

♥A95

♦83

♣QJT62

Board: 5 Dealer: North Lead: ♦A #49

We have 23 points and ten Clubs. We choose game in Clubs because we only have two losers!

East leads ♦A (top of sequence).

We can see 7 top winners (0♠, 2♥, 0♦, 5♣).

Ruffing the Diamonds provides one extra trick (as there are 5 Clubs in dummy too). Spades provide 3 extra tricks once ♠A has been driven out.

Win trick two by ruffing. Draw trumps. Play ♠K Q J 10. Defenders win ♠A but dummy's losing Heart goes on 4th Spade.

East South West North

13 11 8 8

♠T843

♥52

♦A972

♣KJ9

♠J96

♥AQ93

♦JT63

♣86

♠752

♥KJ84

♦KQ5

♣A52

♠AKQ

♥T76

♦84

♣QT743

South West North East

16 7 7 10

♠KQ84

♥

♦QT8752

♣532

♠A952

♥QT873

♦4

♣JT6

♠763

♥KJ92

♦A63

♣Q74

♠JT

♥A654

♦KJ9

♣AK98

Board: 6 Dealer: East Lead: ♠A #50

We have 21 points and eight Hearts so choose a part score in Hearts.

South leads ♠A (top of sequence).

We can see 5 top winners (0♠, 4♥, 0♦, 1♣). The Diamonds can provide three more and a Club ruff in dummy also creates a trick.

Win the Club switch. Draw three rounds of trumps (count the opponents' trumps). Play ♦K to drive out the ♦A. Three Spades, one Diamond and one Club are lost.

Board: 7 Dealer: South Lead: ♣J #51

We have 23 points and nine Diamonds, and although we normally need 27 points for a minor suit game, we can choose game in Diamonds as we only have 2 losers.

West leads ♣J (top of sequence).

We can see 3 top winners (0♠, 1♥, 0♦, 2♣) but the Diamonds will provide five tricks when ♦A has gone. The Spades provide three when ♠A has been driven out. North's Club loser goes on the ♥A.

Win the opening lead and play trumps straight away until East wins ♦A. He finds the best return of a Club, but we win in hand, cash ♥A and draw any outstanding trumps. We then play Spades until ♠A is driven out.

West North East South

19 10 2 9

♠A9
♥76
♦JT985
♣KQT2

♠KQ74 ♠JT62
♥KQ52 ♥JT9
♦AKQ ♦6432
♣94 ♣86

♠853
♥A843
♦7
♣AJ753

Board: 8 Dealer: West Lead: ♣K #52

We have 21 points and eight Spades. We choose a part score in Spades.
North leads ♣K (top of sequence).
We can see 3 top winners (0♠, 0♥, 3♦, 0♣) but Spades provide three more when ♠A has been driven out, and Hearts also provide three more when ♥A has been driven out.
In practice we can't actually make all of these nine tricks. South wins the second round of Clubs and switches to ♦7. We start drawing trumps, but North wins with ♠A and gives his partner a Diamond ruff. South gets off lead with ♥A and another Heart, after which we can draw the remaining trumps and claim the rest. Making eight tricks.

Boards 9 – 12: MiniBridge No Trump contracts

North East South West

17 9 9 5

♠32
♥AK4
♦AK6
♣QJT98

♠QT864 ♠J97
♥96 ♥QJT8
♦T94 ♦J52
♣K75 ♣A64

♠AK5
♥7532
♦Q873
♣32

Board: 9 Dealer: North Lead: ♥Q #13

We have 26 points so we choose game in No Trumps. East leads ♥Q (top of sequence). We can see 7 top winners 2♠, 2♥, 3♦, 0♣.
We can make 9 tricks by winning ♥K and playing ♣Q. West wins with ♣K and returns a Heart (partner's lead). North wins with ♥A and plays ♣J. East wins ♣A and can cash two Heart tricks but North makes the rest.
Note: East defended well by not winning the first Club with ♣A. If he had done so he would have been unable to cash two Heart winners and we would have finished with eleven tricks.

East South West North

12 10 9 9

| | | | |
|--------|---------|--------|--|
| | ♠ 87 | | |
| | ♥ JT86 | | |
| | ♦ KJ9 | | |
| | ♣ A632 | | |
| ♠ 432 | | ♠ AK5 | |
| ♥ A52 | | ♥ K43 | |
| ♦ A765 | | ♦ 432 | |
| ♣ J75 | | ♣ QT94 | |
| | ♠ QJT96 | | |
| | ♥ Q97 | | |
| | ♦ QT8 | | |
| | ♣ K8 | | |

South West North East

15 9 11 5

| | | | |
|---------|--------|---------|--|
| | ♠ 975 | | |
| | ♥ 643 | | |
| | ♦ KQJ | | |
| | ♣ AJT9 | | |
| ♠ A82 | | ♠ 643 | |
| ♥ JT987 | | ♥ 52 | |
| ♦ A9 | | ♦ T8765 | |
| ♣ 532 | | ♣ KQ7 | |
| | ♠ KQJT | | |
| | ♥ AKQ | | |
| | ♦ 432 | | |
| | ♣ 864 | | |

Board: 10 Dealer: East Lead: ♠Q #14

We have 21 points so we choose part score in No Trumps (7 tricks).

South leads ♠Q. Our ♠AK, ♥AK and ♦A give us 5 top winners.

We can make 7 tricks by driving out ♣A and ♣K before cashing the winners in other suits.

Win ♠A and play ♣4 to West's ♣J at trick 2. Win the Spade return with ♠K and play another Club.

We make 2 Spades, 2 Hearts, 1 Diamond, and 2 Clubs.

Note: letting the opponents into the lead twice allows South to set up and then cash some Spade winners, but we discard losing Diamonds from both hands and can cash our established Club winners when we regain the lead.

Board: 11 Dealer: South Lead: ♥J #15

We have 26 points so we choose game in NT.

West leads ♥J. We can see 4 top winners: 0♠, 3♥, 0♦, 1♣.

After winning the first trick in hand we should drive out ♠A. This sets up three Spade winners.

If West plays another Heart, we win and play on Diamonds to drive out the ♦A to set up two Diamond winners.

We make 3♠, 3♥, 2♦, and 1♣.

West North East South

13 14 8 5

♠ A8
♥ QJT
♦ QJT84
♣ KJ3

♠ Q76 ♠ JT92
♥ K6 ♥ A53
♦ A973 ♦ K52
♣ AT84 ♣ 965

♠ K543
♥ 98742
♦ 6
♣ Q72

Board: 12 Dealer: West Lead: ♦Q #16

We have 21 points so we chose part score in No Trumps (7 tricks).

North leads ♦Q. We can see 5 top winners: 0♠, 2♥, 2♦, 1♣.

We win ♦A and play ♠Q before touching any other suit. If North wins and plays another Diamond, we win and play another Spade to drive out ♠K. We now have two Spade tricks to go with the five top winners.

Boards 13 – 16: MiniBridge Suit contracts

North East South West

15 11 12 2

♠ 42
♥ AK6
♦ Q4
♣ KQJT98

♠ QT975 ♠ 8
♥ T53 ♥ QJ9742
♦ 9 ♦ AKJT52
♣ 7642 ♣

♠ AKJ63
♥ 8
♦ 8763
♣ A53

Board: 13 Dealer: North Lead: ♦A #57

We have 27 points and choose game in Clubs.

East leads ♦A.

We can see 10 top winners (2♠, 2♥, 0♦, 6♣). The extra trick can come from ruffing a Heart in dummy. This must be done before drawing trumps or dummy may have none left.

Ruff the third Diamond. Play ♥A and then ♥6. Ruff with ♣A. This is necessary as West has thrown two Hearts on the Diamonds and will overruff the ♣3. DON'T SEND A BOY TO DO A MAN'S JOB! It's an old saying.

East South West North

18 6 8 8

♠KJT8
♥A8742
♦32
♣87

♠A9532
♥5
♦T74
♣KJ53

♠Q6
♥963
♦AKQJ9
♣AQ9

♠74
♥KQJT
♦865
♣T642

South West North East

14 8 11 7

♠A53
♥K5
♦742
♣AT973

♠96
♥J42
♦QJT8
♣KJ86

♠742
♥QT87
♦K96
♣Q54

♠KQJT8
♥A963
♦A53
♣2

Board: 14 Dealer: East Lead: ♦5 #58

We have 26 points and choose game in Diamonds as we only have two losers.

South leads ♦5 hoping to stop ruffs in dummy.

We can see 10 top winners (1♠, 0♥, 5♦, 4♣). We can make one more trick by ruffing a Heart in dummy.

Win the lead and play ♥3. Win the trump return (best) and ruff a Heart in dummy. Play a Club to the ace and draw all the trumps. Then cash the ♣Q followed by the remaining black suit winners. We have to concede the last trick, but still make 11 tricks - our contract.

Note: if South had made the natural opening lead of ♥K (top of a sequence) we can make two Heart ruffs in dummy for 12 tricks.

Board: 15 Dealer: South Lead: ♦Q #59

We have 25 points and choose game in Spades.

West's safest lead is ♦Q (top of a sequence).

We can see 9 top winners (5♠, 2♥, 1♦, 1♣). The extra trick comes from a Heart ruff in dummy but we must do this before drawing all the trumps (or dummy won't have a trump to use).

After winning the opening lead with ♦A we play a Heart to ♥K, a Heart to ♥A and a third round of Hearts.

The simple approach is to play safe by ruffing with ♠A, draw trumps, and later concede a Heart and two Diamonds to make our contract exactly.

It's slightly better to ruff the third round of Hearts low. When East follows suit we play a Spade to ♠K and ruff the fourth round of Hearts with ♠A. Cash ♣A, ruff a Club in hand and claim three more tricks with our remaining top trumps. This gives us eleven tricks. (If East had been able to over-ruff the third round of Hearts we could still make ten tricks by ruffing the fourth round with ♠A.)

West North East South

19 13 5 3

| | | | |
|--------|---------|--------|--|
| | ♠K96 | | |
| | ♥874 | | |
| | ♦AKJT9 | | |
| | ♣Q9 | | |
| ♠AJ7 | | ♠8 | |
| ♥AKQ96 | | ♥JT3 | |
| ♦Q7 | | ♦65432 | |
| ♣K63 | | ♣A742 | |
| | ♠QT5432 | | |
| | ♥52 | | |
| | ♦8 | | |
| | ♣JT85 | | |

Board: 16 Dealer: West Lead: ♦A #60

We have 24 points, and although a touch weak, choose game in Hearts as we can make extra tricks by ruffing Spades.

North leads ♦A.

We can see 8 top winners (1♠, 5♥, 0♦, 2♣). We can make two more tricks by ruffing Spades in dummy, but if we draw trumps there won't be any Hearts left to ruff the Spades. So it must be done before trumps are drawn.

After ruffing the third round of Diamonds we cash ♠A and ruff ♠7 with ♥10. We come back to hand with ♥A and ruff the last Spade. We re-enter hand with ♣K and draw the remaining trumps. We have to lose a Club at the end but still finish with ten tricks.