

U3ABD01 MiniBridge Practice Session

Welcome!

Here is a list of all 20 hands that you could play in today's MiniBridge Practice Session. It tells you useful stuff about them, 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!** This information is there if you want it, but don't feel bad if it makes no sense right now or 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'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

North	East	South	West
14	8	13	5
	♠ A86		
	♥ A73		
	♦ T64		
	♣ AQT8		
♠ 532		♠ QJT94	
♥ Q642		♥ T95	
♦ K987		♦ AJ5	
♣ 32		♣ 75	
	♠ K7		
	♥ KJ8		
	♦ Q32		
	♣ KJ964		

Board: 1 Dealer: North Lead: ♠Q #2

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

East leads ♠Q (top of a sequence).

We have 9 top winners: 2♠, 2♥, 0♦, 5♣.

A straightforward hand, we will cash our 9 top winners, but remember to play clubs starting with ♣A and ♣Q (high cards from the short side first).

If you've already played a few hands of MiniBridge you might spot a way to try for a tenth trick. If East holds ♥Q we could lead a heart from hand, planning to play dummy's ♥J if East plays low. This is an example of a finesse, but it's not advisable on this hand because if West holds ♥Q the opponents might be able to score too many tricks in diamonds.

Did you notice that the combined hands contain 9 cards in clubs? If so, did you think of choosing a club contract?

In practice, with two fairly balanced hands and some high cards in each suit there's little to be gained by having clubs as trumps. It's possible to make ten tricks by careful play, but this extra trick doesn't help because ten tricks aren't enough for game in a minor suit.

East	South	West	North
13	13	10	4
	♠ 3		
	♥ J5		
	♦ QT962		
	♣ JT753		
♠ JT94		♠ AKQ875	
♥ 6432		♥ T8	
♦ A5		♦ 74	
♣ KQ8		♣ A96	
	♠ 62		
	♥ AKQ97		
	♦ KJ83		
	♣ 42		

Board: 2 Dealer: East Lead: ♥A #41

We have 9 spades so we choose to play with spades as trumps.

We have slightly less than the 25 normally needed for game but we have great trumps and we will make some tricks with our small trumps. This means we can choose game which will give us the 300 bonus!

South leads ♥A (top of a sequence).

We have 10 top winners (6♠, 0♥, 1♦, 3♣).

Defenders play ♥AKQ and we win the third round by ruffing in hand. We must draw out the defenders trumps before playing the rest of our winners.

South West North East
 12 12 10 6

♠ KQJ		♠ 974
♥ KQJT76		♥ 543
♦ 987		♦ 64
♣ 6		♣ AQ932
	♠ T865	
	♥ A8	
	♦ AK3	
	♣ JT84	

Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: ♥K #3

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

West leads ♥K (top of a sequence).

We have 7 top winners: 1♠, 1♥, 5♦, 0♣.

We win the lead and immediately take five diamond tricks.

Remember to play the diamonds starting with ♦A and ♦K (high cards from the short side first).

West North East South
 19 5 9 7

♠ AK92		♠ 843
♥ A8642		♥ KQJ3
♦ A9		♦ K73
♣ A4		♣ 952
	♠ Q	
	♥ T75	
	♦ QJT62	
	♣ QT63	

Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: ♠6 #42

We have 28 points and nine cards in hearts so we choose game with hearts as trumps.

North has no good lead so starts with a low spade which is probably safer than leading away from ♣KJ.

We have 10 top winners (2♠, 5♥, 2♦, 1♣).

We must draw trumps first as we don't want to risk the defenders trumping one of our winners in the other suits.

We can make an extra trick by ruffing the fourth spade in dummy after drawing trumps.

North East South West
 13 9 9 9

♠ 76		♠ QJT982
♥ T964		♥ 532
♦ KQJT		♦ 84
♣ K62		♣ AQ
	♠ A5	
	♥ KJ87	
	♦ 962	
	♣ J543	

Board: 5 Dealer: North Lead: ♠Q #5

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

East leads ♠Q (top of a sequence). We have seven top winners: 2♠, 4♥, 1♦, 0♣.

Before playing to the first trick we must check the entry situation. To make four tricks from hearts we'll need an entry to dummy outside hearts to allow us to cash ♥KJ. This means that we must win the first spade with ♠K.

We next unblock the heart suit by cashing ♥AQ. Then we cross to the South hand with ♠A and cash ♥KJ. We finally win ♦A for seven tricks.

East South West North

13	10	8	9
	♠JT9		
	♥QJ9832		
	♦7		
	♣KQ4		
♠642		♠	
♥T7654		♥AK	
♦K3		♦AQ86542	
♣AJ6		♣8752	
	♠AKQ8753		
	♥		
	♦JT9		
	♣T93		

Board: 6 Dealer: East Lead: ♠A #43

We have 21 points and 9 diamonds so we choose to play in part score with diamonds as trumps.
 South lead ♠A (top of a sequence). We have 10 top winners (0♠, 2♥, 7♦, 1♣).
 We ruff the first trick and play a low diamond to ♦K and back to ♦A. When North shows out on the second round we draw the last trump with ♦Q.
 Rather than just claim our ten top winners we should try for an eleventh trick in clubs. We start by playing a club towards ♣J, which would win the trick if South started with ♣KQ.
 In practice North wins with ♣Q and returns a spade, which we ruff in hand. We now try our second shot in clubs by playing ♣A and another. When the suit breaks 3-3 ♣8 becomes our eleventh trick.
 Note: it was important to start drawing trumps with ♦K, following the principle of playing the high card from the short side first. If we play ♦A before ♦K South will ruff if we try to get back to our hand with a heart.

South West North East

16	8	9	7
	♠KJ74		
	♥A		
	♦T932		
	♣J932		
♠32		♠T9865	
♥KQJT76		♥985	
♦Q65		♦AK	
♣75		♣T84	
	♠AQ		
	♥432		
	♦J874		
	♣AKQ6		

Board: 7 Dealer: South Lead: ♥K #7

We have 25 points so we choose game in No Trumps.
 East leads ♥K (top of a sequence). We have nine top winners: 4♠, 1♥, 0♦, 4♣.
 After winning the first trick with ♥A we should immediately play a spade to cash ♠AQ. We can get back to dummy by leading ♣6 to ♣J and can then cash ♠KJ. The ♣J is a vital card, being the only entry to two winners in dummy. (We can, if we want, cash some or all of ♣AKQ before cashing ♠AQ.)
 (High cards from the short side first)

West North East South

13	8	12	7
	♠KJ2		
	♥T85		
	♦QT73		
	♣QT4		
♠A84		♠T753	
♥KQ964		♥AJ72	
♦A86		♦K2	
♣72		♣A83	
	♠Q96		
	♥3		
	♦J954		
	♣KJ965		

Board: 8 Dealer: West Lead: ♥5 #46

We have 25 points and 9 cards in hearts so we choose game with hearts as trumps.
 North leads a trump to avoid giving a trick away. We can see 9 top winners (1♠, 5♥, 2♦, 1♣). The extra trick can come from ruffing a diamond in dummy which has the shorter trumps.
 Ruffing in the hand with the short trumps gives us an extra trick. Note that ruffing in the hand with the long trumps usually doesn't provide an extra trick.
 As long as hearts break 2-2 or 3-1 we can draw all the trumps before taking the ruff with dummy's fourth trump. If South discards at trick 1 we'll need to ruff the diamond first.

North East South West

17	7	6	10
	♠AK2		
	♥AQ3		
	♦A642		
	♣T86		
♠763		♠QJ9854	
♥9865		♥74	
♦KQT		♦98	
♣KQ3		♣A72	
	♠T		
	♥KJT2		
	♦J753		
	♣J954		

Board: 9 Dealer: North Lead: ♠Q #8

We have 23 points so we choose part score in No Trumps (7 tricks)

East leads the ♠Q (top of sequence). We can see seven top winners: 2♠, 4♥, 1♦, 0♣.

After winning the first trick with ♠A we should play ♥AQ followed by ♥3 to cash the remaining hearts. We cash ♦A and ♠K, then concede the rest.

East South West North

14	8	13	5
	♠973		
	♥854		
	♦QJ8		
	♣QT95		
♠K42		♠A6	
♥K62		♥QJT9	
♦743		♦AK62	
♣AK87		♣643	
	♠QJT85		
	♥A73		
	♦T95		
	♣J2		

Board: 10 Dealer: East Lead: ♠Q #9

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

South 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.

We must play hearts before cashing winners in the other suits.

South West North East

16	12	7	5
	♠T86		
	♥3		
	♦AQJ872		
	♣432		
♠QJ95		♠7432	
♥AJ7		♥KT85	
♦T		♦53	
♣KJ865		♣QT7	
	♠AK		
	♥Q9642		
	♦K964		
	♣A9		

Board: 11 Dealer: South Lead: ♠Q #47

We have 23 points and 10 diamonds. We have fewer high card points than we normally need for game but we can choose game in diamonds because we have ten trumps and our small diamonds will make tricks once the defenders three trumps are drawn.

West leads ♠Q (top of a sequence). We have 9 top winners (2♠, 0♥, 6♦, 1♣) with only one heart and one club to lose on top. The extra tricks come from ruffing a spades and a club in our hand (the one with the SHORTER trumps).

The simple approach is to draw trumps in two rounds and then give up a club trick. We enter dummy with heart ruffs to take the two ruffs in our hand.

This line would fail if an opponent was void in trumps (a 22% chance). We could guard against this by cashing our second top spade before playing a diamond to ♦A. We would then be able to make the contract by ruffing a spade in hand and playing ♣A and ♣9 before playing any more trumps.

West North East South

13	10	9	8
	♠ QJT96		
	♥ Q97		
	♦ QT8		
	♣ K8		
♠ AK5		♠ 432	
♥ T43		♥ A52	
♦ 432		♦ A765	
♣ AQT9		♣ J75	
	♠ 87		
	♥ KJ86		
	♦ KJ9		
	♣ 6432		

Board: 12 Dealer: West Lead: ♠Q #10

We have 22 points so we choose part score in No Trumps (7 tricks).
 North leads ♠Q (top of sequence). We can see 5 top tricks: 2♠, 1♥, 1♦, 1♣.
 The simplest way to make 7 tricks 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, cross to dummy's ♦A and lead ♣J.
 If South covers with ♣K, win with ♣A and you now have 8 tricks. If South plays low, play low from hand and you'll still be able make 8 tricks if South 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 North has all six missing diamonds he'll be unable to cash more than five tricks and we'll still make our contract.
 In practice North wins the first round of clubs with ♣K, so we have to be content with making our contract exactly.

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

17	6	10	7
	♠A83		
	♥QT9		
	♦J752		
	♣865		
♠J92		♠KQT5	
♥AJ32		♥K74	
♦AT6		♦KQ4	
♣T42		♣A93	
	♠764		
	♥865		
	♦983		
	♣KQJ7		

Board: 14 Dealer: East Lead: ♣K #11

We have 27 points so we choose game in No Trumps. South 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 South'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 South has five clubs North will have none left when he gains the lead with ♠A. In practice South has only 4 clubs, so the hold-up play isn't required here.

South West North East

14	8	11	7
	♠A53		
	♥K5		
	♦742		
	♣AT973		
♠96		♠742	
♥J42		♥QT87	
♦QJT8		♦K96	
♣KJ86		♣Q54	
	♠KQJT8		
	♥A963		
	♦A53		
	♣2		

Board: 15 Dealer: South Lead: ♦Q #59

We have 25 points and choose game in spades. West's safest lead is ♦Q. We can see 9 top winners (5♠, 2♥, 1♦, 1♣). The extra trick comes from a heart ruff in dummy. This must be done before drawing all the trumps. 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. We 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. We 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 overruff the third round of hearts we could still make ten tricks by ruffing the fourth round with ♠A.

West North East South

11	10	10	9
	♠KJT9		
	♥865		
	♦QJT7		
	♣K3		
♠AQ82		♠764	
♥4		♥KQ73	
♦A86		♦K94	
♣JT752		♣Q64	
	♠53		
	♥AJT92		
	♦532		
	♣A98		

Board: 16 Dealer: West Lead: ♦Q #62

We have 21 points and choose part score in clubs. North leads ♦Q. We can see 3 top winners (1♠, 0♥, 2♦, 0♣). A heart can be set up, a spade finesse might win and 3 club tricks are likely. Win the ♦A and lead ♥4. The ♥K loses to the ♥A, but winning the next diamond in dummy, we throw the diamond loser on ♥Q. The simplest continuation is to draw trumps, which will result in seven tricks. It's also reasonable to try the spade finesse at this point. In practice North wins with ♠K and the opponents will draw the trumps to stop us ruffing a spade in dummy, after which we'll finish with the same seven tricks.

North	East	South	West
15	10	7	8
	♠AK5		
	♥QJ632		
	♦AT		
	♣J32		
♠83			♠JT962
♥K75			♥AT8
♦KQ63			♦J42
♣8754			♣A9
	♠Q74		
	♥94		
	♦9875		
	♣KQT6		

Board: 17 Dealer: North Lead: ♠J #12

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

East 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.

East	South	West	North
18	10	10	2
	♠J973		
	♥JT864		
	♦2		
	♣852		
♠654			♠AKQ
♥AQ7			♥K
♦T987			♦KQJ643
♣AT3			♣764
	♠T82		
	♥9532		
	♦A5		
	♣KQJ9		

Board: 18 Dealer: East Lead: ♣K #64

We have 28 points and choose game in diamonds.

South leads ♣K setting up two clubs for the defence.

We can see 7 top winners (3♠, 3♥, 0♦, 1♣) but there are 5 diamonds to come when the ace has been played. The danger is that the defence cash two clubs when they win ♦A.

Play ♥A dropping the ♥K, and ♥Q throwing a club. Now play diamonds and lose just one diamond and one club.

It was necessary to "sacrifice" one of our heart winners because there was no outside entry to dummy once ♣A had been knocked out. Swap one of East's spade honours with dummy's ♠4 and twelve tricks would have been available.

South	West	North	East
17	9	9	5
	♠AK5		
	♥7532		
	♦Q873		
	♣32		
♠J97			♠QT864
♥QJT8			♥96
♦J52			♦T94
♣A64			♣K75
	♠32		
	♥AK4		
	♦AK6		
	♣QJT98		

Board: 19 Dealer: South Lead: ♥Q #13

We have 26 points so we choose game in No Trumps.

West 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. East wins with ♣K and returns a heart (partner's lead). South wins with ♥A and plays ♣J. West wins ♣A and can cash two heart tricks but South makes the rest.

Note: West 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.

West North East South

15 7 11 7

♠ 764
♥ K87
♦ KJ987
♣ 98

♠ AKJ8
♥ 4
♦ A652
♣ K762

♠ QT95
♥ AJ32
♦ 3
♣ A543

♠ 32
♥ QT965
♦ QT4
♣ QJT

Board: 20 Dealer: West Lead: ♠4 #70

We have 26 points and choose game in spades.

North leads ♠4.

We can see 8 top winners (4♠, 1♥, 1♦, 2♣) but extra tricks can come from taking two ruffs in one of the hands.

Win the spade, and it is best to cash ♣A K before anyone can discard a club.

Now cash the two red aces and crossruff diamonds and hearts.

This comes to 11 tricks as we have managed to make 7 trump tricks plus 4 top winners.