

U3ABD05 MiniBridge Practice Session

Welcome!

Here is a list of all 16 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

Advanced topics

Advanced topics are in green. These are included for completeness; you can ignore them for now or dive in if you want *more*.

Boards 1 – 4: MiniBridge Cross ruffing in suit contracts

North	East	South	West
15	10	12	3
	♠ 5		
	♥ AQ96		
	♦ K32		
	♣ AQ872		
♠ T9742		♠ KQJ	
♥ 8		♥ 7432	
♦ QJ74		♦ T9	
♣ 954		♣ KJT6	
	♠ A863		
	♥ KJT5		
	♦ A865		
	♣ 3		

Board: 1 Dealer: North Lead: ♠K #69

We have 27 points and choose game in Hearts.

East leads ♠K (top of a sequence).

We can see 8 top winners (1♠, 4♥, 2♦, 1♣). But by ruffing from both hands we can make EIGHT trump tricks! This technique is called "cross ruffing".

If you're going to use cross ruffing, you should cash any side winners first to stop defenders discarding from those suits and ruffing those winners later.

Win ♠A, cash ♦AK followed by ♣A and ruff a Club. Ruff a Spade, ruff a Club, ruff a Spade and ruff a Club. Ruff the last Spade and ruff a Club with dummy's last trump.

That comes to ♦AK, ♠A and 3 ruffs, ♣A and 4 ruffs. ♥A is our 12th trick.

Additional (Advanced) Discussion

Cross ruffing works best when you have most of the high trumps, as that stops defenders over ruffing (beating your trumps) when THEY run out of the suit too.

It's also a good idea to cash any top winners in other suits before starting to cross-ruff. If you don't, your opponents may discard losers from those suits when you cross-ruff, so that, when you later cash your other winners, your opponents can ruff THEM.

East	South	West	North
15	7	11	7
	♠ 32		
	♥ QT965		
	♦ QT4		
	♣ QJT		
♠ QT95			♠ AKJ8
♥ AJ32			♥ 4
♦ 3			♦ A652
♣ A543			♣ K762
	♠ 764		
	♥ K87		
	♦ KJ987		
	♣ 98		

Board: 2 Dealer: East Lead: ♠4 #70

We have 26 points and choose game in Spades.
 South leads ♠4 (lowest card from rubbish; leading away from their honours in Hearts or Diamonds is risky).
 We can see 8 top winners (4♠, 1♥, 1♦, 2♣) but can make two extra tricks by taking two ruffs in one of the hands.
 Win the Spade, cash ♣A K next (before defence can discard a Club and ruff them). Now cash the two red aces and cross ruff Diamonds and Hearts.
 This comes to 11 tricks as we have managed to make 7 trump tricks plus 4 top winners.

South	West	North	East
12	12	11	5
	♠ AJ642		
	♥ Q		
	♦ Q9		
	♣ QT762		
♠ K3			♠ QT985
♥ KJ875			♥ T42
♦ AJ5			♦ KT742
♣ 543			♣
	♠ 7		
	♥ A963		
	♦ 863		
	♣ AKJ98		

Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: ♣3 #71

We have 23 points and choose part score in Clubs.
 West leads ♣3 (lowest card from rubbish; leading away from their honours in the other 3 suits is risky.)
 We can see 7 top winners (1♠, 1♥, 0♦, 5♣). We can make extra tricks by cross ruffing.
 Win the trump lead, play ♥A and ruff a Heart. ♠A and ruff a Spade. Ruff another Heart, another Spade and the last Heart.
 Now draw trumps and lose the last three Diamonds for 10 tricks.

West	North	East	South
15	9	8	8
	♠ QT6		
	♥ KQJT		
	♦ 642		
	♣ J65		
♠ AJ832			♠ 7
♥ 4			♥ A6532
♦ AKQJ			♦ T98
♣ 432			♣ A987
	♠ K954		
	♥ 987		
	♦ 753		
	♣ KQT		

Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: ♥K #72

We have 23 points and choose part score in Diamonds.
 North leads ♥K.
 We can see 7 top winners (1♠, 1♥, 4♦, 1♣) but taking ruffs in dummy can make extra tricks.
 Win ♥A. Play a Spade to ♠A and ruff a Spade. Cash ♣A and ruff a Heart, ruff a Spade, ruff a Heart and ruff a Spade with dummy's last trump.
 That comes to 10 tricks!

Boards 5 – 8: MiniBridge Finessing in No Trump contracts

North East South West

16	11	12	1
	♠A53		
	♥A84		
	♦975		
	♣AKJT		
♠T72		♠QJ9	
♥532		♥KQT97	
♦JT42		♦K83	
♣874		♣92	
	♠K864		
	♥J6		
	♦AQ6		
	♣Q653		

Board: 5 Dealer: North Lead: ♥K #29

We have 28 points so we choose game in No Trumps. East leads ♥K (top of a sequence) and, if it holds, continues with the ♥Q. We can see eight top winners: 2♠, 1♥, 1♦ and 4♣. We hold up ♥A until the third round, to exhaust West of Hearts. Our best source of a ninth trick is in Diamonds. At trick four, we lead ♦5. If East plays ♦3, the ♦Q is played from dummy. If East plays ♦K it is taken with the ♦A and the ♦Q is a winner. This is an example of a finesse. One often has to play a finesse in hope; success is not a certainty.

East South West North

17	9	8	6
	♠43		
	♥T9876		
	♦K5		
	♣KT83		
♠K86		♠A752	
♥KJ		♥AQ	
♦J643		♦T872	
♣6542		♣AQJ	
	♠QJT9		
	♥5432		
	♦AQ9		
	♣97		

Board: 6 Dealer: East Lead: ♠Q #30

We have 25 points. With this number we would normally choose game in No Trumps, but the 10 points in Hearts are worth only two tricks. We therefore settle for part score in No Trumps. We have five top winners: 2♠, 2♥, 0♦ and 1♣. North leads ♠Q (top of a sequence). We need two extra tricks. The best chance is to play the Club finesse. Win the first trick with ♠K and lead a Club. When South plays low, West plays ♣J, which wins. Cross back to East by leading ♥Q and playing ♥K on it. Now another Club finesse can be taken.

South West North East

15	7	12	6
	♠K42		
	♥876		
	♦762		
	♣AKQ3		
♠JT87		♠Q6	
♥KQJ95		♥T32	
♦43		♦K985	
♣64		♣JT75	
	♠A953		
	♥A4		
	♦AQJT		
	♣982		

Board: 7 Dealer: South Lead: ♥K #31

We have 27 points so we choose game in No Trumps. West leads ♥K (top of sequence). We can see seven top winners: 2♠, 1♥, 1♦ and 3♣. We must win ♥A on the second round: we stand to lose a lot of Hearts if the opponents get the lead. Diamond finesses provide the extra tricks. Win the ♥A, cross to North on a Club and play ♦2. If East plays low, play the ♦10. If this wins, cross to North on a Club twice more, repeating the Diamond finesse (only playing ♦A if East plays ♦K). We make 10 tricks.

West	North	East	South
14	5	7	14
	♠QJ62		
	♥72		
	♦QT654		
	♣62		
♠953			♠T874
♥K54			♥QJ63
♦K87			♦A9
♣AKJ9			♣873
	♠AK		
	♥AT98		
	♦J32		
	♣QT54		

Board: 8 Dealer: West Lead: ♦5 #32

We have 21 points so we choose part score in No Trumps. North leads a low Diamond as it is his longest suit and best chance to set up winners. We can see four top winners: 0♠, 0♥, 2♦ and 2♣.

Hearts will provide at least two more tricks.

Win ♦K and lead ♥K. When South refuses the trick, play a Heart to ♥Q and South's ♥A. Win the next Diamond with ♦A and cash ♥J.

When North shows out, we need another trick: the Club finesse is the best chance. Lead ♣3 and play ♣J if South plays low.

Boards 9 – 12: MiniBridge Extra tricks in Trump contracts

North	East	South	West
18	6	7	9
	♠AJ973		
	♥Q52		
	♦AQ3		
	♣AJ		
♠Q52			♠T4
♥A9			♥KJ743
♦T94			♦65
♣K9876			♣QT32
	♠K86		
	♥T86		
	♦KJ872		
	♣54		

Board: 9 Dealer: North Lead: ♥4 #73

We have 25 points and choose game in Spades.

East leads ♥4. West wins ♥A and returns ♥9. Having taken three Hearts, East plays ♣2.

We can see 8 top winners (2♠, 0♥, 5♦, 1♣) but Spades will provide enough tricks provided a trick is not lost to ♠Q. The finesse is the best play for no Spade loser.

Play ♠3 to ♠K and ♠6 to ♠J (if West plays low). Draw the last trump and cash the Diamonds.

East	South	West	North
15	5	11	9
	♠AKQ6		
	♥432		
	♦842		
	♣982		
♠875			♠4
♥J5			♥KQT9
♦JT97			♦AKQ3
♣AKQ7			♣JT65
	♠JT932		
	♥A876		
	♦65		
	♣43		

Board: 10 Dealer: East Lead: ♠J #74

We have 26 points and could choose game in Diamonds or Clubs as we have only two losers. Let's say that we choose Diamonds. South leads ♠J and we ruff the second Spade.

We can see 9 top winners (0♠, 0♥, 4♦, 4♣ plus a ♠ ruff). The extra tricks can come from Hearts by driving out the ♥A. But if all opponents' trumps are drawn, we will have no trumps left in hand and defence can cash a Spade trick.

So after two rounds of trumps, we drive out the ♥A, keeping a trump to ruff another Spade. Then we can cross over to dummy to draw the last trump.

South	West	North	East
13	12	9	6
	♠ 7432		
	♥ T5		
	♦ K94		
	♣ AQ72		
♠ KJT		♠ Q95	
♥ KJ964		♥ A83	
♦ 53		♦ 872	
♣ KJ6		♣ T953	
	♠ A86		
	♥ Q72		
	♦ AQJT6		
	♣ 84		

Board: 11 Dealer: South Lead: ♦3 #75

We have 22 points and choose part score in Diamonds.

West leads ♦3. We can see 7 top winners (1♠, 0♥, 5♦, 1♣).

We have three possible ways of making an extra trick:

1. East might have ♥AK, in which case leading towards ♥Q will promote that card.

2. West might have ♣K, in which case finessing ♣Q would succeed.

3. We might be able to ruff a Heart in dummy. We can't guarantee this after the trump lead, but sometimes the opponents aren't able to play trumps each time they're on lead. Taking all this into account, we win the opening lead with dummy's ♦9 and try a Heart to ♥Q. Unfortunately West wins with ♥K and plays another trump, which we win in hand. When we play a second round of Hearts West wins with ♥J, but doesn't have a third trump to lead. We win the Spade return in hand and make sure of our contract by ruffing ♥7 with dummy's ♦K.

We're in the wrong hand to draw the last trump or take the Club finesse, but by exiting in Spades we'll force the opponents to help us in some way. West wins the Spade and switches to a Club. We try dummy's ♣Q, which holds the trick. We cash ♣A and claim three more tricks with our trump winners in hand. Making nine tricks.

East could have held us to eight tricks by overtaking his partner's ♥J at trick 4. He would then have been able to stop the Heart ruff in dummy.

West	North	East	South
14	13	8	5
	♠ JT3		
	♥ AKJT		
	♦ 8642		
	♣ AT		
♠ KQ74		♠ 986	
♥ Q2		♥ 954	
♦ AK5		♦ QJT	
♣ 9865		♣ KQ74	
	♠ A52		
	♥ 8763		
	♦ 973		
	♣ J32		

Board: 12 Dealer: West Lead: ♥A #76

We have 22 points and choose part score in Clubs.

North leads ♥AKJ.

We can see 3 top winners (0♠, 0♥, 3♦, 0♣). Extra tricks can come from Clubs and Spades. By leading towards a KQ holding we make more tricks if the ace is well placed.

Ruff the third Heart and lead a Club. If North ducks, ♣K wins.

Now lead a Spade, playing ♠K if South plays low. Then another Club, which North wins with ♣A. After drawing the last trump we play another Spade.

We make 9 tricks!

Boards 13 – 16: MiniBridge Other Finessing positions in No Trump contracts

North	East	South	West
16	8	6	10
	♠ 932		
	♥ QJT		
	♦ AKQ5		
	♣ A42		
♠ J65		♠ K87	
♥ A5		♥ K9863	
♦ JT96		♦ 872	
♣ KJ85		♣ QT	
	♠ AQT4		
	♥ 742		
	♦ 43		
	♣ 9763		

Board: 13 Dealer: North Lead: ♥6 #33

We have 22 points and choose part score in No Trumps. East leads a low Heart as it is his longest suit and best chance to set up winners. West wins ♥A and returns ♥5. East wins ♥K and plays a third Heart, which sets up two winners. We can see six top winners: 1♠, 1♥, 3♦ and 1♣. Spades could provide an extra trick if East has either ♠K or ♠J. Play ♠2 and put on ♠10. It loses to ♠J. Win the next trick, play ♠3 and put on the ♠Q, which wins. When we cash ♠A both opponents follow suit. This means that dummy's ♠4 is good for an eighth trick.

East	South	West	North
19	8	8	5
	♠ J42		
	♥ 97543		
	♦ 92		
	♣ A53		
♠ 76		♠ AK3	
♥ KJ		♥ AQ6	
♦ 8754		♦ AQ63	
♣ KJT98		♣ 642	
	♠ QT985		
	♥ T82		
	♦ KJT		
	♣ Q7		

Board: 14 Dealer: East Lead: ♠T #34

We have 27 points so we choose game in No Trumps. South leads ♠10 (top of an internal sequence). We can see six top winners: 2♠, 3♥, 1♦ and 0♣. Clubs offer the best chance of extra tricks. If South has the ♣Q, taking the Club finesse sets up four Club tricks. Win the Spade and play ♣2 to ♣8. If it holds, come back by overtaking ♥J with ♥Q and play another Club, playing ♣9 if South plays low. When East's ♣Q appears, play the ♣K and lose one trick only to ♣A, for ten tricks. In practice North simplifies our task by beating ♣8 with ♣A. We win the Spade return and lead another Club, planning to finesse ♣9. When South plays ♣Q we win with dummy's ♣K and cash the rest of our winners, again finishing with ten tricks.

South	West	North	East
12	7	11	10
	♠ KQ5		
	♥ 65		
	♦ K732		
	♣ QJT3		
♠ T73		♠ J42	
♥ AT4		♥ KQJ972	
♦ QJT86		♦	
♣ 97		♣ K865	
	♠ A986		
	♥ 83		
	♦ A954		
	♣ A42		

Board: 15 Dealer: South Lead: ♦Q #35

We have 23 points so we choose part score in No Trumps. West leads ♦Q (top of sequence). East discards ♠2. We can see six top winners: 3♠, 0♥, 2♦ and 1♣. We were lucky to escape a Heart lead. Surely, if the lead is lost, the opponents will switch to Hearts. Clubs can provide the extra tricks. If East has the ♣K, these can be won without losing the lead. We win the opening lead with dummy's ♦K and lead ♣Q, playing low from hand when East plays low. We repeat the process with ♣J. Eight tricks are now assured, but we can make more if one of the black suits breaks 3-3. We try a Club to ♣A, but unfortunately West shows out. We continue with ♠KQ followed by ♠A and ♦A. When this suit breaks 3-3 we finish with nine tricks.

West	North	East	South
18	11	5	6
	♠QT863		
	♥KT6		
	♦87		
	♣AQ4		
♠AK7			♠542
♥A742			♥Q83
♦AK6			♦Q54
♣975			♣J862
	♠J9		
	♥J95		
	♦JT932		
	♣KT3		

Board: 16 Dealer: West Lead: ♠6 #36

We have 23 points so we choose part score in No Trumps. North leads a low Spade as it is his longest suit and best chance to set up winners.

We can see six top winners: 2♠, 1♥, 3♦ and 0♣. Hearts offer the best chance of an extra trick.

After winning the first trick with ♠A we lead a low Heart towards ♥Q, hoping North has ♥K. If North plays low, try playing ♥Q.

In practice North plays ♥K and returns a Spade. We win in hand and cash dummy's red queens, followed by our ♦AK and ♥A in hand. When Hearts break 3-3 we can win an eighth trick with ♥7. This is a sort of finesse too; we hope the key card will be well placed. Note that entering dummy with ♦Q at trick 2 in order to lead dummy's ♥Q would be doomed to failure. As the cards lie North just wins with ♥K, but if South held that card he would play it on dummy's ♥Q, leaving ♥A as our only high card in the suit.