

Planning the Play in No Trumps

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

♠ A 5 4
♥ 10 4 2
♦ 7 5 4
♣ 10 8 6 3

♠ Q J 2
♥ K 9 8 5
♦ A K J
♣ 5 4 2

♠ 9 8 3
♥ Q 7 3
♦ Q 8 6 3 2
♣ K Q

♠ K 10 7 6
♥ A J 6
♦ 10 9
♣ A J 9 7

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

North Declarer in 3NT; Lead ♦ 3 by East

5 top tricks: ♠0, ♥2, ♦3 (thanks to lucky lead), ♣1.

Best source of extra tricks is spades (3 by force).

Win with the ♦J and lead ♠Q (high from short hand).

Play spades right away. East will win and should

lead the ♣3 (4th highest)

Clear the spades, then take your top tricks

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q 7 3
♥ A Q 9 4
♦ 10 7 2
♣ K 6 3

♠ A 9 8 2
♥ 10 2
♦ Q 6 5 4
♣ Q 7 2

♠ K 10 4
♥ K J 5
♦ A J 9 8
♣ 10 9 5

♠ J 6 5
♥ 8 7 6 3
♦ K 3
♣ A J 8 4

West	North	East	South
2 NT	All pass	1 NT	Pass

East is Declarer in 2NT; Lead ♣4 by South; (4th highest from a suit headed by an honour)

5 top tricks: ♠0, ♥4, ♦1,

Duck the club lead (Rule of 7) and win the return.

You need to establish three tricks. You have one spade winner by force after knocking out the ace. (Leave that play for later because it would involve losing the lead). Diamonds offer the best opportunity for extra tricks so start work on them right away. You can make an extra trick by forcing out the ♦KQ, but you have a chance of winning one of the opponents' diamond honours by finessing.

Win the lead and run the ♦10, planning to play low from hand if North plays low. This will force out a top diamond. When next in, take 4 rounds of hearts (opps may make a mistake with their discards) ending in dummy and then lead a low diamond to the ♦9, which may capture the other missing top diamond. If that also fails you can win the second round of spades in hand and play your established 4th round diamond trick.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

♠ K 6 5		♠ Q J 10
♥ A K 8		♥ 5 4 3
♦ K 7 4		♦ Q J 10 8 2
♣ A K J 8		♣ 5 2

	♠ A 9 4 2	
	♥ J 9 6	
	♦ 9 3	
	♣ 9 7 6 4	

		♠ 8 7 3
		♥ Q 10 7 2
		♦ A 6 5
		♣ Q 10 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	Pass
			All pass

West is Declarer in 3NT; Lead ♠2 by North

6 top tricks: ♠1 (thanks to lucky lead), ♥2, ♦0, ♣2.

You need to establish three more tricks. The best source is Diamonds (3 by force).

Key - win with the ♠K. Your ♠6 or ♠5 will then provide an entry to your diamond suit. **DO NOT WIN the opening lead with ♠Q, J or 10,** which would block the suit and deny declarer a diamond entry if North ducks the first two rounds of spades

Board 4

West Deals
Both Vul

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

	♠ 5	
	♥ A J 8 5 2	
	♦ K 10	
	♣ A K Q J 9	

		♠ K Q 6 4
		♥ 3
		♦ A 7 6 5 4
		♣ 8 4 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

South is Declarer in 3NT; Lead ♦9 by West ("high for hate" or "top of rubbish")

7 top tricks: ♠0, ♥1, ♦2, ♣4.

You need to establish two more tricks, Clubs will produce a 5th length club unless the missing clubs split 5-0 (4%). Spades will produce 1 trick by force. But if you win trick 1 with the ♦A then you will not be able to establish the spade trick because you only have one spade in dummy. **You must win the first trick with your ♦K.**

Board 5
North Deals
N-S Vul

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

	N	
W		E
	S	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 NT	Pass	2 NT
	3 NT	All pass	

North is Declarer in 3NT; Lead ♠Q by East (“top of a 3+ card honour sequence”)

6 top tricks: ♠2, ♥3, ♦1, ♣0.

There are 5 missing diamonds. You can make 4 tricks in diamonds, by Force, but you have a chance of making all five by finessing against the opponents’ ♦K, hoping West has it.

Key – win the lead with the ♠A and run the ♦J. If West ducks then play now from dummy (the ♦4) and run the ♦9. You will make all five diamond tricks unless the opponents’ diamonds split 5-0 (4%)

Board 6
East Deals
E-W Vul

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

	N	
W		E
	S	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
		3 NT	All pass

West is Declarer in 3NT; Lead ♠7 by North (4th highest from a suit headed by an honour)

6 top tricks: ♠1, ♥4, ♦0, ♣1.

Diamonds can produce three tricks by force once the ♦A has been driven out. The lead may be from a 5 card suit. If so the opponents can win 4 spade tricks and the ♦A, defeating the contract. Declarer uses the Rule of 7 to work out how many times to duck. You and dummy have 5 spades. 7-5 = 2 so **you duck twice**, hoping that, when you win on the third round, South has the ♦A and is unable to put North on lead to take his spade winners

Key – Duck twice and cross your fingers!

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

♠ Q J 10 9 5
♥ 7 6 4 2
♦ 4 3
♣ Q 10

♠ 8 6 3
♥ K J 9 5
♦ K 8 7 5 2
♣ 5



♠ K 7
♥ A 8
♦ J 10 9 6
♣ J 8 6 3 2

♠ A 4 2
♥ Q 10 3
♦ A Q
♣ A K 9 7 4

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♣
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	2 NT
All pass			3 NT

South is Declarer in 3NT; Lead ♠Q by West ("top of a 3+ card honour sequence")

6 top tricks: ♠1, ♥0, ♦3, ♣2.

The lead may be from a 5 card suit. If so the opponents can win 4 spade tricks and the ♦A, defeating the contract. Using the Rule of 7 (7-6) declarer **holds up once** to exhaust East of spades. (Holding up twice would concede an unnecessary spade trick).

Three tricks will come from hearts after driving out the ♥A, which declarer hopes is held by East.

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

♠ A 6
♥ K 4
♦ K 10 6
♣ Q J 10 8 6 5

♠ 7 5 4 3
♥ 10 7 3 2
♦ A 4 2
♣ A 2



♠ K 2
♥ A Q J 5
♦ Q J 5 3
♣ 9 4 3

♠ Q J 10 9 8
♥ 9 8 6
♦ 9 8 7
♣ K 7

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	3 NT	All pass

East is Declarer in 3NT; Lead ♠Q by South ("top of a 3+ card honour sequence")

6 top tricks: ♠2, ♥4, ♦0, ♣0.

You need three tricks for your contract and they will come from diamonds, by force. Once you win the first spade trick you can only afford to lose the lead once more, otherwise opps will win 3 spade tricks and their ♣AK. So you force out the ♦A right away.

Do not be distracted by your long clubs. To establish them you will have to lose the lead twice. On the first round of clubs the defence will win and lead a spade, which you will win, and on the second round of clubs the defence will win again and make three spade tricks.