

MAKING LAYDOWN CONTRACTS

ANSWERS TO PROBLEMS

SLIDE 5

1. Lead low to the 10 followed by low to the Jack. You make 2 tricks when either K or Q is right (75%)
2. Lead low to the 9 followed by low to the Jack. You make 2 tricks when West holds the 10 and either the King or Queen. (37.5%)
3. Lead low to the Queen followed by low to the 10. You make 2 tricks when the King is with East or the Jack with West (75%)
4. Lead low to the King followed by Low to the Jack (or the other way round). You make 1 trick when the Ace is with West or the Queen with East (75%)
5. Lead the 9 and run it, followed by low to the 10. You make 1 trick when West has either the Queen or Jack (75%). This is better than low to the King (50%)
6. Lead low to the 9 followed by low to the Queen. You make 2 tricks when West has the King, or the Jack and the 10 (62.5%)

SLIDE 6

1. Play King followed by Ace (so that you can pick up Q965 with West). This is fractionally superior to finessing. However if you have evidence of any long suit with either opponent, the odds will then favour a finesse against the opposite defender.
2. Lead the Ace (or Queen) first. Now you have a guess about which opponent is more likely to hold 4. Use evidence from the bidding or the play to earlier tricks to decide. No problem if the suit breaks 3-2.
3. Lead the Ace or King first. If the suit breaks 4-0 you will then have a marked finesse against the player left with Jxx. No problem if the suit breaks 3-1 or 2-2.
4. Lead the Ace first, then low towards the Queen if you just need 5 tricks from the suit. This guards against singleton King offside. If you need all 6 tricks, you must play towards the Queen first.

5. If you can afford to lose one trick, then Play the Ace first, then low towards the K8 intending to play the 8 if West follows. This guarantees one loser only.
6. Lead the Ace first followed by a low card from both hands. This will make 4 tricks when the suit breaks 3-3 or there is a doubleton King or Queen.

SLIDE 9 You have abundant tricks. The only problem could be if you lost two trump tricks. Ensure your contract by leading the K♠ first. Now, if the suit breaks 4-0 you have retained a high card in each hand (Jack in dummy and Ace in hand) and can therefore take a marked finesse one way or the other.

SLIDE 11 You have 9 tricks (4♠, 1♥, 2♦ and 2♣). The extra trick can come from hearts (3-3 break) or finesse in trumps. A better chance is planning to ruff the 4th round of hearts in dummy (with a high trump). Win the club lead and cash AK♦ and the other top club (in case the defenders get a useful discard). Now play Ace and another heart. Eventually you will play a 3rd heart and then a 4th, ruffed high in dummy.

SLIDE 13 With 8 top tricks and diamonds offering the opportunity to establish 3 more there is no shortage of tricks. However, control is the issue here as the defence will establish at least 3 heart tricks before you can set up diamonds. You only need to establish 1 trick and this can easily be done in spades. Do not be tempted to win the K♥ and finesse the Q♠ because then you will have no entry to the J♠. The safe play is to win the A♥ at trick 1 and then play A♠ followed by Q♠.

SLIDE 15 After the spade lead, you can count 3♠, 4♥, 1♦ and 2♣ for an easy 10 tricks. However, your problem here is entries. You need an entry in hand to be able to make the established hearts (the defence will hold up for one round). The only entry possible is the K♠ and you must therefore win the first trick with the A♠ to protect the spade entry to hand.

SLIDE 17 The contract is easy if the diamonds break 3-2. After playing the A♦ and seeing the 10 fall on the left, protect against the 4-1 break by playing a low diamond towards the 9♦. Now, if the 10♦ was singleton, you will lose one to the J♦ but will be able to use the A♥ entry to finesse against the Q♦.

SLIDE 19

6♣ is an excellent contract which depends on how you play diamonds. You could take two finesses, succeeding when East holds either the J♦ or the K♦ (75% chance of success). However, you can do better than this by an elimination play. Draw trumps, then play A♥ and ruff a heart, then A♣ and ruff a club, then ruff another heart. Cross to dummy with a trump and lead a diamond to the 10. If this loses to the J♦, West is 'endplayed' and must lead diamonds into your AQ or concede a ruff and discard. If East shows out on the 4th heart, an alternative route to success would be to discard the 10♦ on that trick which would have the same effect.

SLIDE 21

On the spade lead, you have 9 top tricks. The most obvious place for a 10th trick is ruffing a spade in dummy. The bidding has given a clue that the spades are probably 6-1 and the danger is that one of your top spades will get ruffed in which case you would need to ruff two spades in dummy. The solution is obvious. Defer playing the other top spade until after trumps are drawn. Just return a low spade at trick 2 (losing the trick). Later, you can ruff a spade (with the Q♥), draw trumps and enjoy the other spade trick.

SLIDE 23

After a heart lead, you have 6 top tricks and need to establish 3 more. At least 4 tricks can be made from the minors but you have no 2nd guard in hearts if East wins the next trick and leads one through. The safe line of play is to cross to dummy with a club and lead the 3♠. This gives East a dilemma. If they duck, you play the Jack. You are safe if West wins this trick and if the J♠ holds, you then switch to diamonds and make a safe 9 tricks. If East wins the A♠ on the first round, then you have 3 spade tricks.

SLIDE 25

If the diamonds break reasonably, you have 9 tricks (1♠, 3♥, 4♦ and 1♣). The problem is that after winning the first spade with the Q♠ in hand, if you lose a diamond trick to West a second spade will lose a further 4 tricks in the suit. A possible solution is to let West win the first spade trick. Now, on the probable spade continuation you will be safe because West will have no more spades when they win the diamond trick. However, this might not be good enough because a clever West might switch to a club at trick 2. The solution is to cover the 9♣ with the K♣ in dummy. Now you are protected against a club switch and you can win the spade continuation and play diamonds to keep East out of the lead.

SLIDE 27

You have lots of tricks if you can establish the diamonds but the lead has robbed you of the entry needed so you can count only 1 trick in diamonds to give a total of 9. The 10th trick can come from ruffing a heart in dummy. However, if you take the A♥ and play another, then defence will just play Ace and another trump to deny you your ruff. Then will then have 4 tricks. The solution is to duck the first heart. This gives the defence a dilemma. If they play Ace and another trump, then you draw trumps and have your entry for the diamonds. If they don't, you can ruff a heart in dummy.

SLIDE 29

You have 9 tricks (6♠, 1♦, 2♣) and some chances of establishing a 2nd trick in diamonds. However, the best opportunity for an extra trick is in hearts. Win the spade and lead a low heart to the 10. Eventually you will establish a trick in hearts. If East plays a high heart, you ruff otherwise you discard one of your losers in hand.

SLIDE 31

You have an easy 8 tricks (1♠, 3♥, 2♦ and 2♣) and superficially will succeed if either the spade finesse (against the Q♠) is right or the heart finesse. However, the spade finesse is unlikely to be right and you have no entry for the heart finesse. You can succeed though if the heart finesse is right by forcing an entry into dummy with the J♠. Just play the K♠ under the Ace and eventually you will reach dummy with the J♠ (or 9♠) to take the heart finesse.