



Endplays

An endplay happens when declarer deliberately puts an opponent on lead at a time when anything he plays will help declarer.

	♠J	
	♥AQ	
	♦-	
	♣-	
♠-	N	♠K
♥64	W E	♥KJ
♦2	S	♦-
♣-		♣-
	♠4	
	♥82	
	♦-	
	♣-	

	♠A9	
	♥-	
	♦AJ4	
	♣Q	
♠Q3	N	♠K8
♥Q	W E	♥J
♦???	S	♦???
♣-		♣-
	♠54	
	♥-	
	♦K105	
	♣J	

South plays in a no-trump contract, and needs two of the last three tricks. East bid spades during the auction, and is known to have just one spade left. He has shown out in both clubs and diamonds, so his other two cards are hearts. South **exits** with a spade, putting East on lead. East is **endplayed**, compelled to lead a heart into North's **tenace**

This time South is in 6♣. He has drawn trump and **eliminated** hearts by cashing his winners. Now he **exits** in spades by playing ace and another, **eliminating** spades from his hand and dummy. Either opponent can win the spade, but whoever does is **endplayed**. If he leads a diamond South plays Second Hand Low to ensure 3 tricks in diamonds. If he leads a major he presents South with a **ruff and discard**: he discards a diamond from one hand and ruffs in the other, then ruffs a diamond with the remaining trump.

Here are some holdings you would prefer opponents to lead first.

By playing Second Hand Low you may make more tricks than if you had to make the first lead yourself

♥AJ3
N
W E
S
♥K102

♥AJ3
N
W E
S
♥K92

♥A103
N
W E
S
♥K92

♥A93
N
W E
S
♥Q82

♥A103
N
W E
S
♥J62

♣Q83
N
W E
S
♣K109

♣Q96
N
W E
S
♣K82

♣J43
N
W E
S
♣K65

♣Q32
N
W E
S
♣J65

♣Q73
N
W E
S
♣1092

Planning an Endplay

Endplays are usually necessary only when both hands are fairly balanced, with mirror distribution.

The important part of the plan is to **remove any safe exit cards** by cashing winners in side suits before putting an opponent on lead. (Which goes against everything you have been taught so far, so it is important to know exactly what you are doing!)

In a suit contract you need to have at least one trump left in each hand if the ruff and discard is to help.