



Lesson 7: Opening 1NT & Stayman

Hands 1 - 8

Hand 1 Played by North

Lessons from this hand

1. Opening 1NT with a balanced 12-14 HCP
2. Invitational bid by responder
2. Establishing your work suit - spades
3. Play honours from the short holding first - spades

None Vul	♠ Q J 7 3 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ K 6 4 ♣ A Q T	Dealer N
♠ 8 5 4 2 ♥ K 5 4 2 ♦ Q 8 5 ♣ 9 7	N W E S	♠ A 6 ♥ J 7 3 ♦ A J 7 3 ♣ 8 6 5 4
	♠ K T 9 ♥ A T 9 ♦ T 9 2 ♣ K J 3 2	

Bidding

North	East	South	West
1NT (1)	Pass	2NT (2)	Pass

3NT (3) All Pass

1. 12-14 HCP and balanced
2. 11 HCP invitational bid (i.e. 11-12 HCP) – if opener has maximum HCP (i.e. 14 HCP) bid to game
3. Opener has 14 HCP so bids game – 3NT

Defender Opening lead - ♦3 – 4th highest of best suit

Does partner want this suit returned? **YES!**

Note: in a NT contract it is acceptable to lead small from a suit holding the Ace – but NEVER in s suit contract!

Declarer MUST make a PLAN needing 9 tricks

In NT declarer should count his top tricks first

0 spades, 1 heart, 1 diamond (given the lead), 4 clubs - needs 3 more – where from?

Work suit spades –force out ♠ A for 3 more tricks.

Play - North should win the first trick with ♦K (Note if you do not win your ♦K now you will not win any diamonds as the cards lie with the opponents. Start on your work suit spades playing honours from the short holding first. East will win the ♠ A and should return to play diamonds – defenders work suit!

Defenders should win 1 spade and 3 diamonds

Declarer should win 3 spades, 1 hearts, 1 diamonds, 4 clubs

Score: NS make 3NT = +400 (40+30+30) plus 300 non-vulnerable game score bonus

Hand 2 Played by South

Lessons from this hand

1. 1NT Opening with a balanced 12-14 HCP
2. Responder Invite 12 HCP & balanced
3. Opener minimum declines
4. Establish your suits before cashing top tricks

NS Vul	♠ A 5 3 ♥ Q 9 5 4 ♦ K Q 8 ♣ J 9 8	Dealer E
♠ J T 9 7 4 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ 5 3 2 ♣ K T	N W E S	♠ 8 2 ♥ A 7 6 ♦ J 6 4 ♣ A 7 6 4 3
	♠ K Q 6 ♥ J T 8 ♦ A T 9 7 ♣ Q 5 2	

East	South	West	North
Pass	1NT (1)	Pass	2NT (2)
Pass	Pass (3)		

Bidding

1. Opener (South) bids 1NT, 12-14 HCP balanced.
2. Responder (North) in the 11-12 HCP invitational range bids 2NT, inviting declarer to bid 3NT with a maximum hand of 14 HCP.
3. With a minimum 12 HCP, Opener declines - passes

Defender Opening Lead ♠ J (top of a sequence of 3 from a long suit). A lead from a long suit is normally best against NT. Does partner want this suit returned? **YES!**

Declarer MUST make a PLAN – needing 8 tricks

In a NT declarer should count his top tricks—3 spades, 3 diamonds (4 if suit splits 3:3!) = 5/6 Need 3/2 more - the red suits.

Work suit –Hearts once AK are forced out will give 2 tricks
Diamonds -if the suit splits 3;3 will give a 4th trick plus 1 trick in clubs once ♣AK forced out. Play clubs last.

Card Play – Win lead with ♠A. Don't cash spade winners until you have established extra red suit tricks! Lead hearts twice (to force out ♥AK). Spades will be returned which declarer will win. 2 tricks now established in hearts! Next play diamond as above.

Score – NS make 2NT = +120 (40+30 =70) plus part score bonus of 50 = 120.

Hand 3

Played by East

Lessons from this hand –

1. 1NT Opening with a balanced 12-14 HCP
2. Responder Invite 12 HCP & balanced
3. Establishing two work suits – diamonds first!

E/W Vul	♠ 6 4 ♥ J 3 2 ♦ A K 4 2 ♣ 9 6 5 4	Dealer S
♠ A 8 3 ♥ A T 7 ♦ Q J 6 3 ♣ T 3 2	N W E S	♠ K Q 2 ♥ K 9 8 ♦ 9 8 7 5 ♣ K Q J
	♠ J T 9 7 5 ♥ Q 6 5 4 ♦ T ♣ A 8 7	

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT (1)
Pass	2NT (2)	Pass	3NT (3)

Bidding

1. 12-14 HCP & balanced
2. Responder in the 11-12 HCP invitational range, bids 2NT inviting game if opener maximum

3. with 14 HCP- maximum - bids game

Contract: 3NT by East

Defender Choose Your Opening Lead: ♠J top of sequence of longest suit. Does partner want this suit returned? **YES!**

Declarer MUST make a PLAN – needing 9 tricks

Declarer Count Your Top Tricks in NT -3 spades, 2 hearts, 0 diamonds, 0 clubs = Only 5! Need 4 more! Where from?

Work Suit Diamonds – Force out ♦AK to establish your long suit and establish 2 tricks; Then clubs to force out ♣A to win 2 more

Plan Your Card Play

The lead is good for declarer. You know you must lose the lead twice to force out ♦AK. Defenders will return to play spades, but that's OK – you have 2 more stops! You will also lose the lead to force out the ♣A! Do not take your winners in hearts until you establish your needed tricks!

Score EW make 3NT = +600 (40+30+30) plus 500

vulnerable game bonus = 600

Hand 4

Played by West

Lessons from this hand

1. Opening with a balanced 12-14 HCP
2. Responder makes invitational bid
3. Establishing work suits BEFORE cashing top tricks

All Vul	♠ Q 9 4 2 ♥ T 6 3 ♦ 9 8 2 ♣ K J 2	Dealer W
♠ A 6 ♥ K 8 2 ♦ Q J T 6 5 ♣ Q T 4	N W E S	♠ T 8 5 ♥ A 9 7 ♦ K 4 3 ♣ A 9 7 3
	♠ K J 7 3 ♥ Q J 5 4 ♦ A 7 ♣ 8 6 5	

West	North	East	South
1NT (1)	Pass	2NT (2)	Pass
Pass (3)	All Pass		

Bidding

1. Dealer opens with 1NT 12-14 HCP and balanced
2. Responder in the 11-12 HCP invitational range bids 2NT inviting opener to bid game if maximum.

3. Opener is minimum (12 HCP) so declines

Defender Choose Your Opening Lead ♠2, 4th highest promising an honour. Does partner want this suit returned? **YES!**

Note: in a NT contract it is acceptable to lead small from a suit holding the Ace – but NEVER in a suit contract!

Declarer MUST make a PLAN – needing 8 tricks

Declarer Count Your Top Tricks in NTs – 1 spade, 2 hearts, 0 diamonds, 1 club = 4

Wow! A lot of work to do to win 8 tricks!

Work Suit – diamonds – force out ♦A to establish your needed 4 tricks!

Plan Your Card Play - Do not play hearts or clubs until you have established your work suit diamonds! You can only hold up spades for one round and win ♠A in the second round. Immediately set about establishing your work suit by playing low to the ♦K – honours from the shorter holding first. South will win his ♦A and return to playing spades for 2 more rounds! Do not discard your diamonds from the long holding! These are your needed tricks!

Score – 2NT made by EW = +120 (40+30) + 50 for part score bonus

Hand 5

Played by North

Lessons from this hand

1. 1NT Opening with a balanced 12-14 HCP
2. With 11+ HCP bids 2♣ Stayman
3. 4 cards in both majors - bid lower rank first
4. Responder bids 3NT (promising 4 spades)
5. Opener with a known spade fit bids game, 4♠

NS Vul	♠ K T 6 4 ♥ A Q 9 8 ♦ Q J 3 ♣ 6 3	Dealer N
♠ A 8 3 ♥ J T 7 ♦ 8 4 2 ♣ T 9 4 2	N W E S	♠ 9 2 ♥ 5 4 3 ♦ A T 7 ♣ K Q J 8 7
	♠ Q J 7 5 ♥ K 6 2 ♦ K 9 6 5 ♣ A 5	

North	East	South	West
1NT (1)	P	2♣ (2)	P
2♥ (3)	P	3NT (4)	P
4♠ (5)			

Bidding

(1) Balanced hand 12 -14 HCP

(2) Responder has enough for game but where? Uses 2♣ - Stayman alerted by Opener asking opener 'Do you have a 4 card major'

(3) Opener's 2♥ does not deny 4 spades! With both majors he must bid the lower ranking one first.

(4) South bids game bid in NT.

(5) North now knows that South must have 4 Spades to make his Stayman bid so converts 3NT to 4♠.

Defender Choose Your Opening Lead – ♣ K top of a sequence. Does partner want this suit returned? **YES!**

Declarer MUST make a PLAN

In a suit contract declarer should count his losers first – 1 spade, 1H if split 4:2 and ♥ J to 4 cards in East, 1 diamond, 1 club! = 4 – One too many! Can you reduce these?

Work suit- diamonds; force out ♦A - establish 2 tricks

Plan Your Card Play -Win the lead with ♣A in dummy.

Draw trumps. West wins ♠ A at some stage & continues with a club, won by East. When declarer gets in, finish drawing trumps and play your work suit. – low towards the short hand! Then play hearts

Score 4♠ made by NS = 620 (4 x 30 =120 plus 500 vulnerable game bonus.)

Hand 6 Played by East

Lessons from this hand

1. Opening 1NT - balanced 12-14 HCP
2. 2♣ -Stayman with 11+ HCP
3. Drawing trumps but taking a trump finesse
4. Defenders getting a ruff

EW Vul	♠ 8 7 4 ♥ A 7 ♦ K 6 5 4 ♣ J 7 3 2	Dealer E
♠ Q T 9 2 ♥ Q J 5 3 ♦ A 7 ♣ K Q 5	N W E S	♠ A J 6 3 ♥ K T 2 ♦ J 2 ♣ A T 9 6
	♠ K 5 ♥ 9 8 6 4 ♦ Q T 9 8 3 ♣ 8 4	

East	South	West	North
INT (1)	Pass	2♣ (2)	Pass
2♠ (3)	Pass	4♠ (4)	

- (1) 1NT balanced 12 – 14 HCP's,
 (2) 2♣, Stayman bid alerted by Opener asking opener 'Do you have a 4-card major?'

(3) East bids 2♠ This bid also says that he does not have 4 Hearts.

(4) West has a fit and he knows there are enough HCP for game so bids straight to 4♠.

Defender Choose Your Opening Lead -♥9– top of rubbish!
 Does partner want this suit returned? **Normally NO but you may get a ruff if you do!**

Declarer MUST make a PLAN

In a suit contract declarer should count his losers first – 1 spade (if finesse fails), 1 heart, 1 diamond, and 0 clubs! = 3 Looks good!

Plan Your Card Play –Draw trumps asap (taking the finesse by playing towards ♠J) to avoid any issues should opponents be short in a suit where they could score a ruff and then defeat the contract. Then play winning clubs and established hearts

North wins the heart lead and declarer wins the continuation of the suit, starts to draw trumps taking the spade finesse. Drat! South wins, leads another heart and North ruffs! However, your hearts are now established so you can discard a losing diamond in East's hand on your heart winners in West's hand.

Score – 4♠ made by EW = +620 (4 X 30 = 120) plus vulnerable game bonus = 500

Hand 7

Played by South

Lessons from this hand

1. Opening 1NT - balanced 12-14 HCP
2. 2♣ Stayman with 11 HCP & 4 of both majors
3. With a fit, invites game.
4. Opener maximum plays in 4 of major
5. Draw trumps, take a finesse, establish work suit.

All Vul	♠ K J T 3 ♥ A Q 7 3 ♦ 8 2 ♣ J T 4	Dealer S									
♠ Q 2 ♥ 8 6 2 ♦ K Q J 6 ♣ A 8 7 6	<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 9 8 6 5 ♥ 9 5 ♦ T 9 7 4 3 ♣ K 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ A 7 4 ♥ K J T 4 ♦ A 5 ♣ Q 9 5 3										

South	West	North	East
1NT (1)	Pass (2)	2♣ (3)	Pass
2♥ (4)	Pass	3♥ (5)	Pass
4♥ (6)			

Bidding

1. South (opener) 12 – 14 HCP balanced hand
2. West also has opening points but must pass!
3. North (responder) bids 2♣ (Stayman) with 11+ HCP alerted by opener.
4. South's bid shows 4+ cards in hearts
5. With 11 HCP North invites game
6. With maximum 14 HCP South bids game.

Opening Lead – ♦K, top of a sequence- a safe lead. Does partner want this suit returned? **YES!**

DECLARER MUST MAKE A PLAN

In a suit contract declarer should count his losers first – 1 spade (if finesse fails), 0 hearts, 1 diamond and 2 clubs. One too many! How to reduce this?

Winners – 3 spades (possibly 4), 4 hearts, 1 diamond, and 2 clubs once AK forced out = 10 tricks!

Work suit after drawing trumps = clubs

Card Play - Win the ♦K lead and draw trumps in 3 rounds. Tackle spades playing Ace (honours from the short hand first) then take the finesse towards the ♠J. This works - the Queen falls and the losing diamond in dummy can be thrown on an established spade winner. Now play clubs giving up 2 tricks. Defenders will return diamonds which now can be ruffed! Defenders win 2 clubs & 1 spade/diamond

Score 4♥ made by NS = +620 (4 x 30 = 120) plus 500 vulnerable game bonus points = 620

Hand 8

Played by West

Lessons from this hand

1. Opening 1NT - balanced 12-14 HCP
2. 2♣ Stayman with 11 HCP and both 4 card majors
3. With no fit but maximum HCPs West plays in 3NT
4. Establishing work suits BEFORE cashing top tricks
5. Analysing the lead. Finesse the ♠Q against ♠A

None Vul	♠ A 9 4 2 ♥ T 6 ♦ 9 8 2 ♣ K J 7 2	Dealer W
♠ K J 6 ♥ K 8 2 ♦ Q J T 5 ♣ A T 4	N W E S	♠ Q T 5 3 ♥ A 9 7 3 ♦ K 4 ♣ Q 9 3
	♠ 8 7 ♥ Q J 5 4 ♦ A 7 6 3 ♣ 8 6 5	

West	North	East	South
1NT (1)	Pass	2♣ (2)	Pass
2♦ (3)	Pass	2NT (4)	Pass
3NT (5)			

Bidding

1. Dealer opens with 1NT 12-14 HCP and balanced
2. Responder with 11HCP and both 4 card majors bids Stayman - 2♣ which must be alerted by Opener.
3. Opener, with no 4 card majors bids 2♦
4. Responder bids 2NT as an invitation
5. Opener is maximum (14 HCP) so accepts and bids game in NT!

Opening Lead Knowing declarer has no 4 card major North is likely to favour leading one – chooses ♠2, 4th highest promising an honour. Does partner want this suit returned? YES!

Note: in a NT contract it is acceptable to lead small from a suit holding the Ace – but NEVER in a suit contract!

DECLARER MUST MAKE A PLAN

In a NT contract declarer should count his top tricks

He counts his top winners only 3! More must be developed whilst he still has control. These will come from Spades and Diamonds. Declarer must force out the ♦A and ♠A as quickly as possible. He will then be certain to make 3 spade tricks, 2 heart tricks, 3 diamonds and one club, possibly 2 if the sequence of play allows by leading a spade from hand up to the ♠Q hoping that the ♠A is with North (likely given his lead!).

Score – E/W make 3NT = +400 (40+30+30 = 100) plus non-vulnerable game bonus of 300.

Add a further 30 points for each overtrick.