



## LESSON 18: 2♣ Openers: Hands 1-12

Hand 1.

Contract 4♠ by East

When Opener's rebid shows a suit as trumps, partnership MUST bid to game. Key Card plays:

1. Only 1 entry to the weak hand, West using the ♠T
2. Unblock the diamond suit – honours from the short hand first

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

North	East	South	West
pass	2♣ (1)	P	2♦ (2)
Pass	2♠ (3)	P	4♠ (4)
All pass			

### Bidding

- 1 – 24 HCP bids 2♣, a game force opening bid
- 2 – Showing 0-7 HCP
- 3 – Showing suit for trumps
- 4 – Bids game as shut out.

South must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit? Chooses J♣ - top of a sequence

### Declarer makes his plan

In a suit contract declarer must count his losers first - 1♣ and 2♥ so the contract looks safe. Looking at winners, declarer has 11 tricks. Can an overtrick be made? What can go wrong? With the lead declarer has one losing club (but can reduce that after drawing trumps on the play of Diamonds - BUT declarer has no entries to dummy other than ♠T so must preserve that at all costs to get 3 Diamond winners by playing ♦AQ from hand - honours from the short hand first, before crossing to Dummy's ♦K using the ♠T to get to West's hand.

### The card play

Win the Club lead with ♣A. Draw 2 rounds of trumps preserving the ♠T in West as your entry. Unblock Diamonds by playing ♦AQ from hand. Play a third round of trumps winning with ♠T then play ♦K discarding a losing Club from hand. North is squeezed when drawing trumps and must make 2 discards – note if these are Diamonds - if so, your 4th Diamond may be promoted to master! If no Diamond discards from North, ruff your 4th Diamond, play ♥A and give up 2 Hearts. EW make 11 tricks losing 2 hearts.

Score EW make 4♠ +1 overtrick (5 x 30 = 150) + non vulnerable game bonus of 300 = 450

## Hand 2:

### Contract 3NT by North

When Opener rebids 2NT responder with 0-1 HCP **CAN** Pass.

The only exception to the opening 2♣ game force bid. But with 2+ HCP **MUST** bid to game.

Key Card plays: Look for a successful finesse for your 9<sup>th</sup> trick

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

East	South	West	North
pass	pass	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♦ (2)	pass	2NT (3)
pass	3NT (4)		
All pass			

### Bidding

- 1 – Game force opening bid - 24 HCP
- 2 – Negative response showing 0-7 HCP
- 3 – Showing 23-24 HCP and balanced hand
- 4 – With no 4 or 5 card major suit to explore and 3 HCP bid game in NT. If South had zero HCP he could have passed. This

is the only situation where responder would refuse to bid the game after this sequence with the game force 2♣ opening bid. Opener's maximum holding is 24 HCP, so if responder has zero HCP there would not be enough for game.

**East must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit?** Chooses ♥Q Top of sequence  
**Declarer makes his plan**

**In a NT contract declarer must count his winners first** - ♥AK, ♦AKQ and ♣AKQ, gives 8 top tricks, declarer needs only one extra trick from the minor suits to make this contract.

Where might an extra trick come from? Only possibility is from a minor suit provided either minor breaks 3:2, or there is a singleton jack. There might also be 4 tricks in a minor suit if we can expose a finessing position against West. You need West to hold the top cards in a long minor.

### The card play

Win the first trick in hand with ♥A (key play) and cash ♦AK and ♣AK. You find that West has a singleton diamond! You can't do anything about East's ♦Jxxx. As compensation for this, you find out that East has a singleton ♣9. We therefore enter dummy with ♥K and play ♣T, playing low from North if West doesn't play the ♣J.

You can play your minor suit queens and concede the rest, thereby making the contract exactly 9 tricks: 2♥ 3♦ and 4♣  
**Note:** Some partnerships may find it harder if the opponents lead spades but even then, you lose 4 spades but after that follow the above play to make all the remaining tricks

**Score: NS make 3NT** (3 x 30 = 90) +plus an extra 10 for the first trick = 100 plus **vulnerable** game bonus of 500 = **+600**

### Hand 3: Contract 3NT by West

Opener's 2NT rebid is the partnerships first natural bid so responder can use Stayman or Transfer conventions if appropriate

Key card plays:

1. Interpret the opening lead and use to advantage
2. Finesses

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

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

### Bidding

- 1 – Game forcing bid - 23 HCP
- 2 – Negative response – 0-7 HCP
- 3 – 23-24 HCP balanced hand

4 – **Stayman** – Have you got a 4-card major, partner?

5 – Yes, 4 hearts

6 – With 5 HCP and no major fit bids game in 3NT

**North must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit?**

Chooses 5♣ (an unbid suit - 4<sup>th</sup> highest /low from an honour) knowing 4-card majors held by the opposition.

**Declarer must make a plan. In a NT contract declarer must count his winners first:** 8 sure tricks – ♠AK, ♥AKQ, ♦AK and ♣A. Where can 9<sup>th</sup> trick come from?

**Work suit** – It may be spades, but given the club lead, clubs looks a better bet as your work suit. Declarer is sure of a second trick in the club suit as he holds ♣J and ♣T. He should win the first trick & continue the suit to force out ♣Q.

### The Card Play

Win the lead (assuming South rises with ♣K) with ♣A.

From North's lead you know North must hold the ♣Q so play your ♣J. North wins with ♣Q setting up your ♣T for your 9th trick.

Play AK Spades noting the fall of ♠T and ♠8 from South. Now play the ♠3 to the ♠9 if the Q does not appear from North. If it wins – making an overtrick! If North plays his ♠Q, win whatever is returned and cross to the ♦A to play your established ♠J for the overtrick!

**Score: EW make 3NT + 1 Overtricks** (4 x 30 plus 10 for the first trick = 130) plus **non-vulnerable** game bonus of 300 = **+430**

#### Hand 4. Contract 4♠ by South

Openers rebid of 2NT is the partnerships first natural bid so responder can use the Transfer convention with a weak hand to play in a suit game and escape a NT contract

Key card plays:

- 1 Draw trumps
- 2 Taking a Finesse

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

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♦ (2)	pass	2NT (3)
pass	3♥ (4)	pass	3♠ (5)
pass	4♠ (6)	pass	pass (7)

All Pass

#### Bidding

1. 23 HCP - Game Force opening bid
2. Negative response – 0-7 HCP
3. Showing 23/24 HCP and balanced hand

4. Transfer to spades. Though weak with a 6 card suit better to play in a suit rather than NT
5. Dutifully completes the transfer
6. Bids Game knowing for a 2NT rebid, opener must have 23/24 HCP and at least 2 cards in Spades.
7. Given partner's 2♦ bid and with minimum spade holding has no ambitions for slam.

**West must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit?**

Chooses ♥Q top of touching honours.

**Declarer makes his plan**

**In a suit contract declarer must count his losers first** – 1♠ 0♥

1 or 2♦ depending where the Ace is, 0♣. Looks good! What can go wrong?

**Count winners** – 5♠ (you must lose the Ace), 2♥ 1 or 2♦ (if East has the Ace), 2♣ = 10 / 11

Plan to win the opening lead on the first trick - you can ruff the little hearts in North then begin to take out trumps, finally playing winning ♣AK to win 11 tricks.

#### The Card Play

♥Q lead to ♥2 in dummy, ♥5 in East to Declarer's ♥A.

Declarer sets about drawing trumps. East wins ♠A then observing dummy, switches to the ♦T to South's ♦K and West's ♦A. A low diamond back is won by declarer's ♦Q. Declarer then draws the opponents' trumps winning 10 tricks.

**Score: NS make 4♠ + 1 overtrick (5 x 30 = 150 ) plus non vulnerable game bonus = 300 = +450**

## Hand 5. Contract 6 or 7♥ by North

Responder's bid shows 8+ HCP and a 5+ card suit

With a suit, uses LTC – only 3-4 losers- explores for slam

Key Card Play:

1. Establishing a long suit to discard losers
2. Only 1 entry to the weak hand with the long suit - ♥J

<b>Vul: NS</b>	<b>♠ K 3</b> <b>♥ A K Q T 3</b> <b>♦ A 5</b> <b>♣ A K 4 2</b>	<b>Dealer N</b>
<b>♠ J T 8 6 4</b> <b>♥ 9 7 5</b> <b>♦ Q 9 8</b> <b>♣ Q 5</b>	<div style="text-align: center;">N</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>W</span> <span>E</span> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">S</div>	<b>♠ Q 9 7 2</b> <b>♥ 8 6</b> <b>♦ T 7</b> <b>♣ T 9 8 7 3</b>
	<b>♠ A 5</b> <b>♥ J 4 2</b> <b>♦ K J 6 4 3 2</b> <b>♣ J 6</b>	

North	East	South	West
2♣ (1)	pass	3♦ (2)	pass
3♥ (3)	pass	4♥ (4)	pass
4NT (5)	pass	5♣ (6)	pass
*6♥ (7)	All pass		

### Bidding

- 1 – 23 HCP - Game Force opening bid
- 2 – Positive response showing 8+ HCP and 5+ cards in diamonds
- 3 – Bids long suit of 5+ cards - showing suit for trumps

4 – Bids game showing a heart fit

5 – Roman Keycard Blackwood 1430

6 – 1 Keycard

7 – Having 4 Aces and a suit fit bids a Small Slam!

\* Some partnerships may bid to 7♥

**East must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit?**

Chooses ♣T – top of a sequence.

**Declarer makes his plan**

**In a suit contract declarer must count his losers first** – 0♠ 0♥

0♦ and 0♣ (if there are no trumps in the South hand for ruffing) The long diamond suit looks good for discards of the losing Clubs in your hand. You are missing ♦Q and therefore will need to play ♦AK then ruff a diamond hoping for a 3:2 split and that the ♦Q falls BUT having set up diamonds, you must be able to get back to dummy! Your only entry is the ♥J which you must preserve!

### The card play

Declarer wins whatever is led. Draw **two** rounds of trumps **only** by playing ♥A, ♥K. Both opponents following suit. Now time to set up diamonds while you still have ♥J entry. Play ♦A playing high cards from the short hand first - and cross to ♦K, then play ♦3 and ruff in hand **HIGH** with ♥Q then cross to ♥J (drawing last trump from opponents) and cash your established diamonds discarding losing clubs! 13 tricks and slam made 😊

**Score: NS make 6♥ 1 overtrick (7 x 30=210) + vulnerable game bonus of 500 also + vulnerable 'Small Slam' bonus of 750 = +1460**

**NB if you bid 7♥ vulnerable – a grand slam = +2210 to N/S!**

## Hand 6. Contract 6 or 7♥ by East

Responders bid shows 8+ HCP and a 5+ card suit

With a suit fit opener uses LTC – only 2 losers explores for slam

Key Card Play – Honours from the short hand first!

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

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

## Bidding

- 1 – Game force opening bid - 21 HCP and fantastic shape
- 2 – Positive response showing 8+ HCP and 5+ card C suit
- 3 – Showing long suit (5+ cards) suggesting the trump suit

4 – Once suit fit found use **Roman Key card Blackwood 1430**

– How many key cards do you have?

5 – 5♣ - shows 1 or 4 key cards

6 – Must have 4 for his 2♣ opener. With all the Keycards held in partnership bids slam! \* Some partnerships may bid to 7♥! – a Grand Slam!

**North must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit?**

Chooses ♣Q - top of touching honours

**Declarer must make a plan:**

A 'laydown', 13 tricks off the top! Win whatever is led, draw trumps in 3 rounds, play all your winning top cards discarding losers on winners.

**Danger – Declarer - don't get stuck in the wrong hand!**

**Score: EW make 6♥ + 1 overtrick (7 x 30 = 210) + vulnerable game bonus of 500 plus vulnerable small slam bonus = 750) = +1460**

NB If anyone bid and made 7♥ **vulnerable** – a **Grand Slam** = **+2210 to EW!**

## Hand 7. Contract 6 or 7♠ by South

With a 5+ card major suit fit and 8+ HCP shown by responder opener explores for slam. Key card plays:

1. Ruffing in the short hand to win extra tricks (no extra tricks ruffing the long hand)
2. Play Honours from the short hand first

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

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

### Bidding

- 1 – Game force opening bid
- 2 – Positive response - 8+ HCP and 5+ cards in spades
- 3 – Roman Key Card Blackwood 1430 asking number of key cards
- 4 – 5♥ shows 2 key cards without ♥Q

Very relieved to hear that South has Ace Diamonds as you have that vulnerable singleton King.

5 – With a minimum of 32 combined HCP, a suit fit and missing no Aces, bids a Small Slam! \* Some pairs may bid to 7♠

West must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit? ♦5 – low from an honour

Declarer makes his plan. In a suit contract declarer must count his losers first: 0♠ even if the suit breaks 4:0, 0♥ 0♦ but potentially 1♣! Can he reduce this?

Count winners – 5♠ 3♥ 2♦ + ruff, 3 or 4♣ if the ♣K is in the West hand! Play for it to be in West by taking a finesse after trumps are drawn.

### The Card Play

Win the club lead with the ♦K. Draw trumps in three rounds by playing ♠AKQ. Trumps break 3:1 Cross to the ♥A, play your ♦A discarding a small heart. Now the finesse lead the ♣T letting it run (unless West plays the ♣K in which case cover with your ♣A). If the ♣T wins, repeat with the ♣9. South should make 13 tricks!

Score NS make 6♠ + 1 overtrick (7 x 30 = 210) = **vulnerable** game bonus of 500 + **vulnerable** 'Small Slam' bonus of 750) = **+1460**

If anyone bid and made 7♠ **vulnerable** the score = **+2210 for NS**

## Hand 8. Contract 7♥ by West

When opener does not rebid 2NT, Responder MUST bid to game, even with 0 HCP

Key Card Plays:

1. Draw trumps
2. Discard losers on a long suit

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

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

## Bidding

1. Game forcing bid
2. 2♥ response – 8+ HCP

3. Roman Key card Blackwood 1430 key card asking with hearts as a trump suit
4. Shows 1 or 4 key cards – Must be 1!
5. With all the Aces and a suit fit in Hearts bid the Small Slam!

North must think about his opening lead – which suit? And which card in that suit?

♠J top of a sequence

Declarer must make a plan

In a suit contract declarer must count his losers first: 0♠ provided there are trumps in the West hand to ruff the small cards, 0♥ 1♦ 0♣ - Looks good!

**The card play:** Win the lead and draw trumps in two rounds. Play your winning spades discarding 2 losing diamonds and ruff 2 small spades. Play winning clubs discarding a losing diamond play your AK of diamonds to make all 13 tricks!

**Score:** EW make 6♥ + 1 overtrick (7 x 30 = 210) + **non-vulnerable** game bonus of 300 + **non vulnerable** 'Small Slam' bonus of 500) = + 1010



## Hand 9 Contract 6♥ by East

2♣ opening with 23+ HCP

Responder shows 8+ HCP and a 5+ card suit by a jump to 3 Diamonds

Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB) Key Card asking

Key play – unblocking the ♣K

E/W vul	♠ T 9 8 7 6 5 ♥ T 4 ♦ Q 5 ♣ T 6 5	Dealer N
♠ 4 2 ♥ A 9 5 ♦ J 9 8 7 6 4 3 ♣ K	<div style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">                         N W E S                     </div>	♠ A K J ♥ K Q J 6 2 ♦ A ♣ A Q 3 2
	♠ Q 3 ♥ 8 7 3 ♦ K T 2 ♣ J 9 8 7 4	

North	East	South	West
pass	2♣ (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	pass	4♥ (4)
pass	4NT (5)	pass	5♣ (6)
pass	6♥ (7)	All pass	

### Bidding

- Game force opening bid

- West has 8+ HCP a 5+ card diamond suit. If West bids only 2♦, that would mean 7 or fewer HCP so the bid has to be 3♦
- Unbalanced hand so East wants to bid his 5 card suit which is Hearts.
- West has 3 Hearts and Opener did not bid NT. He must have 5+ Hearts so support his suit.
- There might be 'Slam' on here, so check for key cards (Roman Key card Blackwood 1430)
- 1 key card
- Bid the Small Slam - not cast iron but have a go

**South must think of his opening lead?** With nothing obvious, a trump lead is often good in a slam contract. Choose ♥8

### Declarer must make a plan

**Count losers:** 0♠ 0♥ 0♦ 0♣ Great!

**Count winners:** 3♠ 5♥ 1♦ 3♣ = 12!

Note to win 3 clubs you must play the ♣K first to unblock the suit – playing honours from the short hand first!

### Card Play

Win the trump in dummy, West and immediately play the ♣K Then return to drawing trumps in another 2 rounds. Play all your winning cards to make your contract.

**Score EW make 6♥** (6 x 30 = 180) + **vulnerable** game bonus of 500, +**vulnerable** 'Slam' bonus of 750) = **+1430**  
Add +30 if you made 7♥!

## Hand 10 Contract 6♣ played by North

Strong 2♣ opening

Responder shows 8+ HCP & no 5 card suit - responds 2NT

Use of RKCB

Key play – unblocking hearts and clubs

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

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

### Bidding

- (1) Bids second suit. Partner now can work out South's likely shape and knows he has less than 16+ HCP
- (2) Re-bids clubs and jumps to show strength/length
- (3) RKCB 1430 agreeing clubs as trumps
- (4) 3 or 0 key cards

- (5) Partner has shown \*16+ HCP by the jump bid to 4 clubs, so must have 3 key cards, therefore South bids the SmallSlam!

\* 16+ HCP **and** a 6-card suit, jump bid to show strength

**East must think of an opening lead**- In a suit contract, could choose the unbid suit diamonds but not good to lead away from a KJ holding so decides to lead into dummy's second bid suit - often a safe bet! Choose ♥2 - low promises an honour

**Declarer must make a plan**

**In a suit contract count losers first:** 0♠ 1♥ 1♦ 0♣ One too many - Can you reduce these? Yes, by playing spade winners and throwing away heart and diamond losers.

**Count sure winners:** 3♠ 1♥ 1♦ 8♣ You can make all 13 tricks if you play to your plan!

**Card play:** Win the lead and 'unblock' spades by playing ♠A first then cross to South to play ♠KQ spades discarding losing heart & diamond. Draw trumps and play ♦A to make all 13 tricks!

**Score:** NS make 6♣ (6 x 20 = 120) + **non-vulnerable** game bonus of 300, + **non-vulnerable** Small Slam bonus of 500) = **+920**

### Hand 11 Contract 2NT by North

2♣ opening with a 23 HCP balanced hand

2♦ response showing fewer than 7 HCP

Opener's rebid of 2NT shows 23 - 24 HCP

Responder passes 2NT with only 1 HCP

No one vul	♠ A J 9 3 ♥ A Q T 8 ♦ K Q ♣ A K 2	Dealer S
♠ K Q 4 2 ♥ 5 4 ♦ T 5 ♣ J T 7 6 3	N W E S	♠ 7 6 ♥ K J 3 2 ♦ A 4 3 2 ♣ Q 5 4
	♠ T 8 5 ♥ 9 7 6 ♦ J 9 8 7 6 ♣ 9 8	

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

#### Bidding

1. 23+ HCP and a balanced hand or 20+ HCP with a strong distributional hand.
2. Less than 8 HCP
3. This bid show a balanced type hand with 23 or 24 HCP
4. The 2♣ opening bid is almost always forcing to game. This is the only situation in which South may pass in a contract below

game. North has at most 24 HCP & South has only 1 - you can pass.

**Lead** - This is a situation where a passive lead is called for.

East knows that all declarer's strength is in the North hand so East's hand is sitting 'over' him. Don't lead anything which will gift North a trick. Don't lead away from any of those isolated honours. A Spade lead looks the safest. Lead the ♠7.

#### Declarer must make a plan

**Count your sure tricks first in a NT contract:** 1♠ 1♥ 1♦ after the ♦A is forced out), 2♣ Ugh! This is not looking good! Need 2 more - where will they come from?

**Count losers:** 2♠ 2♥ hopefully only 1♦ but sadly, you will not be able to reach winning diamonds, and losing several clubs after ♣AK played!

**Card Play:** North will struggle to make this contract. The only strength in the South hand is in that long weak diamond suit but you do not have any obvious entry into South. Try forcing an entry in Spades. Take the first trick with ♠A covering West's honour. Now lead a top diamond. When you have the chance, lead the second top diamond hoping that the ♦A will be played. When you get back in, lead a small Spade to the 8. If a high Spade does not take the trick you are in dummy and can cash the diamond winners. If the ♠8 is overtaken, you can later lead the ♠9 towards the ♠T in dummy to get you into the South hand to cash those winners.

**Score:** 2NT go 1 down in = -50 non vulnerable

## Hand 12 Contract 4♥ by West

2♣ strong opening bid

Responder shows less than 7 HCP by bidding 2♦

Opener's rebid of 3NT shows balanced hand with 25+ HCP

Responder converts NT to Hearts with a 7 card heart suit.

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

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

### Bidding

- 1 A balanced hand with 23+ HCP or a very strong distributional hand with a 6+ card suit and only 20+ HCP
- 2 Less than 8 HCP
- 3 Now showing 25+ HCP

- 4 The only strength in the West hand is his long Hearts so convert the NT contract into Hearts. East will have at least 2 Hearts.

Lead - ♦Q will give nothing away.

In a suit contract declarer should count his losers first: ♠A ♣A and possibly a heart if the cards split with 3 or 4 cards in South i.e. with the ♥K offside! However, even with this the contract looks safe!

### Play

Win the lead, take out trumps in 2 rounds. Play your top spades or clubs losing 2 aces but making all the other tricks!

Score EW make 4♥ + 1 overtrick (5 x 30 – 150) + non vulnerable game bonus of 300 = +450

NB In 3NT the contract goes 1 down!