

Winning Duplicate Tips

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Lesson 1

“10 RANDOM PRINCIPLES FOR BETTER BIDDING”

(You are South in each of the following Examples)

1. You Hold:	Q9874	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	K84				
	74	1D	P	1S	P
	J73	1NT	P	?????	

North, having bid 1NT on his/her first rebid must have a balanced hand with no fewer than two (2) cards in each of the four suits and 11-14 HCP's. North, therefore, not having supported Spades, cannot have four Spades, but must have either two or three Spades. In either instance, South's hand will produce more tricks in a Spade contract than it will in a NT contract. In this example, South's proper rebid is "2S". **Always bid or rebid a 5-card Major over 1NT**

If you held: Qxxxx xxx xx xxx You would not hesitate to transfer to 2 Spades over a 1NT Opening by partner, and so should you do similarly in the above referenced example with a 1NT rebid by Opener. **Always bid or rebid a 5-card Major over 1NT**

2. You Hold:	A53	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	K84				
	K984		1C	?????	
	KJ3				

Here, South has opening count, but does not have enough cards in the three unmentioned suits, Diamonds, Hearts and Spades, to justify a take-out double. In this example, South's proper bid is to "Pass". A second position "Pass" says nothing other than at this moment the player chooses not to make a bid, and, indeed, could even have values equivalent to or even stronger than the opening call. In order to make a Take-out Double, one's hand must be of proper shape, and/or of sufficient point count.

One should never make a direct take-out double with minimum balanced opening hands that contains more than 2-cards in Opener's suit.

3a. You Hold:	A853	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	84				
	KQ84			1D	P
	KJ3	1S	P	?????	

Here, in this example, everyone would surely support partner by re-bidding “2S”. North has shown 6-18 HCP’s with at least four Spades, and therefore, a rebid by South is mandatory. South’s rebid of “2S” evidences a Golden Fit in Spades with minimum opening count. With this as a baseline background:

3b. You Hold:	A853	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	84				
	KQ84			1D	1H
	KJ3	Dbl.	P	?????	

Here, the bidding as gone slightly differently. Never-the-less, North, has, in effect, similarly bid the same 1 Spade by virtue of his/her Negative Double. If you had been prepared, as above in (3a) to bid “2S” why not still do the same here. South should bid “2S” just as in (3a) above. A bid of “3S” would have shown a one trick better Opening count of 16-18, but here, the “2S” bid, as before, would show minimum count and a hand which would have bid “2S” had there not been an intervening overcall. In effect, why bid only “1S” which would more easily allow West an opportunity to enter the bidding with a “2H” or “2C” call?

Ignore the Opponents! Never suppress support for Partner! Bid as quickly as possible to your own contract level, thereby making it more difficult for the opponents to find their best contract.

3c. You Hold:	A85	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	984				
	KQ84			1D	1H
	KJ3	Dbl.	P	?????	

Here, if you recognize as in (3b) above that a “2S” bid would guarantee four (4) Spades, then in the referenced hand here in (3c), the appropriate rebid by Opener would then be “1S” which would evidence minimum values and only three (3) pieces of Spades. (Note: In effect the principal in (3c) acts similar to a Support Double which, in competition, evidences 3-card support for partner’s 4-card suit.)

4. You Hold:	A9853	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	KJ76				
	K84	1NT	P	?????	
	3				

With game values (11+ HCP's) opposite a 1NT opening bid, Responder, having both a 4-card and a 5-card Major suit holding must abandon the tendency to think in terms of Jacoby Transfer bids and alternatively first bid a "2C" Stayman call. Receiving either a "2H" or a "2S" response by opener, Responder will then proceed to game level in the agreed-upon Major. If however, opener bids "2D" denying a 4-card Major, Responder may then proceed to the 3-level of his/her 5-card Major ("3S" in this instance) asking opener to proceed to the 4-level if holding three pieces, else to 3NT as an alternate rejection of the 5-card Major suit of Responder. **Never use Jacoby Transfer bids opposite 1NT or 2NT Opening bids when holding both 5-card and 4-card Major suits and game values. Stayman always takes precedent over Jacoby Transfers.**

5. You Hold:	A953	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	K76				
	K4			1C	Dbl.
	QJ53	ReDbl.	1S	?????	

A Redouble is the only strong bid, other than conventional raises of partner's opening suit (Like Jordan) following a Take-out Double by the Opponents. A Redouble implies no fit with partner and is a Defensive Bid. As a result, in this instance, South should make a penalty "Double" confirming his/her willingness to defend against the 1S overcall by the opponents.

6. You Hold:	63	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	A853				
	KJ94	P	P	1D	P
	Q73	1H	P	?????	

Previous discussion indicated the thought that it be best to pass a previously-passed Responder's bid when one held a third-hand light opening bid as shown here in (6). The latest thinking, however, is that to "Pass" in these instances would only invite the opponents to enter the bidding in what might be, for them, a favorable contract. To thwart this, however, as in this hand, bid aggressively even with a sub-minimum opening count. Here, South should bid "2H". **Never suppress support except when pre-empted.**

7. You Hold:	8753	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	986				
	KQ84	1S	2H	?????	
	83				

When holding few HCP's and the opportunity arises to bid a pre-emptive support bid for partner's bid suit, bid as quickly as possible to a level supported by the "LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS"; i.e., the 3-level with 9 pieces, 4-level with 10 pieces, and the 5-level with 11 support pieces for partner.

8a. You Hold:	A953	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	K85				
	K84			1C	P
	K83	1H	P	?????	

If you bid two suits, you have two suits! If one were, therefore, to open 1 Club and rebid 1S one **must** have 4+ Clubs. In this instance, therefore, one should not rebid 1S, but rather “1NT”. Percentage wise, even acknowledging the potential to sometimes miss a 4-4 Major suit fit, the acknowledged admission of two suits, as in the following hand, more than makes up for the possible afore-mentioned deficiency.

8b. You Hold:	A953	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	K85				
	K8			1C	P
	K873	1H	P	?????	

Here, Opener should rebid 1S, thereby showing two suits, Clubs and Spades!

9. You Hold:	A853	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	5				
	9843	1D	P	1S	P
	K764	2D	2H	3D	3H
		3S	P	?????	

North has shown, by virtue of his/her rebid of 2D, a likely 6-card Diamond holding. South easily competes to the 3-level holding 4 Diamonds. When West bids 3H, North re-enters the bidding with a 3S call which, having previously denied four pieces of Spades absent a 2S call in lieu of his/her 2D bid, confirms North to have just three pieces of Spades. South, not wanting to be in a 3S contract with only seven trumps, easily bids the preferred contract of “4D” holding a likely ten Diamonds between the two partners. **Play in the right suit, Even if you are 1-level higher!**

10. You Hold:	A953	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	5				
	KQ84			1D	P
	KJ73	1H	P	1S	P
		1NT	P	?????	

South should bid “2C”. Similar to (8b) above which indicates that if one bids two suits, one has two suits: **If one bids three suits, you have three suits and are short in the fourth!** Here, North can now either pass the 2C bid, else seek the best 7-card final contract.

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Lesson 2

Utilization of and Modifications of the “Rule of 20”

To Open the Bidding or Not – That is the Question!

With some qualifications and several modifications, herein discussed, the “Rule of 20” is a sound approach as a yardstick to determine whether or not a hand is strong enough to qualify as sufficiently strong to open. **One simply adds the HCP’s to the number of cards in one’s two longest suits.** When this summation totals 20 or more, the hand qualifies as being strong enough to justify a player taking the position to open the bidding in first or second position; i.e., either the dealer or the player to the immediate left of the dealer, should the dealer choose to pass.

(A)	KQXX	(B)	AXXXX	(C)	AJXXX
	X		X		X
	AJXXXX		XX		X
	XX		AQXXX		AXXXXX

With (A): Open 1D! If partner bids 1H you intend to rebid 1S. If Responder, alternately bids 1NT or 2C (Denying 4 Spades) your plan is to rebid 2D. Remember, always mentally consider your rebid **before** you make your opening bid.

With (B): (Any hand with 5 Clubs and 5 Spades potentially houses a bidding problem.) Notice, if you open 1S, partner is likely to respond 2D or 2H. You would then be forced to rebid 3C which is a “High Reverse” evidencing 16 or more HCP’s.

Some prefer to open 1C with a minimum holding as herein depicted, and to follow up with a rebid of Spades as if one held a 6-5 Distribution. That works if the opponents promise not to intervene, but the reality of today’s world is that one is likely to get a raise in either of the red suits to the 3-level or higher, and then opener would be reluctant to introduce the Spades with such a weak holding.

Better to start with 1S, the higher ranking of two 5-card suits. If Responder responds 1NT you can rebid 2C. Over 2D or 2H your best rebid is to bid 2S.

With (C): “Bid Length before Strength”. Open 1C. Over 1D or 1H, rebid 1S, then Spades again on the third round evidencing a 6-5 distribution (assuming partner has not supported your first Spade rebid).

Modification #1 to the “Rule of 20”:

(A)	AXX	(B)	KXX	(C)	QJXXX
	AXX		QJ		X
	AXXX		QJXX		KQ
	XXX		KXXX		QXXXX

As previously simply stated, the “Rule of 20” would suggest that one pass with (A), and open with both (B) and (C).

One needs, however, to take into account the negative aspects of such as the doubleton QJ in (B) and the KQ in (C), as well as the positive aspects of the Aces present in hand (A).

The first modification to the “Rule of 20”, making it more accurate, is to add the HCP’s, plus the number of cards in one’s two longest suits, plus the Quick Tricks (QT) in the hand.

Quick tricks (QT) are the tricks one figures to win in the first two rounds of a suit whether as declarer or in defense. The Quick Trick scale is:

$$A-K = 2, \quad A-Q = 1\frac{1}{2}, \quad A = 1, \quad K-Q = 1, \quad K = \frac{1}{2} \text{ (0 if a Singleton)}$$

When counting Quick Tricks as well, the standard for opening now goes to 22 or more. **Adding Quick Tricks to the “Rule of 20” now produces the “Rule of 22”.** By this calculation, hand (A) measures 22 and should be opened, whereas hand (B) and (C), each having only 1 QT, measure 21 and should, therefore, be passed.

Modification #2 to the “Rule of 20”:

(A) A Q X X
X
X X X X X
A X X

Reduce the “Rule of 22” to “21” at favorable vulnerability.

Hand (A) above calculates to 21½. With equal vulnerability (Both sides vulnerable or not-vulnerable) or if unfavorable vulnerability (Your side vulnerable and the opponents not) “Pass” with the above hand. With favorable vulnerability (Your side not-vulnerable and the opponents vulnerable) open the above hand with 1D.

Modification #3 to the “Rule of 20”:

(A)	AJ1074	(B)	A9743	(C)	AKJ2
	AJ103		K		93
	8		A652		K986
	743		875		642

Honors cards in combination are more powerful than are honor cards on their own. It is worth upgrading a hand by ½ a point for a queen or jack in a suit with two higher honors (A-K-Q, A-K-J, A-Q-J, K-Q-J) or J-10 in a suit with one higher honor (A-J-10, K-J-10, Q-J-10). These above combinations boost one’s chances for making an extra trick

Conversely, honor cards in short suits should be downgraded. Deduct 1 point for a singleton King, Queen or Jack, and deduct ½ point for the King, Queen, or Jack in a doubleton suit.

Upgrade for honors cards in combination and downgrade for honors in short suits.

With (A): This hand has 10 HCP's, 9 points for length, and 2 Quick Tricks for a total of 21. Being one short of the recommended 22 suggests a pass. However, once one upgrades $\frac{1}{2}$ point each for the two A-J-10 holdings, one reaches 22 and should open 1S.

With (B): This hand has 11 HCP's, 9 points for length, and 2 Quick Tricks totaling 22 which, at first glance indicates opening strength. However, after deducting 1 for the singleton King, you now drop to 21 and should pass except at favorable vulnerability where the Rule of 21 applies.

With (C): This hand has 11 HCP's, 8 points for length, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ Quick Tricks for a total of $21\frac{1}{2}$, but adding $\frac{1}{2}$ for the Jack with two higher honors justifies one's opening. If the Jack were elsewhere, one would pass.

Modification #4 to the "Rule of 20":

(A)	KJ8632	(B)	QJ8632	(C)	K96532
	8		AK7		AK7
	KQ862		62		8
	5		85		964

The more shapely a hand, the more attractive it is to open. There is, therefore extra value in having singletons or voids.

When using the Rule of 21 or 22 in deciding whether or not to open the bidding, if your length total is 8 or 9, add $\frac{1}{2}$ for a singleton or void; and if your length total is 10 or 11, add $\frac{1}{2}$ for a void.

With (A): This hand has 9 HCP's, 11 points for length, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ Quick Tricks for a total of $21\frac{1}{2}$. With this holding, therefore, one should open 1 Spade at favorable vulnerability, and a weak 2S at equal or unfavorable vulnerability.

With (B): This hand has 10 HCP's, 9 points for length, and 2 Quick Tricks totaling 21. Once again, here one should open 1 Spade at favorable vulnerability, and a weak 2S at equal or unfavorable vulnerability.

With (C): Here we have 10 HCP's. 9 for length, $2\frac{1}{2}$ Quick Tricks, and an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ for a total of 22. This hand is worth a 1S opening at any vulnerability.

In duplicate play, safety is not one's primary concern, but rather the frequency of gain. The above-mentioned factors reflect the main considerations which should be employed in the decision-making process as to whether or not to open any particular borderline hand in first or second position at the table. In the long run, utilization of these factors will pay off with a positive duplicate score.

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Lesson 3

Constructive Bidding

1. When you have a choice between passing 1NT or reverting to opener's Minor, choose the minor suit if your combined point count is likely to be 21 or less, but pass 1NT if the total combined count is 22-24.

What action should South pursue with the following hands:

	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1D 1NT	P P	1S ?????	P
(A)	Q10XX XX KJXX XXX		(B)	A10XX XX KQXX JXX

Answers: ("2D") with (A) – Combined total = 18-20 HCP's
("Pass") with (B) – Combined total = 22-24 HCP's

When your side has 23-24 points, 1NT is likely to be safe and an overtrick is even feasible. With fewer points, 1NT is not safe and an overtrick is highly improbable, whereas the Minor suit part-score is more likely to yield a plus.

2. With a Major suit fit and also a hand reasonably suitable for a NT contract, play in the Major suit when your combined total is 25-29, but choose No-Trumps when your side has 30 points or more.

What action should South pursue with the following hands:

	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1NT	P	?????	
(A)	AQXXXX QX KJX XX		(B)	AJ10XXX AJ QXX KX

Answers: ("2H") (Transfer) with (A) – with intent towards a final 4S contract (27-29 HCP's)
(3NT) with (B) – Combined total = 30-32 HCP's

3. When partner transfers to a Major after your 1NT opening bid, accept the transfer at the 2-level on most hands, but take a “Super-Acceptance” Jump-Accept to the 3-level if holding all three of the following positive features:

- (A) – 4-card support for partner’s Major**
- (B) – Maximum (17) point count – if borderline, upgrade a hand with Aces and Kings, downgrade one with many Jacks and Queens**
- (C) – Ruffing value via the presence of an outside doubleton**

What action should North pursue with the following hands:

	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>			
	1NT ?????	P	“2H” (Transfer)	P			
(A)	A Q J 4 Q 7 K 9 8 3 Q J 3	(B)	A J 6 4 K 5 K Q 4 2 A 1 0 9	(C)	A J 6 4 K 5 3 K Q 4 A 1 0 8	(D)	X X A K X K Q 4 2 Q J 8 3

Answers: (2S) with (A) – Borderline, but holding too many Queens and Jacks
 (3S) with (B) – All three positive features are present
 (2S) with (C) – You have no ruffing value (Absence of a doubleton)
 (2S) with (D) – You are never permitted to decline a transfer

4. If partner opens 1H or 1S and you have support, but a balanced hand with 10 losers, choose a 1NT response rather than raising to 2H or 2S.

What action should South pursue with the following hands:

	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>			
	1S	P	?????				
(A)	K 8 7 4 K 9 3 9 8 3 J 5 3	(B)	A 6 4 J 5 J 7 4 2 9 8 6 2	(C)	J 4 3 2 K Q J 8 7 4 J 6 3	(D)	Q 7 6 J 1 0 8 6 K 8 4 2 9 8

Answers: Each of the above hands has enough HCP’s AND Spade support to warrant a raise to 2S, but in each instance a 1NT response will provide a better result most of the time. Each of these hands holds 10 losers. In SAYC, a 1NT runs the risk of being left there, but to raise to 2S with 10 losers runs an even greater risk. Having bid 2S runs the additional risk of opener taking further action wherein you are most likely headed for a minus score. In “Forcing” NT circumstances, Responder may then revert to 2S on his/her rebid, a circumstance not likely to excite opener to further action. This will not sound nearly as encouraging as an immediate raise to 2S. In the final analysis, you may suffer occasional losses by responding 1NT under these circumstances, but in the long run the upside potential will significantly outweigh the downside.

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Lesson 4

Competitive Bidding

1. When Partner opens with a 1H or 1S bid, and you have a weak responding hand with 5 pieces of partner's suit or a 9-card trump fit and 10+ cards in two suits, jump to game at once.

What action should South pursue with each of the following hands:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1S	P	?????	
(A)	KXXXX KX XXX XXX	(B)	AXXX JX QXXXXX X

Answer: When your side is known to have 10 trumps, it is sound competitive technique to compete for ten tricks as quickly as possible. The same strategy works when you have a certain or probable 9-card fit and one of the hands has 10 cards in two suits. In both of the above-referenced hands, an immediate jump to 4S is the winning strategy.

2. When Opener has bid two suits, and Responder's rebid is preference for the first suit at the 2-level, bid in the direct seat as though you were in fourth seat after two passes, for, indeed, the bidding is about to cease.

What action should South pursue after the following bidding sequence?

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1D	P	1S	P
2C	P	2D	?????
(A)	AXX AJXXX XX XXX		

Answer: It is obvious from the bidding that East has minimal values and the bidding is about to conclude with East's choice of the two suits presented him/her by Opener. South's bid may be somewhat risky, but on balance when one team can make a 2-level contract in suit A, so can the other team in suit B (Larry Cohen's "LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS"). At the very least South will either steal the contract, else push East-West to 3D which may fail.

3. When you bid a negative double holding 10-12 HCP's opposite partner's opening bid, you should take another bid and invite game with your rebid.

What action should East pursue with the following hands:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1D	1S	Dbl.	P
	2C	P	????	
(A)	K74 J1093 A83 K53	(B) 64 A865 J42 AQ62	(C) 32 KJ65 AJ74 Q63	(D) 763 A862 K84 KJ8

Answers:

With (A): Bid 2NT - This bid shows 10-12 HCP's and a stopper in Spades. Opener may then Pass, raise to 3NT, else reject the invitation by reverting to one of his/her Minor suits.

With (B): Raise to 3C. Responder could have passed with fewer points, but by taking this rebid, Responder shows invitational values (10-12 HCP's), Club support, and implies the absence of a Spade stopper.

With (C): Raise to 3D. Responder could have passed with fewer points, but by taking this rebid, Responder shows invitational values (10-12 HCP's), Diamond support, and implies the absence of a Spade stopper.

With (D): Bid 3D. The hand is much too strong for 2D and 2NT is unsuitable with no Spade stopper.

Opener's rebid evidences 11-18 HCP's. With Responder holding at least 10 HCP's with his/her negative double it is imperative that Opener be encouraged to game should opener hold a maximum opening of 16-18 HCP's. The fact that responder takes a rebid evidences a minimum value of 10 HCP and Opener can then proceed to game if applicable.

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Lesson 5

Competitive Bidding (Continued)

4. After a negative double by Responder, opener should not compete to the 3-Level in the direct seat with just minimum values.

What action should West pursue with the following hand?

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
2D	Dbl.	3D	1C ????
(A) KJXX AXX XX KQXX			

Answer: Pass! When partner has made a negative double, opener's action at the 2-Level does not show extra values even if RHO has bid. However, since the responder could have as few as 6-9 HCP's for his/her negative double, if opener were to compete freely to the 3-Level, opener should hold stronger than minimum opening values; i.e., 15-18 HCP's.

5. Compete freely in fourth seat after a transfer bid has been passed.

What action should West pursue with the following hands?

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1NT 2S	P P	"2H" P	P ????
(A) XX AX AKJXXX XXX	(B) X JX KQXXX AQXXX	(C) X AXXX KJXX AXXX	

Answers: With (A): Bid 3D

With (B): Bid 2NT (Unusual for the Minors)

With (C): Double for take-out

After a 1NT opening and a transfer bid, passed by Responder, be very eager to compete, bidding your own good suit if available, "2NT" as "Unusual" for the Minors, or a double for a take-out assuming the proper shape.

6. It is extremely valuable to add “Support Doubles” to your system.

What action should West pursue with the following hands?

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1D	P	1S	2H
????			
(A) QJXX XXX AKQXX X	(B) QJX XXX AKQXX XX	(C) JX X AKQXXX QJXX	

Answers: With (A): Bid 2S - Shows a minimum opening with 4 Spades

With (B): Double - A support double showing exactly 3 Spades. Such a support double is alertable.

With (C): Bid 3D - Shows fewer than 3 Spades (0-1-or 2) and 6 or more Diamonds. The absence of the use of a support double is also alertable in that it evidences lack of support.

Anytime Responder shows a new suit which could be as few as 4 pieces, opener’s double in competition shows 3-card support for responder’s 4-card holding. One factor to take into account in a competitive auction at the 3-level is the number of trumps held by your side. Usually it is worthwhile bidding 3-over-their-3 only when your side holds nine trumps. In order to make that judgement, each of the partners needs to know the exact combined trump strength.



7. Do not pass partner’s take-out double with weak trumps.

What action should South pursue with the following hand?

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1C	Dbl.	P	?????
			(A) XX JX JXX XXXXXX

Answer: Bid 1D - Crap Happens!!!!

The fact that you have a difficult and uncomfortable problem does not mean that you are permitted to shirk your responsibility. With a 0-5 HCP hand, reply to a take-out double with a suit bid. With no 4-card suit of your own, and weak values in the opponent’s bid suit, bid your cheapest 3-card suit.



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Lesson 6

Competitive Bidding (Continued)

8. After a negative double by Responder, opener should not compete to the 3-Level in the direct seat with just minimum values.

What action should West pursue with the following hand?

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
2D	Dbl.	3D	1C ????
(A) KJXX AXX XX KQXX			

Answer: Pass! When partner has made a negative double, opener's action at the 2-Level does not show extra values even if RHO has bid. However, since the responder could have as few as 6-9 HCP's for his/her negative double, if opener were to compete freely to the 3-Level, opener should hold stronger than minimum opening values; i.e., 15-18 HCP's.

9. After a take-out double at the 4-level, note the use of 4NT to offer a choice of contracts.

What action should East pursue with each of the following hands?

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1H P	P ????	4H	Dbl.
(A) J1076 93 QJ83 Q53	(B) 654 J1087 Q942 Q65	(C) 865 J105 974 Q653	(D) 763 A8 K874 Q986

Answers: With (A): Bid 4S - Shows a minimum values with 4 Spades

With (B): Pass - You have no long suit, your hand is balanced and you have a likely trick in their suit. Playing for penalties is likely to be the best possibility for a plus score.

With (C): Pass - The hand is too flat and too weak to go to the 5-level.

With (D): Bid 4NT - In reply to a take-out double at the 4-level, 4NT is best used to show a hand which has more than one playable suit. Since the absence of bidding Spades denies that suit in this instance, the bid here clearly should guarantee you reach the better Minor suit contract.

10. When faced with a decision whether or not to compete higher, the player short in the enemy suit should not take action in the direct seat, but rather should leave the decision to partner, who holds possible length in the enemy suit.

What action should North pursue with the following hand?

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1S	2H	2S	3H
3S	4H	P	P
4S	?????		

(A) -----
 AQJXXXX
 KXX
 XXX

Answer: Pass! Although due to the presence of a void in Spades, it seems, from North's perspective, that there be a sensational fit. However, being in the direct position, North should make a "**Forcing Pass**" leaving the decision to South whether to Double for penalties, Pass, else compete further to 5H.

11. Overcall freely with modest values if short in the opponent's suit(s).

What action should South pursue with the following hand?

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
		1S	?????
(A) X	(B) KXXX	(C) KJX	
KJ10XX	KJ10XX	AXXXX	
KXXX	QJX	XXX	
XXX	X	XX	

A 2-level overcall is expected to have 10+ HCP's and a strong suit. One should, however, feel free to overcall on light values when you are short in opener's suit. On that basis, a 2H overcall is reasonable with (A), but one should pass with (B) and (C) because of the length and strength in Spades. This concept is analogous to a take-out double with less than opening values if holding a singleton or void in the opponent's opening suit.

5. When the opposition bidding starts 1-Minor : 1-Major : 3-Major or 4-Major, leading an unbid suit is often best.

The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1C	P	1S	P
3S	P	4S	All Pass

What would you lead as South from the following?

863 A1094 Q4 J974

Auctions that proceed as above are frequently based upon opener having 4-card support for responder plus a 5-card or longer Minor. Whenever dummy is expected to hold a good long suit and you are *not* strong in that suit, it pays to lead an unbid suit. In such hands, declarer's strategy is often to draw trumps and use Dummy's long side suit upon which to discard losers. Unless your tricks come quickly, they may disappear. **Even though the lead of an unbid suit may be a risky choice, take the risk when dummy is presumed to have a long side suit.** In the above instance, the Queen of Diamonds or the Ace of Hearts are the preferred possible leads.

6. When the opponents clearly bid what appears to be beyond their high card values, lead a trump. If the circumstances are as described, herein, their needed tricks will not be coming purely from high cards, and can only, therefore be anticipated by their ruffing. Leading a trump will reduce this possibility.

The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	P	1H	1S
2H	4C	Dbl.	4S
Dbl.	P	P	P

What would you lead as West from the following?

863 A1094 Q4 J974

Winning Duplicate Tips

Lesson 8

Opening Leads (Continued)

7. Have a clear understanding with your partner as to your team's expectation when your side doubles any splinter bid. The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
P	"4D"	Dbl.	1S
P	"5D"	P	4NT
			6S (All Pass)

What suit should West lead based upon the bidding and the double of "4D" by East?

Usually, any double of an artificial bid is a "Lead Directing Double", usually for the suit that is doubled. Since a Splinter bid, however, suggests a singleton or a void, there is often little to be gained by asking for a lead of that suit. Some teams, therefore, use the double of a splinter bid to mean a request for the suit higher or lower ranking (exclusive of the contract suit) as an alternative. Once agreed upon as to which of the three possibilities your team has agreed to, absent such a double implies a desire for some other suit to be led. This agreement is not a right-wrong but rather one for each team to identify as to their agreed-upon choice; i.e., the doubled suit, else the suit higher or lower ranking. ---

8. If declarer shows length in two suits, and a stopper in a third, he/she is likely to be short in the remaining suit. The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
		P	1C
1H	1S	P	2D
P	3C	P	3NT (ALL PASS)

What suit should West lead from the following?

KXXX Q10XXX AX XX

Usually, the customary lead against a NT contract is from one's longest and strongest suit. Let's examine this circumstance a bit closer, however. Notice that East has failed to support West's Heart overcall and therefore is likely to have fewer than 3 pieces. In addition, Declarer has shown at least one stopper in Hearts. Furthermore, Declarer has shown at least nine pieces in the Minors having reversed into Diamonds after a Club opening bid. Perhaps, therefore, North-South's weak spot is the unsupported Spade suit. **In general, absent a likely-to-be-productive, better lead of your own or a suit bid by partner, an oft time very good lead against any NT contract is the second suit bid by Dummy, i.e., a suit unsupported by Declarer.**

9. The lead of a singleton Ace of trump can often be a good start against a sacrifice by the opponents, or alternatively, any other Ace. The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1S	2NT (Unusual)	3H	P
Dbl.	(ALL PASS)		5C

What card should West lead from the following?

AJXXXX QJX JXX A

When the opponents are clearly sacrificing and you have no standout lead, leading an Ace of any suit, particularly that of the trump suit, can be useful. Firstly, it allows partner to signal you with his/her desire for a continuation versus a switch of suits, and secondly it allows the leader to see the Dummy, thereby adding to the information pool as to what suit to continue. ---

10. When partner has shown all round strength, it is usually safer to lead from a King-high suit rather than one headed by a Queen. The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
P	P	Dbl. (Take-out)	4D All Pass

What card should West lead from the following?

KXX QXX XXX XXXX

With a 4-3-3-3 pattern, it is usually not attractive to reply to a high-level take-out double. One should prefer to "Pass" and defend. As East was most likely prepared for a bid in either Major suit, try a Major suit lead. One, under these circumstances, should choose a Spade, as it is usually better to lead from a King than a Queen. -----

11. With a choice of two equally strong leads against a trump contract, choose the lead in the shorter suit. The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
Dbl. (Take-out)	P	P	4H P

What card should West lead from the following?

AKJXX X XXX AKXX

Although the double in the above-referenced example was for take-out, East chose to convert to penalties. The preferred lead here is the King (or Ace) of Clubs as declarer is likely to be shorter in your long suit. -----

Winning Duplicate Tips

Lesson 9

Opening Leads (Continued)

12. Avoid leading unsupported Aces against a suit contract as well as a singleton Trump.

The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
			1H
Db1.	3H	P	4H (All Pass)

What card should West lead from the following?

AJXX X AXXX QXXX

With no obviously good lead, begin the decision-making process as to the best lead by eliminating the terrible leads. The lead of a singleton trump is usually a very poor lead. With the opponents statistically likely to have 8-9 trumps, it is clear that your partner has the remaining 3 or 4 pieces. To lead from your singleton trump will surely, most likely finesse partner out of any honor which he/she holds and you are, thus, helping the opposition to do so. **Refrain from leading a singleton trump.**

An even worst lead against a suit contract is almost always the lead of an unsupported Ace. In the above example, you are left with only the Club suit as your best lead.

13. When dummy has shown a strong, balanced hand, there is no rush to make an attacking lead. A passive lead from a worthless suit is usually the best and least risky lead.

The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1H	P	1S
P	2NT (18-19 Balanced)	P	4S (All Pass)

What card should West lead from the following?

AJX KJXX JX XXXX

With dummy showing a strong balanced hand, there is no urgency for an attacking lead. Each of the above-referenced suits is risky, but the Club suit is the least risky. **The same principle applies when there is a strong “2C” or 2NT bid by Declarer to your right: Lead passively – not aggressively so as not to give up a trick with your aggressive lead.**

14. When a cross-ruff is threatened, start with a trump lead and continue trumps at each opportunity.

The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	P	1D	P
1S	Db1.	P	2C
P	P	2S	3C
P	P	Db1.	All Pass

What card should West lead from the following?

QJXX XXX QJX XXX

East has chosen to Double for penalties. North's Double has suggested Hearts but South's avoidance of that suggestion figures to evidence shortness in Hearts. North's double probably evidences shortness in Spades. Declarer's shortness in Hearts coupled with North's shortness in Spades suggests that declarer's best chances are most likely centered within a planned cross-ruff. That strongly suggests a trump lead as affording the greatest opportunity to defeat the contract.

Winning Duplicate Tips

Lesson 10

Random Tips for Success

1. If game values are present and you have a suit quality of 10, be prepared to insist on your suit being trumps.

Suppose the bidding has proceeded as follows: What action should East take with each of the following hands?

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1C 2C	P P	1S ????	P
(A) KQJ10XX KX XXX AX	(B) KJXXXX KX JXXX A	(C) AQJ10X KXX QXXX X	

The Suit Quality Test (SQ), originally devised to check the soundness of overcalls can be usefully applied to situations as herein discussed. To calculate the SQ, count the number of cards in that suit (Length) and add the number of honor cards (10 and above) in that suit (Strength). The SQ should not be less than the number of tricks represented by one's bid.

- (A) - Partner has shown a minimum opening. You have enough values for game and a SQ of 10 in Spades. You should proceed directly to a bid of 4S.
- (B) - You, once again, have the values for game, but your Spades are not adequate without assistance from partner. Imagine trying to cope in a 4S contract should partner be void in Spades. You need to tread cautiously. Bid a new suit, 2D, causing partner to bid, and the jump to 3S which forces to game, shows opener a 6-card suit and asks for support with a doubleton.
- (C) - You only. Here, have invitational values. Here you, once again, force partner to bid by bidding a new suit, 2D. Partner now has the opportunity of supporting with 3-Pieces, absent that you can proceed to 2 or 3NT depending upon partner's bid.
-

2. If you hold a 6-5 pattern with a 6-card Minor and a 5-card Major, it is usually best to start with your 6-card suit.

Suppose you hold the following hand. What should be your opening bid and what action should you take over partner's 1NT response?

(A) AQJ10X

Q
KQ10XXX
X

With strong values, one way to show a 6-5 pattern is to open with 1D, then jump to game in the Major on the next round. **Jumping to game in a new suit, promises 5-cards in that suit.** Because, however, you opened in a lower ranking suit, partner will know that you, therefore, have 6 Diamonds and 5 Spades and can place the contract accordingly by either passing the 4S bid, else correcting to 5D.

With suits of lesser quality, and hands of lesser value, prefer to start with your 6-card suit, then bidding your 5-card suit at the cheapest value, followed by a repeat of the 5-card suit, once again, at the cheapest level.

Here you should open 1D, rebid 1S, then re-rebid 2S, evidencing a 6-5 distribution.

(B) AXXXX

Q
Q10XXXX
A

3. After a single raise in a Minor suit, a change of suit by opener is strong and forcing, usually looking for a NT contract.

<u>West</u>	AJ10	<u>East</u>	XX
1D	K	2D	AXX
2S	AQXXX	3H	KJXX
3NT	K10XX		XXXX

West, seeking 3NT as a better alternative to a possible Diamond contract, shows a Spade stopper with his/her "2S" bid and forces a rebid by Responder. East can now show a Heart stopper with his/her "3H" bid, and West, now encouraged, can proceed to a final 3NT. Notice, had East denied a Heart stopper by bidding 3D over Opener's 2S, opener would opt to stop at 3D.

Winning Duplicate Tips

Lesson 11

Random Tips for Success (Continued)

4. A “Splinter Bid” is an extremely useful way to show trump support for partner and a short suit at the same time. Such bids can be made both by opener and responder under many varied bidding scenarios. A double jump bid in a new suit is commonly used as a ‘splinter’

- (a) - Responder may commonly use such a ‘splinter’ in order to show 4+ trumps, a singleton (not an Ace) or void in the suit bid, and enough high card strength values for game, usually 11+ HCP’s. Since game is likely there as a given, the splinter is a short suit try for slam. The message to opener is that if the short suit can generate at least two useful ruffs, slam is likely.

Examples of splinter sequences by Responder include such as:

(1) <u>North</u> 1H	<u>South</u> “3S”	(2) <u>North</u> 1H	<u>South</u> “4C”	(3) <u>North</u> 1S	<u>South</u> “4D”
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- (b) – Opener can also make a splinter rebid. If responder has bid a Major at the 1-level, the same double jump into a new suit would be a ‘Splinter’. Since splinter bids are used only when the threshold of game values are present, opener would have to have 20+ HCP’s or its equivalent coming on the heels of Responder’s first bid which could have evidenced as few as 6 HCP’s.

Examples of splinter sequences by Opener include such as:

(4) <u>North</u> 1H	<u>South</u> 1S	(5) <u>North</u> 1D	<u>South</u> 1H
“4D”		“3S”	

- (c) – As a reverse by opener is forcing for one round, a single jump shift into a reverse is commonly played as a ‘splinter’.

Examples of splinter reverse sequences by Opener include such as:

(6) <u>North</u> 1D	<u>South</u> 2C	(7) <u>North</u> 1C	<u>South</u> 1NT	(8) <u>North</u> 1D	<u>South</u> 2D
“3H”		“3S”		“3H”	

In (6) 2H would be a normal reverse, and, therefore forcing, so “3H” shows 4+ Club support, shortage in Hearts, and at least 16+ HCP’s; i.e., game forcing opposite South’s having showed at least 10+ HCP’s.

In (7) 2S would be forcing for one round. The jump to “3S” bid, therefore, shows short Spades and 6+ Clubs in a hand too strong for a 3C rebid, perhaps 17-18 HCP’s with 7 Clubs.

In (8) any change of suit would normally be forcing anyhow, so the jump bid after the suit agreement is a 'splinter' with extra strength in the suit opened.

(d) – If transfers are employed after a 1NT opening, a transfer followed by a jump into a new suit shows 6+ in the transferred suit, shortage in the 'splinter' suit, and slam prospects.

(9) <u>North</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>South</u>
AKJ	1NT	"2H"	109XXXXXX
KXXX	2S	"4D"	AXX
XX	6S	P	X
KXXX			AQ

(e) – 'Splinters' are also useful for a weak responder to a "2C" strong, artificial, and forcing opening, when Responder has little more than support of opener's suit but with a short outside suit.

(10) <u>North</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>South</u>
AQX	"2C"	"2D"	KXX
AKQXXX	2H	"4C"	XXXX
A	"4D"	"4S"	XXXXX
AXX	7H	P	X

("2C" = strong, artificial and forcing, "2D" = negative, "4C" = Splinter in support of Hearts, "4D" = Cue-bid first round control of Diamonds, "4S" = first or second round control of Spades, 7H = "Heaven")

Winning Duplicate Tips

Lesson 12

Random Tips for Success (Continued)

5. Partnerships should have an explicit understanding as to what significance is meant by a "Lightner Double"; i.e., exactly what suit is called for as desired led by the partner of the team member who doubles. A Lightner double is a lead-directing double of a slam contract. Since competent opponents who bid a slam voluntarily are generally expected to fulfill their contract or fail, at most, by one trick, a normal penalty double is unlikely to gain very much. A more useful interpretation of a double of a slam is to request an unusual, unconventional lead; namely, **a lead of the first suit bid by dummy.**

6. **It is normally a losing strategy to lead away from an Ace-high suit in a trump contract.** In the long run you tend to lose more tricks than you gain. In general unless you hold the King or believe partner does, you should not lead the Ace, but if you break the rule, lead the Ace not a low card. Under-leading from an Ace is, however, often effective with one lie of the cards.

	<u>North</u>	
	KXXX	
<u>You</u>		<u>East</u>
AXXX		QXX
	<u>South</u>	
	JX	

7. **The lead of the Queen is the standard lead from suits headed by Q-J-10 or Q-J-9.** From weaker suits, say Q-J-X-X, or longer, leading low is oft times better unless partner is marked for strength or length in that suit.

8. **With Q-J-9-8-X in hand opposite A-X-X in dummy, you naturally begin by leading the Queen.** One must then have a firm policy as to how to play this suit for no losers if everyone plays low on the first round, and also how to proceed if the Queen is covered by the King. (Firstly, realize that the outstanding cards are, most likely, split 3-2)

- (a) - One should begin by leading the Queen. If all follow low, play the second hand to have K-X-X, and the fourth 10-X. Therefore, lead the Jack next, thereby smothering the 10.
 - (b) - It is too hard for a defender with K-X to play low on the queen. Therefore, if the Queen is covered, play second hand to have had the K-X. Cover the King and finesse backwards through the fourth hand for the 10, playing him/her to have had 10-X-X.
-

9. Low level doubles for a take-out are all the rage these days almost irrespective of the early auction. If you wind up as declarer after the opponents enter a take-out double, play the doubling opponent to be short in the suit doubled.

10. Two probable self-evident, but often disregarded probabilities are:

- (1) When missing two significant honors in a suit, play the opponent with the greater strength to hold the higher missing honor.
 - (2) When one opponent has significantly greater length than the other in one suit, the other is likely to hold greater length in the other suits.
-

11. When playing from K-X-X in a suit where you need at least four tricks in a No Trump contract, lead low from K-nothing, but the second highest card if there is a danger of the suit blocking because your middle card is semi-high.

Note the proper lead by East in each of the following as stated above allows for a collection of 4 tricks in the suit, whereas, any other attack will only produce 3 tricks, for the suit becomes blocked.

(1)	<u>North</u> 102	(2)	<u>North</u> 92
<u>West</u> AJ97	<u>East</u> K5 <u>3</u>	<u>West</u> AJ75	<u>East</u> K10 <u>3</u>
	<u>South</u> Q864		<u>South</u> Q864
(3)			
	<u>North</u> J5	<u>East</u> K9 <u>2</u>	
	<u>West</u> AQ84	<u>South</u> 10763	
