

MB DUCKING AS DECLARER NOTES

There are many reasons to duck as declarer. The hold up play might be the most popular one—this is a type of duck which severs communication between the defenders, but there are other reasons to hold up. You might hold up to maintain control of a suit, to maintain transportation between dummy and your hand, or to keep a dangerous opponent off lead. We'll demonstrate some deals where you shouldn't be so quick to win your tricks.

Deal 1
D

North: ♠ Q5, ♥ 653, ♣ 63, ♦ AK6542

West	North	East	South
			1NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West: ♠ J98, ♥ K872, ♣ J1098, ♦ J9

East: ♠ A1073, ♥ A97542, ♣ Q108, ♦ 8

South: South (YOU): ♠ K642, ♥ QJ104, ♣ AKQ, ♦ 73

3NT South | NS 0 EW 0

You need to duck in diamonds to be sure to take your 5 diamond tricks. Make sure you count your tricks, if you set up diamonds but don't work on spades beforehand, you might find yourself in some trouble later on.

Deal 1B
D

N North
A 5 6 5 3 6 3 A K 6 5 4 2

West	North	East	South
	3NT	Pass	1NT
Pass		Pass	Pass
Pass			

W West
J 9 8 3 K 8 7 2 J 10 9 8 9

E East
Q 10 7 A 9 7 5 4 2 Q J 10 8

S South: South (YOU)
K 6 4 2 Q J 10 4 A K Q 7 3

3NT South | NS 0 EW 0

This deal looks the same as 1A except dummy now has the ♠A. That doesn't mean you shouldn't hold up! Here, the issue is if diamonds split poorly (and wouldn't you know it, they are 4-1!). If you duck, no problems, but if you cash the ace and king, you can never set up your suit.

Deal 2
D

N North
Q 5 6 5 3 6 3 A Q 7 6 5 4

West	North	East	South
	3NT	Pass	1NT
Pass		Pass	Pass
Pass			

W West
10 7 3 K 8 7 J 10 9 8 K 9 8

E East
K J 9 8 A 9 4 7 5 4 2 J 10

S South: South (YOU)
A 6 4 2 Q J 10 2 A K Q 3 2

3NT South | NS 0 EW 0

Another similar deal, this time we have AQ in dummy instead of AK. Now to take the most diamond tricks, we still should duck the first round before taking the finesse (try it out if you win the finesse first!)

Deal 3
D

N North

West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

W West

E East

S South: South (YOU)

4♠ North | NS 0 EW 0

On this deal, you are again establishing dummy's long suit. You need to duck a heart so that you can play hearts enough times to generate that trick with the length.

Deal 4
D

N North

West	North	East	South
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

W West

E East

S South: South (YOU)

4♠ South | NS 0 EW 0

With a trump suit like this, the important thing is to not lose control. If you play the ace and another, you run the risk of the opponents drawing your remaining trump.

Deal 5

N North
 ♠ Q1098 ♥ A Q 9 4 ♣ Q 3 ♦ K 7 5

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

W West
 ♠ 7765 ♥ J1098 ♣ J9862 ♦

E East
 ♠ 65 ♥ K832 ♣ K742 ♦ A Q 10

S South: South (YOU)
 ♠ A K J 4 3 2 ♥ J 10 ♣ A 6 5 4 3 ♦

4♠ South | NS 0 EW 0

When the Q is covered by the K at trick one, we need to duck to keep East on lead. East can't hurt us but West would be able to switch to a killing diamond.

Deal 6

N North
 ♠ A 5 2 ♥ A K Q 6 ♣ K 6 4 5 4 3 ♦

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	6NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

W West
 ♠ Q J 10 6 ♥ 8 7 ♣ J 9 8 7 2 ♣ J 6 ♦

E East
 ♠ 9 8 7 ♥ J 10 9 2 ♣ 10 3 10 9 8 7 ♦

S South: South (YOU)
 ♠ K 4 3 ♥ 5 4 3 ♣ A Q 5 ♦ A K Q 2

6NT South | NS 0 EW 0

This one is hard to see, but sometimes you only see 11 tricks and you want to make life harder for your opponents later on so you will lose a trick early before running off your suits. Sure you give up on the 10% or so chance of making 13 tricks, but you'll take 12 tricks a lot of the time.

