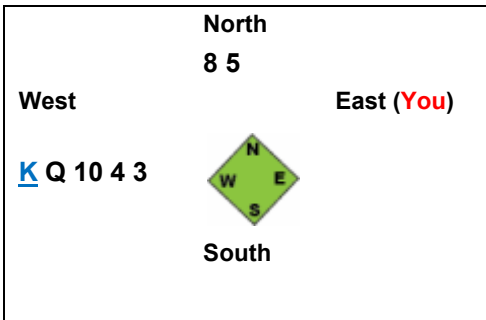


Tutoring Hands: Basic Signals

Must Know

In a NT contract Hi promises a significant honour card, Lo denies.

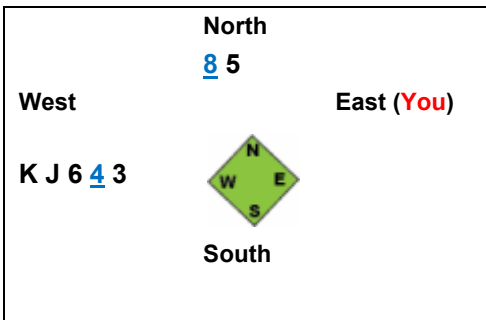
All Contracts are 3NT by South



Signalling when partner leads an honour

At NT an honour card lead promises at least three honours. Here the KQ and the J or 10. If you hold one of the missing honours you must let partner have the good news.

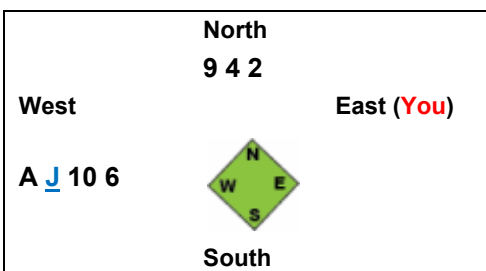
- You hold A 9 2 or J 9 2
You must play the 9 to let partner know that you have an honour.
- You hold 9 7 2
You must play the 2. Partner will now know that you do not have either the A or J. So declarer must have them.
- You hold A 2
This is a special case. You should overtake the K with the A, and then play back the 2.
This avoids you winning the next trick and then being unable to lead the suit back, i.e. the suit would become blocked.



Signalling when partner leads low

Partner leads small, showing strength in the suit. In a suit contract partner will hold only one honour. But at NT they could have two. Here partner has led fourth highest in a suit where they hold 4, possibly 5 cards. They are hoping that you can help setup the suit. With only little cards in dummy they expect you to play an honour if you have one. *So third hand plays Hi.*

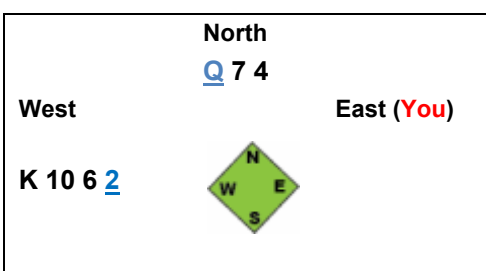
- You hold A 7 2 or Q 7 2 or 10 7 2
Third hand plays Hi
At your next turn to play this suit you must play the highest of your two remaining cards. An aware partner can then figure out that you started with three cards, and therefore so did declarer.
- You hold 10 9 7
You must be very careful to play the 9, the *lowest of equals*.
Note: had dummy played the 5, your 10 9 7 surrounds the 8 in dummy. Play the 7 which is now as powerful (*equal to*) the 10
This is a very important principle that often helps partner to figure out the cards held by declarer.



Signalling when partner leads an interior sequence

Partner leads the J promising the 10, and denying the Q. Here you can see the 8 & 9, so partner must hold A J 10.

- You hold Q 8 7 3
You must play the 8 to let partner know that you have the Q.
- You hold K 8 3
Third hand plays Hi. At the next trick you must lead the 8.
Declarer's Q is now trapped. If declarer ducks you remain on lead.



Signalling when dummy plays an honour

If you cannot overtake you should signal

- You hold J 8 5 3
You must play the 8 to let partner know that you have the J
- You hold 9 8 5 3
You must play the 3 to deny holding the J


Tutoring Hands: Basic Signals

Must Know

In a suit contract Hi asks for continuation, Lo asks for a switch

When discarding a Hi card says *I like this suit*, a Lo card says *don't lead this suit*

Contract 4♠ by South

North		
♠ K J 6		
♥ K 5 4		
♦ Q 5 4		
♣ A K Q 5		
West		East
♠ 7 8		♠ 5 4 3
♥ 9 8 7 2		♥ A Q 6 3
♦ <u>A</u> K 8 2		♦ 9 3
♣ 7 4 3		♣ 9 8 6 2
South		
♠ A Q 10 9 2		
♥ J 10		
♦ J 10 7 6		
♣ J 10		

Signalling to a Suit Contract.

In a suit contract the negative signal asks for a switch.

The lead of the A promises the K. Here it seems reasonable to play Hi to ask for a continuation with the expectation of ruffing the third round.


However it is clear that once declarer gets in they are likely to use the clubs to get rid of heart losers. So it is important to get tricks ASAP.

Here you desperately want partner to lead a heart. So play the ♦3, your lowest card. This signal asks partner to switch suits. Partner has a choice between hearts and clubs, so should lead hearts, hoping that you have AQ.

West does not want to encourage you to lead the suit back, so should lead a Hi card.

By making the obvious switch the defence defeat the contract. Had East signalled for a continuation the defence would make the first three tricks, but no more. The contract would then make.

Contract 2♠ by South

North		
♠ J 9 2		
♥ J 10 6		
♦ Q J 10 3		
♣ K 7 4		
West		East
♠ 10 6		♠ 7 4 3
♥ <u>A</u> K Q 8 5		♥ 7 2
♦ K 7 2		♦ A 9 8
♣ Q 6 3		♣ 10 9 8 5 2
South		
♠ A K Q 8 5		
♥ 9 4 3		
♦ 6 5 4		
♣ A J		

Signalling to a Suit Contract & Discards

In a suit contract the positive signal asks for continuation.

The lead of the A promises the K. Here it seems best to play the 7 to suggest continuation, planning to ruff the third round.

When partner plays the K and Q there is no point in ruffing. However you would very much like partner to next lead a diamond. So on the third round East should play the ♦9, to show a liking for Diamonds.

Without this discard signal West is likely to lead clubs.

Following your signal for a diamond West should lead the ♦2 to request that you lead back the suit.

So East wins with the A and leads back to partner's K. West should notice that East led back the 8. This cannot be an original 4th highest, so it looks as though partner started with 3 cards. In that case they have none left and declarer has one. So West should lead back their last diamond which partner ruffs.

Played this way the defence take the first 6 tricks, for down one.

Tutoring Hands: Basic Signals