

Lesson 3 – Playing a NT Contract in 3NT

Note: The complete layout of the four hands for this game is shown at the end of this lesson so the cards can be set up for practice with 4 players.

Bidding:

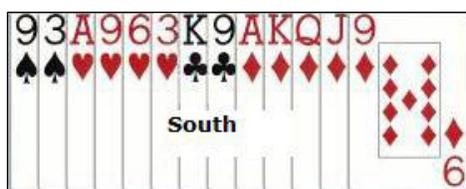
North is the Dealer. This is North's hand:



North has 9 HCP plus 1 for length. This is not enough points to open, so North passes.

Note: East and West pass throughout.

This is South's hand:



South has 17 HCPs, plus 1 for length. South does not have a 5-card major so will bid a minor.

South bids 1♦.

North bids 1♠, looking for a fit in a major.

Because South has 17 pts, it is best to show this extra strength to North now.

South will bid 2♥, a reverse bid*, forcing.

*When opener opens with one suit and then rebids in a higher-ranking suit, he has made a reverse bid, showing 5 of the first suit and 4 of the second suit, and 16+ pts.

North bids 2♠, showing 5 spades. South bids 2NT.

North bids 3NT, having 10 pts with length, knowing that South has 16+ pts promised by his reverse bid.

The final contract is **3NT by South**.

Playing the Cards:

West is on lead. All suits have been bid except clubs. Leading from clubs, West will lead high/low from a doubleton, so ♣Queen.

Now South gets to see the Dummy hand. South counts 7 immediate winners. There is a good possibility of an extra winner in diamonds with the ♦9, so probably 8 winners. South should be alert to notice that once the ♠A and ♠K are out, there are 2 sure winners in spades. Transportation to North's hand could be a problem.

There could be an extra winner in hearts also, but that will depend on where the K♥ and J♥ are, whether the finesses work. The spades are a sure bet, so South will work on spades first.

South should take the first trick with the ♣K in his hand. He better watch out ... clubs is the dangerous suit.

Trick #1✓ — (The ✓ notation after a trick indicates a winner for N/S and the X indicates a lost trick.)

South should start immediately to build extra winners in spades. He should lead the ♠9 towards the dummy and let the opponents take the trick. West might take it with his ♠K, since he can see it will win a trick. East will keep his ♠Ace winner, in that case.

Trick #2X (lost to the ♠King)

Let's assume West will lead his small club and the ♣Ace should be "ducked" in dummy. If East plays the ♣Jack it will take the trick. Then North's ♣Ace and ♣10 are now winners.

Trick #3X (lost to the ♣Jack)

Trick #4✓ (won by the ♣10 or the ♣Ace)

South should play another spade and force out the Ace from West's hand. West must play it.

Trick #5X (lost to the ♠Ace)

It doesn't matter which card East leads next.

E/W should take 3 tricks ... the ♠Ace, the ♠King and 1 club. South has taken 2 tricks.

South should take all the remaining tricks. He should discard his losing hearts and take a trick with the Ace. He may not even have to play his heart winner.

South should be able to take 10 tricks, making one overtrick.

The strategy is to force out the two winner spades while keeping stoppers in the clubs (opponents' longest suit) until the rest of the winners can be played and the contract made without losing control again.



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