

**Board NF**  
 South Deals  
 None Vul

	♠ 6 5 4		
	♥ Q J 10 9 8 7		
	♦ Q 10		
	♣ 6 3		
♠ J 10 9	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">             N              W     E              S           </div>	♠ A 3 2	
♥ K 6 5		♥ 4 3 2	
♦ A K 8 7		♦ J 9 3 2	
♣ K J 10		♣ 5 4 2	
	♠ K Q 8 7		
	♥ A		
	♦ 6 5 4		
	♣ A Q 9 8 7		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	2 ♥	All pass	1 ♣

**Auction Commentary:** When partner opens and the next hand overcalls 1 NT, double is for penalty! If you have 9 or more HCP and partner opens, your side has the balance of power and the dummy will be nearly worthless for the overcaller. A worthless dummy means it is hard to take tricks (just remember back to the hands where you opened 1 NT and partner put down a weak hand). You are likely to beat 1 NT, perhaps by multiple tricks, and you should want to defend.


So, if we double with our good hands, we can bid a new suit at the two level with weaker hands. These will have a long suit that will only be of value if that suit is trumps. The North hand is a prime example; 4 guaranteed tricks with ♥s as trump, and 0 guaranteed tricks on defense.

In this auction, South has a decent hand, but they should know to pass! Partner has announced less than 9 points and a hand that is only good for hearts. We don't have a good fit, we have at most 23 total points (and could have less), so we just let partner play 2 ♥ if the opponents subside.

**Play Commentary:** Declarer has multiple ways of trying to make this hand. The key is not to squander any of them. Remember, we want to lead up to our high cards in the dummy. If the defense starts with 3 rounds of ♦s, North ruffing the 3rd, don't rush to play a trump to dummy's Ace. If you do, you will now be forced to lead the high cards from dummy, rather than leading up to them. Play a club to the Q♣ first, to see if the K♣ is onside. West will win, but they have no constructive return. Eventually, we will either set up our ♣ suit in the dummy to pitch losing ♠s, or, we can lead up to the KQ♠ in dummy twice. We lose 1 club, 2 diamonds, 1 heart and 1 spade. So, West would probably make 1 NT, but we have made 2 hearts instead.

**Board 3**

South Deals  
None Vul

<p>♠ J 4 2 ♥ K Q J ♦ 10 9 7 ♣ Q J 10 8</p>		<p>♠ Q 5 ♥ A 9 8 7 ♦ K 6 5 4 ♣ 6 5 4</p>	<p>♠ 10 9 3 ♥ 10 6 3 2 ♦ Q J 8 3 2 ♣ 2</p>
	<p>♠ A K 8 7 6 ♥ 5 4 ♦ A ♣ A K 9 7 3</p>		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♠
Pass	1 NT	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

**Auction Commentary:** South opens a 5+ card ♠ suit, with 12-21 HCP. Responder bids 1 NT to show 6-10 HCP, with no fit in ♠s. Opener must JUMP IN A NEW SUIT to show a game force and 18 HCP or more. (This is called a Jump-Shift, and responder cannot pass it -- even with the weakest hand.) Responder has a stopper in each red suit, and rebids 3 NT.

**Opening Lead:** 3 ♦ from the long suit, or 2 ♥ from the other major

**Planning the Play:** Counting winners in NT, declarer finds 3 ♠s, 1 ♥, 2 ♦ winners and 2 ♣s, for at least 8 tricks. If the ♠s break favorably, there will be 2 more there, for 10.

If they lead a ♦, win the A♦ and try the spades. If they don't run, you still have the ♦ K to stop that suit.

If they lead a small ♥, it is trickier, since we only have one stopper in that suit. If the opponents are playing 4th best leads, we know the enemy ♥s are split 4-3, so they can only take 3 ♥ tricks. That means we can afford to lose one trick in a black suit. If we rush to cash our ♠s, we will lose our communications to cash the ♦ K unless we cash the A♦ and K♦ before hoping the spades are 3-3. If they aren't, the defenders get to cash their hearts AND their diamonds. No bueno! The better play (at least to make the contract) is to duck one ♣ trick first. The defenders will get their 3 ♥s and one ♣, but the ♦ are still protected. We can try and run our ♣s, but when that fails, we can revert to trying to run the ♠c. This way, we combine all of our chances.

**Takeaways:** Jump-shifts by opener are always forcing. Look for ways to combine your chances as declarer.

**Board 6**  
 East Deals  
 None Vul

♠ —	♠ K 5 4	♠ A Q 9 8 3
♥ A 9 8 7 2	♥ Q J 6 5 4	♥ 3
♦ 6 5 4	♦ J 10 3	♦ A K 2
♣ K 10 8 6 4	♣ 5 3	♣ A J 9 7

♠ J 10 7 6 2
♥ K 10
♦ Q 9 8 7
♣ Q 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 NT	All pass

**Auction Commentary:** Responder devalues the hand, with a void in opener's suit and not enough HCP to make a bid at the 2-level. But opener jumps in the second suit to show 18-21 HCP, at least 9 cards in a 5/4 shape, and this is 100% forcing to game. On the way, responder rebids 3 ♥ to show a 5-card suit. Opener finds all the suits well stopped, and bids 3 NT.

**Opening Lead:** J♦ - the unbid suit, and the ♥ suit was bid by declarer

**Planning the Play:** Counting winners in NT, declarer finds 1 ♠ trick, 1 ♥ trick, 2 ♦ tricks and 5 ♣ tricks (if they behave!). Run for your life, hoping the clubs break 2/2. If they play ♠s for you, an overtrick is a bonus.

**Alternate Auction Commentary:** We disparage playing in minor suits most of the time, for good reasons. 3 NT needs only 9 tricks to make versus 11 tricks for 5 of a minor. 3 NT scores more when we make an over trick than we can make in 5 of a minor making an overtrick.

**Board 9**

North Deals  
None Vul

<p>♠ J 9 2 ♥ 8 6 3 2 ♦ A 10 9 4 3 ♣ K</p>	<p>♠ K 8 7 6 5 ♥ K Q 9 4 ♦ J 8 ♣ A 5</p>	<p>♠ A 10 4 3 ♥ A J 5 ♦ 5 2 ♣ J 8 6 2</p>	
<p>♠ Q ♥ 10 7 ♦ K Q 7 6 ♣ Q 10 9 7 4 3</p>			

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 ♣
All pass			

**Auction Commentary:** Whether 1 NT was forcing or not, North should introduce their ♥ suit. With minimum values, North simply makes the cheapest ♥ bid. 2 ♥ limits the North hand in strength. And with a super strong hand, as the previous two deals, opener jump shifted. North is saying they have five or more ♠s, and four or more ♥s, but not enough to commit their side to game just yet. Though it is a new suit, because North has limited their hand, 2 ♥ is not forcing. If South has a bare minimum response, and a ♥ fit, they can pass.

South has an awkward rebid. With a six card suit, ♣s rates to be the best NS suit fit, and 3 ♣ is South's best option. With a minimum hand and adequate ♣ support, North should be pleased to pass.

**Opening Lead:** ♥ 8 - With no clear choice, try dummy's second suit. Remember BOSTON.

**Planning the Play:** Looking at our losers, we see the obvious 1 ♠, 1 ♥, 1 ♦ and probably 1 ♣. However, we have to consider what is going to be done with our 4th ♦. It won't be good on its own, and we aren't likely to want to try and ruff it. Luckily, we have a discard available on the K♠, but we will need to preserve an entry to it. East will likely win the ♥ A and return a ♦.

In due course, declarer can win the A♣, cash the high spade throwing a low diamond, and then lead a second trump. If no honor appears, declarer will have to guess whether to play the Q♣ or the T♣. The K♣ on the first round is a welcome sight. Declarer can then lead to the 9♣, finessing against East's "known" J♣! Then cash the Q♣ and drive out the A♦. This will make 3 ♦, losing only three aces and a trump.

**Takeaways:** Remember what has been shown previously in the bidding when considering bidding further. That helps identify when partner's bid is forcing or otherwise. If we have described our hand well, as North has here, partner is best able to judge where we belong.