



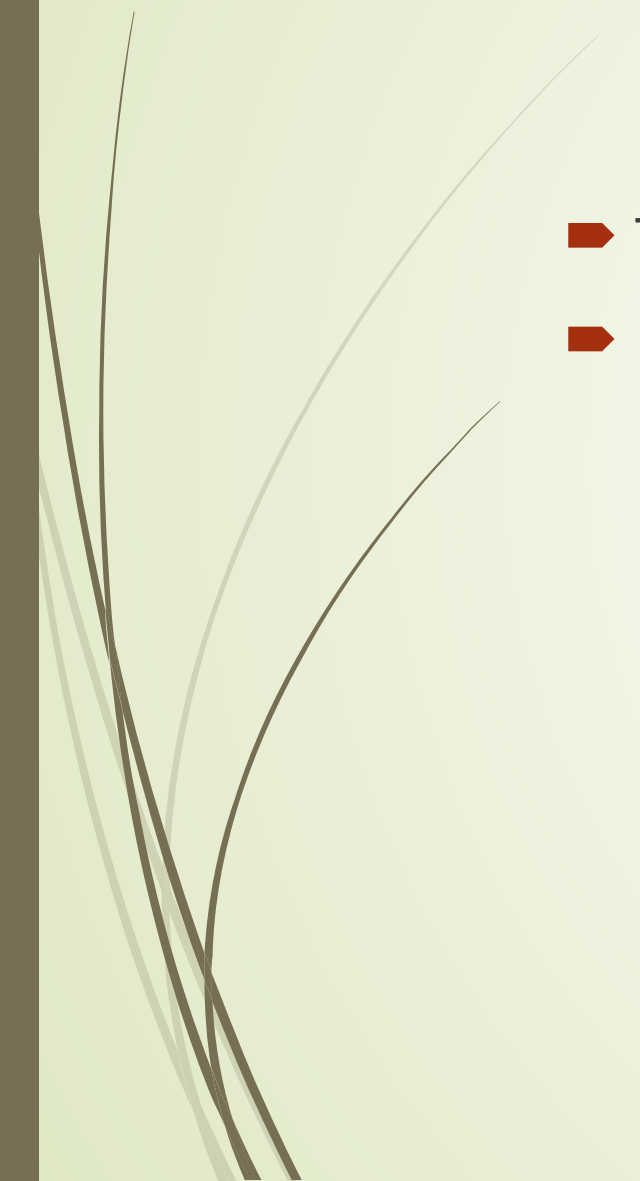
# How to play Notrump Contracts

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Hands provided by Richard Pavlicek Sr

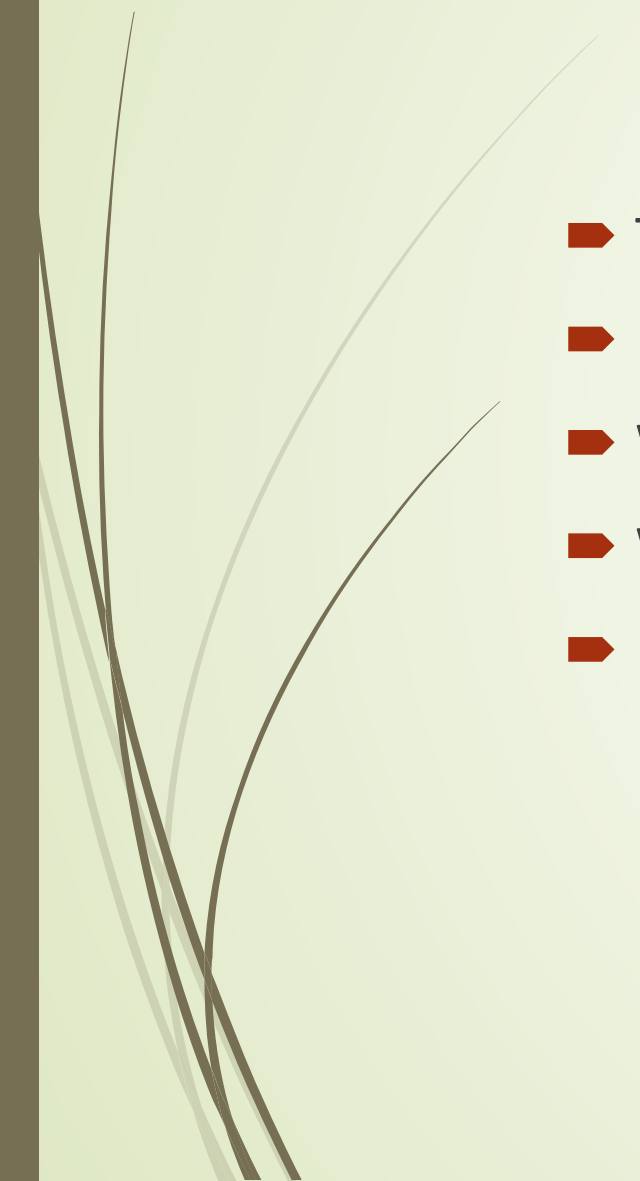


# Overview

- The right attitude at the table
  - How to play Notrump contracts
- 



# The Right Attitude at the Table

- Table presence
  - Emotions
  - What to watch and focus on
  - When to pause
  - How to play in tempo
- 



# Notrump Contracts

- Develop a plan
  - Count winners
  - Look for additional tricks
  - Analyze the opening lead.
  - Which card do you play at trick one?
  - Will you use a holdup play?
  - Which suit do you attack first?
  - What is the best way to play the suit you attack?

# Example 1 – Holdup Play

(3NT by South – Opening lead is the 5 of spades)

## North

♠ Q2  
♥ J74  
♦ AK3  
♣ 96532

The opening lead is the ♠5.

What is your plan?

## South

♠ A94  
♥ K10  
♦ QJ1054  
♣ AK7

# Example 1 – Holdup Play

What to play at trick one?

North

♠ Q2  
♥ J74  
♦ AK3  
♣ 96532

South

♠ A94  
♥ K10  
♦ QJ1054  
♣ AK7

The best play on the opening lead is the ♠Q. If the Q holds you have 9 tricks.

However East covers with the K.

Now what?

# Example 1 – Holdup Play

Holdup spades until trick 3 - Which suit do you attack?

## North

♠ Q2  
♥ J74  
♦ AK3  
♣ 96532

## South

♠ A94  
♥ K10  
♦ QJ1054  
♣ AK7

Holdup spades until trick 3.

West is the dangerous opponent.

If you try to establish clubs you will be set if West has a club entry or the A of hearts.

The best hope is to play East for the A of hearts.

# Example 1 – Holdup Play

9 tricks – contract made

## North

♠ Q2  
♥ J74  
♦ AK3  
♣ 96532

## West

♠ J7653  
♥ Q86  
♦ 76  
♣ Q108

## East

♠ K108  
♥ A9532  
♦ 982  
♣ J4

## South


♠ A94  
♥ K10  
♦ QJ1054  
♣ AK7

Go to the dummy with the A of diamonds.

Lead a heart and play the **K!**

Now you have 9 tricks.





## Example 2 – Holdup Play

(3NT by South – Opening lead is the 10 of spades)

### North

♠ 762  
♥ A43  
♦ AKQJ  
♣ 1054

Assume East has overcalled 1♠  
and West leads the ♠10.

What is your plan?

### South

♠ A98  
♥ K62  
♦ 853  
♣ A987

## Example 2 – Holdup Play

Holdup until trick two - attack clubs

### North

♠ 762  
♥ A43  
♦ AKQJ  
♣ 1054

### West

♠ 105  
♥ Q875  
♦ 1042  
♣ QJ62

### East

♠ KQJ43  
♥ J109  
♦ 976  
♣ K3

### South

♠ A98  
♥ K62  
♦ 853  
♣ A987

Assume East has five spades.

Win the ♠A on the second round.

Hope West has two club honors.

Go to the dummy in diamonds and finesse clubs through East.

# Example 3 – Holdup Play

(3NT by South – Opening lead is the 2 of spades)

## North

♠ A64  
♥ 9  
♦ KQ1086  
♣ K643

The opening lead is the ♠2.

What is your plan?

## South

♠ 1093  
♥ A764  
♦ 2  
♣ AQJ87

# Example 3 – Holdup Play

Don't holdup - attack diamonds

## North

♠ A64  
♥ 9  
♦ KQ1086  
♣ K643

## West

♠ QJ82  
♥ K532  
♦ J73  
♣ 95

## East

♠ K75  
♥ QJ108  
♦ A954  
♣ 102

## South

♠ 1093  
♥ A764  
♦ 2  
♣ AQJ87

Don't hold up. Win the ♠A at trick one. A heart switch will defeat you.

You have 7 top tricks. You need to win two diamonds.

Lead a club to the South hand and finesse the **10** of diamonds.



# Example 4 – Avoidance Finesse

(3NT by South – Opening lead is the 5 of spades)

## North

♠ Q3  
♥ K873  
♦ K952  
♣ A32

The opening lead is the ♠5.

East covers the Q with the K.

What is your plan?

## South

♠ A84  
♥ A4  
♦ A74  
♣ KJ954

# Example 4 – Avoidance Finesse

Holdup until trick three – How do you attack clubs?

## North

♠ Q3  
♥ K873  
♦ K952  
♣ A32

## West

♠ J9752  
♥ Q102  
♦ J3  
♣ Q87

## East

♠ K106  
♥ J965  
♦ A74  
♣ 106

## South

♠ A84  
♥ A4  
♦ A74  
♣ KJ954

Holdup in spades until trick 3.

West is the dangerous opponent.

We want to develop clubs keeping West off lead.

Try the unusual procedure of the backward finesse.

Lead the J from the South hand and let it ride if West doesn't cover.

# Example 5 – Avoidance Duck

(3NT by South – Opening lead is the 6 of spades)

## North

♠ Q3  
♥ K83  
♦ AK1082  
♣ J43

## South

♠ K84  
♥ AQ4  
♦ 974  
♣ A952

The opening lead is the ♠6.

You play the Q and it holds.

What is your plan?



# Example 5 – Avoidance Duck

How do you attack diamonds?

## West

♠ AJ962  
♥ 1052  
♦ Q3  
♣ Q87

## North

♠ Q3  
♥ K83  
♦ AK1082  
♣ J43

## East

♠ 1075  
♥ J976  
♦ J65  
♣ K106

## South

♠ K84  
♥ AQ4  
♦ 974  
♣ A952

This time East is the dangerous opponent.

We want to develop diamonds keeping East off lead.

Come to the South hand in hearts and lead a diamond to the K.

Once again, come to the South hand, lead a diamond and duck when West plays the Q.





# Example 6 – Establishing Two Suits

(3NT by South – Opening lead is the 4 of spades)

## North

♠ 93  
♥ AK72  
♦ K962  
♣ QJ2

The opening lead is the ♠4.

You win East's J with the Q.

What is your plan?

## South

♠ AQ6  
♥ 643  
♦ A1073  
♣ K83



# Example 6 – Establishing Two Suits

(3NT by South – Opening lead is the 4 of spades)

## North

♠ 95  
♥ AK72  
♦ K962  
♣ QJ2

You have 6 top tricks. You need three more.

Two of the additional tricks will come from clubs, and the other from diamonds.

## South

♠ AQ6  
♥ 643  
♦ A1073  
♣ K83

# Example 6 – Establishing Two Suits

How do you attack diamonds?

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
♠ K10843	♠ 95	♠ J72	♠ AQ6
♥ J8	♥ AK72	♥ Q1095	♥ 643
♦ J85	♦ K962	♦ Q4	♦ A1073
♣ A76	♣ QJ2	♣ 10954	♣ K83

The correct play is to go after **clubs** first.

After driving out the A of clubs, holdup in spades until the third round when West continues the suit.

Develop diamonds keeping the dangerous opponent West off lead.