

West may regret his lead of the king of clubs, but if you look at the hand again you will see that this lead made no difference. Suppose West makes a neutral lead, such as a trump. South takes an early finesse in hearts, losing to the king. When East switches to a club South goes up with the ace, draws trumps, discards one club and one diamond on the heart winners, and gives up two diamonds; there is still a trump in dummy for the other diamond loser.

Example 21

We move now to a group of hands where the declarer is concerned with establishing a long suit in dummy.

Since the days of Auction bridge there has been a popular pleasantry to the effect that there is many a man walking the Embankment because he failed to draw trumps. The conclusion that it is always right to draw trumps must be regarded with some distrust, however. The trump suit is often an important thoroughfare between declarer and dummy. We saw one example in deal No 12, and here is another:

<p>♠ A 7 4 3 2 ♥ 8 6 ♦ J 3 2 ♣ J 8 3</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> </table>	N	S	W	E	<p>♠ K Q J ♥ 10 7 5 3 ♦ 7 6 5 4 ♣ 7 6</p>	<p>♠ 6 ♥ A 9 ♦ A K 10 ♣ A K Q 10 9 5 2</p>
N	S						
W	E						

South was the dealer and the bidding went:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
2♣(1)	pass	2♣(2)	pass
3♣	pass	3♣	pass
4♣	pass	5♣	pass
6♣(3)	pass	pass	pass

1) Conventional.

2) The hand was played in France, where 'ace responses to two clubs' are popular. Thus two spades signified the ace, not a suit.

3) South finds it reasonable to hope that he will be able to dispose of one of his red-suit losers.

West led the king of hearts and South won with the ace. If he draws trumps he is thrown back on the diamond finesse as his only real hope for the contract. There is an additional chance, however—to find the spades 4—3 and the clubs 2—1.

Even one round of trumps would be an error. South must begin by leading a spade to the ace and ruffing a spade with a high trump. Then he leads the nine of clubs to the jack and ruffs another spade, again with a high trump.

By this time the declarer knows his fate. As the cards lie, both opponents follow to the third round of spades and to the first round of clubs. South plays the five of clubs to dummy's eight, ruffs a fourth round of spades, and returns with the two of clubs to dummy's three, to cash the last spade and discard a heart.

If either black suit proves disappointing, South can change his plan and finesse for the queen of diamonds.

Example 22

When the declarer is playing to establish a suit in dummy he must be careful to use entries in the right order. There was a temptation on the deal below to take a ruff in dummy too soon.

<p>♠ 6 5 ♥ 8 6 3 ♦ A K 8 5 2 ♣ A 10 3</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> </table>	N	S	W	E	<p>♠ A 9 4 ♥ Q J 9 ♦ Q 10 9 4 ♣ Q 6 5</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 8 7 3 ♥ 10 5 ♦ J 7 ♣ K 9 8 7</p>
N	S						
W	E						

South opened with a minimum bid of one heart and the bidding continued:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	pass	2♦	pass
2♥	pass	4♥	pass
pass	pass	pass	pass

Many players would have raised to three hearts only on the North hand, but four hearts was perfectly correct. In general, a player who has opening bid values (in this case, an A K and an ace) opposite an opening bid should want to be in game unless there is a palpable misfit. Here there was no question of a misfit, as North held three cards in the suit which South had rebid.

West led the seven of spades to his partner's ace, and East could see nothing more dynamic than to return a spade. A successful finesse of the jack would permit a club discard on the king of spades, but as it was most unlikely that the finesse would win, South went up with the king. Two rounds of hearts left one trump outstanding. South had arrived at this position:

<p>♠ Q 10 8 ♥ — ♦ J 7 ♣ K 9 8 7</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	<p>♠ — ♥ 8 ♦ A K 8 5 2 ♣ A 10 3</p>	<p>♠ 4 ♥ Q ♦ Q 10 9 4 ♣ Q 6 5</p>
W	N						
E	S						
<p>♠ 2 ♥ 7 4 2 ♦ 6 3 ♣ J 4 2</p>							

It was important now to play the cards in the right order. Because the diamonds may break 4—2, declarer must play on this suit at once, ruffing the third round. Only then does he take the spade ruff. A fourth diamond is trumped, setting up the long diamond as a winner. South crosses to the ace of clubs and plays the good diamond, discarding a club. The defence makes only two more tricks, a trump and a club.

Example 23

To stay alive and trust to luck is an agreeable formula for many situations in life, but as a motto for bridge players it lacks iron discipline. To be afraid all the time of bad distributions makes for slow play and loss of concentration on more important matters, but when there is an obvious chance that a suit may break badly it is very necessary to examine alternative ways of making the contract. The following hand presents problems in both bidding and play:

<p>♠ J 6 4 ♥ Q 10 4 ♦ Q J 10 8 ♣ 9 6 3</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	<p>♠ K 8 5 3 2 ♥ A 7 6 5 2 ♦ 3 ♣ A 2</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 9 7 ♥ K ♦ 9 7 6 5 4 2 ♣ 7 5</p>
W	N						
E	S						
<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1 ♠ 3 ♣ 4 ♥ 6 ♣</p>		<p>NORTH</p> <p>1 ♠ 3 ♥ 5 ♣ pass</p>					

It is a tricky hand to bid, because of the danger of ending in six hearts instead of six clubs. This is a possible route:

West leads the queen of diamonds and South wins with the ace. There are eleven tricks on top, but it would be lazy to rely on the hearts producing a twelfth trick. There are too many ways of losing two tricks in this suit before an extra trick can be developed.

The declarer should note (before drawing trumps) that it may be possible to establish the fifth round of spades. The order of play, after the ace of diamonds, is: ace of spades, club to the ace, ruff a low spade; ruff the king of diamonds (the critical move); ruff a spade with the ten of clubs. When all follow, South can see daylight, for the K 8 of spades are now good. After drawing trumps, declarer crosses to the ace of hearts and discards two hearts on the winning spades.

Oddly enough, it would be easier to perceive the right line of play if declarer held A x of diamonds instead of A K. To ruff the king of diamonds with the two of clubs is just as certain a trick as letting it ride; as we have seen, the ruff is vital for reasons of entry.

Example 24

It may not be difficult to see that there are chances to establish a suit in dummy; not difficult to count how many entries will be required; and not difficult, when the count is sufficient, to see that establishing winners is a more promising line than playing a suit where you need

to find a card on the right side, with only a 50% chance of success. However, it may be difficult to 'put all this together', especially when there are alternative ways of playing the trump suit. Do not be discouraged if you do not see the best line of play immediately, while more experienced players would need only one glance at the combined hands. It is all a matter of practice and familiarity. That is why we present you with four or five hands in succession which are closely related in theme.

<p>♠ QJ109 ♥ Q92 ♦ J2 ♣ K1087</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ K2</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ A76</td><td>♥ 8763</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ 97643</td><td>♦ 105</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ A42</td><td>♣ A1085</td></tr> </table>	♠ K2		♥ A76	♥ 8763	♦ 97643	♦ 105	♣ A42	♣ A1085	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ 8763</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ 105</td><td>♥ A1085</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ A1085</td><td>♦ J96</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ J96</td><td></td></tr> </table>	♠ 8763		♥ 105	♥ A1085	♦ A1085	♦ J96	♣ J96		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ A54</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ KJ843</td><td>♥ KJ843</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ KQ</td><td>♦ KQ</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ Q53</td><td>♣ Q53</td></tr> </table>	♠ A54		♥ KJ843	♥ KJ843	♦ KQ	♦ KQ	♣ Q53	♣ Q53
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South opens one heart, North responds two diamonds, and South rebids two hearts. North raises to three hearts. (If you ask why we advise only three hearts here, while we commended the raise to four hearts on Example 22, the answer is that the present hand is less flexible. The side suit is weak and may be difficult to establish, and three low trumps, with compensating values outside, is a better holding than A x x of trumps.) South has better than a minimum opening and will go to four hearts over the raise to three.

West leads the queen of spades and declarer sees that there is a sure loser in diamonds, a possible loser in trumps, and perhaps two losers in clubs. However, if the diamonds can be established it may be possible to obtain at least one discard and not rely on the clubs to provide a second trick.

Because all dummy's entries may be needed, the first move is to win with the ace of spades and advance the king of diamonds. Say that East wins and knocks out dummy's king of spades, which is as good a defence as any: South crosses to the queen of diamonds, and all follow. At this point the contract is safe, so long as the trumps are not worse than 3—2. South must not risk a losing finesse in hearts. Instead, he plays king of hearts and a low heart to the ace. These are the remaining cards:

South leads a diamond and ruffs. It makes no difference whether or not West overruffs. Suppose he does not: then declarer ruffs a spade and plays a fourth diamond, ruffing again. The fifth diamond is good now, for the discard of a losing club. South makes game for the loss of one trump, one diamond and one club.

<p>♠ J10 ♥ Q ♦ — ♣ K1087</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ —</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ 7</td><td>♥ 87</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ 976</td><td>♦ —</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ A42</td><td>♣ 108</td></tr> </table>	♠ —		♥ 7	♥ 87	♦ 976	♦ —	♣ A42	♣ 108	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ 87</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ —</td><td>♥ —</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ 108</td><td>♦ J96</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ J96</td><td></td></tr> </table>	♠ 87		♥ —	♥ —	♦ 108	♦ J96	♣ J96		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ 5</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ J84</td><td>♥ —</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ —</td><td>♦ Q53</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ Q53</td><td></td></tr> </table>	♠ 5		♥ J84	♥ —	♦ —	♦ Q53	♣ Q53	
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Example 25

Some hands seem to be full of finesses and it may not be obvious at first which finesse to take and whether, instead, to attempt to establish a long suit.

<p>♠ K1086 ♥ J1097 ♦ 54 ♣ 976</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ QJ5</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ AQ</td><td>♥ 9743</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ Q62</td><td>♦ K653</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ AQ1032</td><td>♣ 7</td></tr> </table>	♠ QJ5		♥ AQ	♥ 9743	♦ Q62	♦ K653	♣ AQ1032	♣ 7	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ A2</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ 842</td><td>♥ KJ84</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ AKJ10983</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>♣ 5</td><td></td></tr> </table>	♠ A2		♥ 842	♥ KJ84	♦ AKJ10983		♣ 5		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td colspan="2">♠ A2</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ 842</td><td>♥ KJ84</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ AKJ10983</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>♣ 5</td><td></td></tr> </table>	♠ A2		♥ 842	♥ KJ84	♦ AKJ10983		♣ 5	
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The bidding went as follows:

	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
	1♦	pass	3♣	pass
	3♦	pass	3NT	pass
	4♦(1)	pass	4♥(2)	pass
	4♣(3)	pass	6♦(4)	pass
	pass	pass	pass	pass

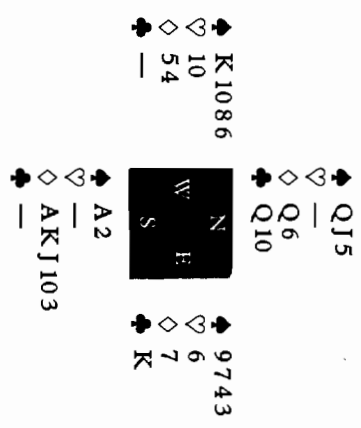
- 1) With a hand on which he would have made a jump rebid of three diamonds over a simple response of two clubs, South is certainly going to try for a slam after partner has forced.
- 2) North would not be introducing a new suit at this level, so four hearts is obviously a 'cue-bid', showing a control in hearts and implying support for diamonds.
- 3) South responds with a cue-bid in spades.

4) Many players, with their eyes fixed on the two A Q combinations, would bid six no trumps at this point. However, North has already bid no trumps and his partner can convert if he wishes. As the play will show, the advantage of playing with a long trump suit is that this can be used for the establishment of a side suit—clubs in this case.

When the jack of hearts is led, South can see finesse positions in three suits. It may be possible to avoid the heart finesse by coming to hand with a trump, finessing the queen of clubs, and eventually establishing the fifth club for an additional discard. However, the heart finesse may win (West might have made an attacking lead from K J 10 through a suit where dummy is expected to hold the ace) and several other chances remain, so the natural play for declarer is to put in the queen.

East wins with the king of hearts and his obvious return is a spade. It is better play, however, to return a heart, removing an entry from the dummy before South has begun to establish the clubs. If declarer needs the spade finesse for his contract he will take it later.

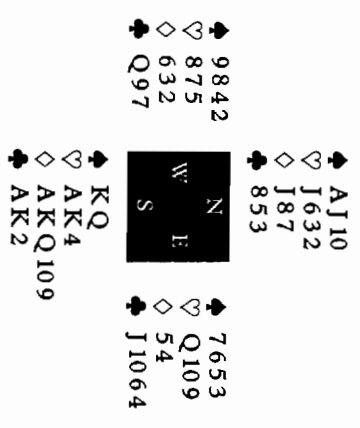
In dummy with the ace of hearts, South must play immediately on clubs. He plays ace of clubs, ruffs a club high, trumps a heart with the two of diamonds, and leads a third round of clubs, again ruffing high. The position is now:



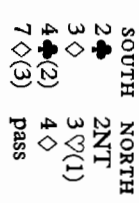
South has one more shot in his locker before falling back on the spade finesse. He leads the ten of diamonds to the queen, hoping to drop the seven. When this chance succeeds he is able to ruff a club with the jack and enter dummy with the six of diamonds. A spade is thrown on the queen of clubs and the slam is made.

Example 26

When you are in a position to take a discard in one or other of two suits, consider carefully whether perhaps the discard in one suit may be worth, in effect, two tricks. This was a sad little story because South bid quite reasonably to a grand slam and then failed because he took a discard in the wrong suit.



South opened two clubs, intending to settle for three no trumps over the expected negative response of two diamonds. To his surprise, North replied with a positive of two no trumps, showing some values but denying a fair suit. The bidding continued:



1) Not everyone's choice, but North had already denied a biddable suit and thought it would be more helpful to show that he held four hearts than to rebid three no trumps.

2) The main purpose of this bid is to see if he can wrest some diamond support from his partner, to suggest that the suit will be solid.

3) South expects his partner's hearts to be Q x x rather than J x x and proposes to discard his club loser on the ace of spades.

West led a trump—often best against a grand slam—and South won in hand. The only chance he could see was to discard a club on the third spade and hope to bring down the queen of hearts in two rounds. He began by playing off five rounds of diamonds, causing no great pain to the opposition. Then he took three spades, discarding a club, cashed his top clubs and hearts, and eventually conceded the thirteenth trick to the queen of hearts.

South failed to see that a 3—3 break in hearts, as well as a doubleton queen, would probably be good enough. He should draw just two rounds of trumps, leaving the jack in dummy, then play off ace and king of hearts. If the queen falls, no problem arises. If not, he discards a heart, not a club, on the third round spades, ruffs a heart with a high trump, and enters dummy with the jack of diamonds to cash the jack of hearts, which is now good. This form of play provides the solution to many contracts.

Example 27

This is a final hand on the general subject of suit establishment. The theme is the same as in the last example: the contract depends on good timing and the right choice of discards.

<p>♠ 9 5 ♥ 10 9 8 4 ♦ K J 5 2 ♣ 9 7 3</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> </table>	N	S	W	E	<p>♠ K J 7 4 2 ♥ Q 7 5 ♦ A 3 ♣ J 6 2</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 8 ♥ A 6 3 2 ♦ 10 9 7 6 4 ♣ 4</p>
N	S						
W	E						
<p>♠ A 6 3 ♥ K J ♦ Q 8 ♣ A K Q 10 8 5</p>							

There is something to be said for opening two no trumps on the South hand, but South began with a normal one club and the bidding continued:

SOUTH	NORTH
1♣	1♦
3NT (1)	4NT (2)
6♣ (3)	pass

1) Not ideal, but it is difficult to find a better rebid. Three clubs would not express the strength.

2) Quite rightly, North gives his partner a chance to look for a slam. Four no trumps, being a raise of a natural no trump call, is 'quantitative', not Blackwood.

3) South is happy to accept the slam suggestion and sees no point in giving any further information to the opponents.

A diamond lead would have presented South with an awkward guess—whether to let it run to the queen or go up with the ace and trust the spades to provide five tricks. (If the diamond queen wins, South can play for the discard of a spade on the third heart.) However, West made the more natural lead of the ten of hearts. East won and switched to the ten of diamonds. South tried the queen without much hope, and this was covered by the king and ace. After two high trumps the position was:

<p>♠ 9 5 ♥ 9 8 4 ♦ J 5 2 ♣ 9</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> </table>	N	S	W	E	<p>♠ K J 7 4 2 ♥ Q 7 ♦ 3 ♣ J</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 8 ♥ 6 3 2 ♦ 9 7 6 ♣ —</p>
N	S						
W	E						
<p>♠ A 6 3 ♥ K ♦ 8 ♣ Q 10 8 5</p>							

Obviously South could cash the king of hearts, cross to the jack of clubs, discard a diamond on the queen of hearts, and take the spade finesse for his contract. There is a much better way, however: cash the king of hearts, play ace and king of spades, discard a spade on the queen of hearts, and ruff a spade with a high trump; then back to the jack of clubs to cash a long spade and dispose of the losing diamond. There are some slight risks in this play, but much less than in the simple finesse for the queen of spades.