

Trick One



By Marjorie Michelin
michelinonbridge@aol.com

Many contracts are won or lost by what each side does at Trick 1! So... Don't play a single card until you have a PLAN.

Use the clues from the auction

Use the clues from the lead and opponents play to lead

Determine if there is a danger hand

Determine if a lead is a singleton

Plan your entries if needed

Example A

West	North	East	South
			1♠
P	2♥	P	3♥
P	4♣	P	P
P			

North
 ♠A1063 ♥AJ1052 ♦K7 ♣94

♣4
 ♣7 ♣K
 ?

South
 ♠KQJ84 ♥Q83 ♦943 ♣AJ

West leads the ♣7. You play low. East plays the king. What do you do at trick 1? Why?

You have four possible losers: one club, one heart, two diamonds

You need to make one of those losers disappear. You have several chances. What are they? Can you ensure your contract?

Here's the full board:

	♠A1063	
	♥AJ1052	
	♦K7	
	♣94	
♠9		♠752
♥976		♥K4

♦J862	♦AQ105
♣Q10872	♣K653
♠KQJ84	
♥Q83	
♦943	
♣AJ	

You have several choices to rid yourself of a loser. Hearts look promising for pitches. You can hope the heart finesse works

You can hope the ♦A is on side

The danger in the hand is that East holds the ♦AQ, and if West gets in, he can sizzle the diamond through your king.

You must duck the first club to cut communication to the West hand. You know that West holds the ♣Q, because if East had the king and the queen, he would have played the queen.

If you don't duck, and lose to the ♥K, East will return the club and West will play a diamond. By ducking, there is no card East can play to hurt you. He can't lead diamonds. You win his return, pull trump and if you lose to the ♥K, you are still home free!

Example B

West	North	East	South
			1NT
P	3NT	P	P
4♠	P	P	
P			

North

♠Q107 ♥K3 ♦8743 ♣AJ65

♣5

♣4 ♣2

?

South

♠AJ98 ♥852 ♦AK62 ♣K9

What card do you play from your hand at trick 1? Why? What is your plan for playing the rest of the hand?

Plan trick 1, trick 2, and trick 3.

Trick 1

North

♠Q107 ♥K3 ♦8743 ♣AJ65

♣5

♣4 ♣2

♣K

South

♠AJ98 ♥852 ♦AK62 ♣K9

Trick 2

North
♠Q107 ♥K3 ♦8743 ♣AJ65

♣J
♣8 ♣3
♣9

South
♠AJ98 ♥852 ♦AK62 ♣K9

Trick 3

North
♠Q107 ♥K3 ♦8743 ♣AJ65

♠Q
♠4 ♠2
♠8

South
♠AJ98 ♥852 ♦AK62 ♣K9

Here's the full board:

♠Q107	
♥K3	
♦8743	
♣AJ65	
♠64	♠K532
♥9764	♥AQJ10
♦Q95	♦J10
♣Q1084	♣732
♠AJ98	
♥852	
♦AK62	
♣K9	

You have six top winners: one spade, two diamonds, three clubs. In this hand, North must not try to be greedy and make the right play at trick 1.

Winning the first trick with the ♣9, blocks the suit. You can only take two club tricks this way. Win the ♠K, a club to the jack. Now play on spades.

Play the ♣Q, if not covered, cash your ♣A before you have no entry back to it!

You have a dangerous heart holding but you have no choice in how to play the spades. Continue playing spades: ♠10, ♠7.

You will take three clubs, four spades and two diamonds – 9 tricks. ♣