



# PLAY HELP SHEET

## for the Learn to Play Bridge course – part 1



DECLARING – PLANNING THE PLAY	
<b>Pause</b>	When you see dummy, think before you play your first card. When you win your first trick, think before you continue.
<b>Count</b>	How many sure winners do you have? Do you have any ‘almost sure’ winners, e.g. <i>long trumps</i> ? How many more do you need?
<b>Plan</b>	Where can you create more winners? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What seems possible, suit by suit?</i></li> <li>• <i>Which will you choose?</i></li> </ul> What’s your order of play? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Draw trumps first?</i></li> <li>• <i>Which suit first?</i></li> <li>• <i>Any problems to think about?</i></li> </ul>
<b>Creating extra tricks</b>	
Think about:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promoting</b> winners by driving out the defenders’ higher card(s)</li> <li>• Setting up <b>length</b> winners</li> <li>• <i>If it’s a suit contract: ruffing</i> losing cards in the short trump hand</li> <li>• <b>Finessing</b> a high card even though the defenders have a higher one</li> </ul>	

DEFENDING	
Choosing a Lead	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opening lead against a no trump contract</b></p> <p><u>WHICH SUIT?</u> Lead <b>partner’s suit</b> if she has bid one Otherwise, lead your <b>longest suit</b> If you have two equally long suits - the <b>stronger</b> one</p> <p><u>WHICH CARD?</u> Headed by 3 touching or near-touching honours – <b>top of touching honours</b> Headed by 1-2 honours or non-touching honours – <b>Low for Like: 3<sup>rd</sup> of 3, 4<sup>th</sup> of 4+</b> Not headed by an honour – <b>High for Hate: 2<sup>nd</sup> highest</b> Doubleton – <b>top</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opening lead against a suit contract</b></p> <p><u>WHICH SUIT?</u> Lead a <b>good suit</b> if you can:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner’s suit if she has bid one</li> <li>• A side suit headed by two touching honours</li> <li>• A side suit singleton, unless it is an honour</li> </ul>           Don’t lead a <b>bad suit</b> if you can help it:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A suit headed by the Ace without the King (unless it’s partner’s suit)</li> <li>• A doubleton or singleton honour (unless it’s partner’s suit)</li> <li>• A side suit bid by the opposition</li> </ul>           If you still have a choice, lead the <b>safest suit</b> that’s left:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A side suit with no honour is the safest.</li> <li>• The trump suit, if you have no honour, is safe-ish.</li> <li>• A suit with one or non-touching honours is the least safe.</li> </ul> </p> <p><u>WHICH CARD?</u> Headed by the Ace – <b>Ace</b> Headed by 2 touching honours – <b>top</b> Headed by 1 or non-touching honours – <b>Low for Like: 3<sup>rd</sup> of 3, 4<sup>th</sup> of 4+</b> Not headed by an honour – <b>High for Hate: 2<sup>nd</sup> highest</b> Doubleton – <b>top</b> Trump – <b>lowest</b></p>
When You are Not Leading	
<p><b>Third Hand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If partner leads a low card, then play <b>as high as you need to</b> - to win the trick or else drive out declarer’s highest card.</li> <li>• If you have <b>touching honours</b>, play the <b>bottom</b> one.</li> </ul> <p><b>Second Hand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually <b>play low</b>, but <b>cover an honour with an honour</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discarding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the cards you will need later.</li> </ul>	