

PLAY HELP SHEET

for the Learn to Play Bridge course – part 1

DECLARING – PLANNING THE PLAY	
Pause When you see dummy, think before you play your first card. When you win your first trick, think before you continue.	Creating extra tricks <i>Think about:</i> • Promoting winners by driving out the defenders' higher card(s) • Setting up length winners • Finessing a high card even though the defenders have a higher one • If it's a suit contract: ruffing losing cards in the short trump hand
Count How many sure winners do you have? Do you have any 'almost sure' winners, e.g. long trumps? How many more do you need?	
Plan Where can you create more winners? • What seems possible, suit by suit? • Which will you choose? What's your order of play? • Draw trumps first? • Which suit first? • Any problems to think about?	

DEFENDING	
Choosing a Lead	
Opening lead against a no trump contract <u>WHICH SUIT?</u> Lead partner's suit if she has bid one Otherwise, lead your longest suit If you have two equally long suits - the stronger one <u>WHICH CARD?</u> Headed by 3 touching or near-touching honours – top touching honour , e.g. K from KQ10..., J from AJ10... Headed by 1-2 honours or non-touching honours – Low for Like: 3rd of 3, 4th of 4+ Not headed by an honour – High for Hate: 2nd highest Doubleton – top	Opening lead against a suit contract <u>WHICH SUIT?</u> Lead a good suit if you can: • Partner's suit if she has bid one • A side suit headed by two touching honours • A side suit singleton <i>unless it's an honour</i> Don't lead a bad suit if you can help it: • A suit headed by the Ace without the King <i>unless it's partner's suit</i> • A doubleton or singleton honour <i>unless it's partner's suit</i> • A side suit bid by the opposition If you still have a choice, lead the safest suit that's left: • A side suit with no honour is <u>safe</u>. • The trump suit, if you have no honour, is <i>safe-ish</i>. • A suit with one or non-touching honours is <u>risky</u>. <u>WHICH CARD?</u> Headed by the Ace – Ace Headed by 2 touching honours – top Headed by 1 or non-touching honours – Low for Like: 3rd of 3, 4th of 4+ Not headed by an honour – High for Hate: 2nd highest Doubleton – top Trump – lowest
When You are Not Leading Third Hand • If partner leads a low card, then play as high as you need - to try to win the trick or else drive out declarer's highest card. • If you have touching honours, play the bottom one. Second Hand • Usually play low, but cover an honour with an honour. Discarding • Keep the cards you will need later.	