

Keeping the danger hand off lead

An example

	S: 8 6 5 H: 10 2 D: A Q 5 3 C: A Q 8 3		
S: J 10 4 H: K Q J 9 8 7 D: J 6 C: J 9	Love All Dealer: West	S: K 4 3 H: 5 4 D: K 10 9 8 4 C: 10 7 2	
	S: A Q 9 7 H: A 6 3 D: 7 2 C: K 6 5 4		
Bidding:			
West	North	East	South
2H	Pass	Pass	X
Pass	3D	Pass	3NT
All pass			

West opens a weak 2H and South becomes declarer in 3NT.

West leads the HK. How should South play to develop 9 tricks?

Trick 1: Duck the HK

Trick 2: When West continues with HJ, South must win with HA.

Trick 3: South crosses to dummy with CQ.

Trick 4: S5 to declarer's Q finessing East for the K.

Trick 5: South crosses to dummy with CA.

Trick 6: S6

If East plays K then declarer must duck! Whatever East plays next, declarer comes to 9 tricks: 4 in clubs, 3 in spades, 1 heart and 1 diamond.

If East plays low, declarer wins with the A and gives up the next trick to East's SK. He can then come to the same 9 tricks.

Points to remember:

- Declarer can never make his contract unless East has SK so must assume that card is in East's hand.
- By leading spades from dummy twice, declarer makes sure that West, the danger hand, cannot gain the lead. This is called an *avoidance play*.
- East must play the SK on the second round (*play the card you are known to hold*), to give declarer a chance to go wrong.
- On this hand, *playing the card you are known to hold* potentially creates an entry for partner but there are many other situations where it will give declarer a problem.

For example:

	K J 2	
Q 10 3		8 6 4
	A 9 7 5	

Declarer plays a small card to dummy's J, successfully finessing your Q. On the play of the K, you must play the Q, the card you are known to hold, to give declarer a guess as to whether to finesse or drop the 10.

	A Q 4 3 2	
K J 7 5		10 6
	9 8	

This is a side suit in a trump contract. Declarer plays small to dummy's Q and then cashes the A. If you don't play the K on the second round, declarer can safely ruff the third round and set up the suit. Play the K and give him some losing options.