

# Improvers' Lesson 7 - Signals & Discards

**Board 1**  
North Deals  
None Vul

♠ Q J 7  
♥ 9 3  
♦ Q J 9 8 4  
♣ J 10 9

♠ K 5 4 3  
♥ Q J 10 7  
♦ 5 3  
♣ 7 4 2

♠ A 10 9 6 2  
♥ 8 5 4  
♦ A K  
♣ K Q 6

♠ 8  
♥ A K 6 2  
♦ 10 7 6 2  
♣ A 8 5 3

West North East South  
2 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Dbl  
Pass Pass 3 ♠ All pass

Lead: ♥ A

On the ♥ A lead, North must encourage with ♥ 3 (low = like). South can show which suit to return by playing a low heart on the 3rd round. (low = lower side-suit = ♣ suit).

South then wins ♣ A and returns another heart to be ruffed by North to prevent a club discard.

**Board 5**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ Q 8 7 6  
♥ 5 3 2  
♦ 10 7 5 3  
♣ 6 2

♠ J 10 2  
♥ 9 8  
♦ Q 6 4  
♣ K Q J 9 3

♠ A 4  
♥ K Q 7 6 4  
♦ 9 2  
♣ 8 7 5 4

♠ K 9 5 3  
♥ A J 10  
♦ A K J 8  
♣ A 10

West North East South  
All pass Pass Pass 2 NT

Lead: ♣ K

Declarer wins ♣ A and plays a low spade towards the ♠ Q. East wins, returns a club, and EW cash their winners.

On the last club East discards the ♥ 4 to encourage a heart switch. This defeats the contract by 1 trick.

**Board 2**  
East Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ A Q 7 6  
♥ 9 8 3  
♦ 9 3  
♣ K J 9 8

♠ 5 4  
♥ A Q 10 6 5  
♦ 7 5 2  
♣ 7 6 2

♠ J 10 9  
♥ J 2  
♦ A 8 6 4  
♣ Q 10 5 4

♠ K 8 3 2  
♥ K 7 4  
♦ K Q J 10  
♣ A 3

West North East South  
Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♦  
Pass 4 ♠ Pass 3 ♠

Lead: ♠ J

♠ J is a safe lead. West's first discard should be the ♣ 7 - showing no honour. Now, when declarer plays the diamond suit, East can win and knows to switch to the ♥ J.

This defeats the contract.

**Board 6**  
East Deals  
E-W Vul

♠ 10 8 7 4 2  
♥ 9 8 4  
♦ A 3  
♣ A 5 4

♠ A 5  
♥ K 6 3 2  
♦ 5 4 2  
♣ J 10 7 2

♠ K 3  
♥ Q J 10 5  
♦ K Q 9 7  
♣ Q 8 3

♠ Q J 9 6  
♥ A 7  
♦ J 10 8 6  
♣ K 9 6

West North East South  
All pass 1 NT All pass

Lead: ♠ Q

North encourages with the ♠ 2 so, when South wins ♥ A, it is easy to continue spades.

Declarer wins and continues hearts, ending in dummy, then leads a low diamond towards the ♦ KQ. North rises with the ♦ A and wins 3 spade tricks, along with 2 red aces and 2 clubs.

**Board 3**  
South Deals  
E-W Vul

♠ 8  
♥ Q 8 4  
♦ A K Q 4  
♣ 10 8 6 4 2

♠ K J 10 7 6 4 3  
♥ A 2  
♦ 9 6 3  
♣ 5

♠ A Q  
♥ K J 6 3  
♦ J 10 8 2  
♣ K Q J

♠ 9 5 2  
♥ 10 9 7 5  
♦ 7 5  
♣ A 9 7 3

West North East South  
3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ All pass

Lead: ♦ A

North leads ♦ A, then ♦ K and ♦ Q. South discards ♣ 3 on the 3rd round to show an honour. North switches to a club to defeat the contract.

**Board 7**  
South Deals  
Both Vul

♠ K 2  
♥ K Q J  
♦ A J 5  
♣ J 10 9 7 2

♠ 8  
♥ 5 3 2  
♦ 10 9 7 6 2  
♣ A K Q 5

♠ A Q 5 4 3  
♥ 10 9 8 7  
♦ 4 3  
♣ 8 6

♠ J 10 9 7 6  
♥ A 6 4  
♦ K Q 8  
♣ 4 3

West North East South  
Pass 1 ♣ Pass 1 ♠  
Pass 1 NT Pass 3 NT

Lead: ♥ 10

North wins with the ♥ A in dummy and runs ♠ J. East wins with the ♠ Q and exits with another heart.

Declarer now plays ♠ K to East's ♠ A. West should discard a low club (low=like) or ♦ 9 (high=hate).

The contract will now go 1 down.

**Board 4**  
West Deals  
Both Vul

♠ 5 3  
♥ K J 5 3  
♦ Q J 9 8  
♣ 10 9 7

♠ K Q J 2  
♥ 7 6 2  
♦ 5 2  
♣ K 8 5 4

♠ 9 8 4  
♥ A Q 10 9  
♦ 10 4 3  
♣ J 6 2

♠ A 10 7 6  
♥ 8 4  
♦ A K 7 6  
♣ A Q 3

West North East South  
Pass Pass Pass 1 ♦  
Pass 1 ♥ Pass 1 NT

Lead: ♠ K

East signals discouragement with the ♠ 9. When in again, West should switch to the ♥ 7 through dummy's honours. East wins and returns a spade to West who plays another heart.

This pattern is continued whenever the defence gets in. This great defence will defeat the contract.

**Board 8**  
West Deals  
None Vul

♠ K Q J 9 8 7  
♥ A  
♦ 10 7  
♣ J 9 6 2

♠ A 10 4  
♥ K Q 6 5 4  
♦ K Q 6  
♣ A 8

♠ 3 2  
♥ 10 9 8 7  
♦ A 5 4 2  
♣ Q 5 3

♠ 6 5  
♥ J 3 2  
♦ J 9 8 3  
♣ K 10 7 4

West North East South  
1 ♥ 1 ♠ 2 ♥ Pass

Lead: ♠ K

South encourages partner's lead with the ♠ 5 hoping for a ruff. North then wins ♥ A and continues spades. South overruffs the 3rd round with the ♥ J. South must be careful not to exit with a club which would give declarer an extra trick.

Best play now is to lead a trump.