


1.

	♠ AK4	
	♥ K	
	♦ 7642	
	♣ J6432	
♠ 973		♠ QJ10
♥ Q732		♥ J1095
♦ AJ93		♦ Q105
♣ 108		♣ Q97
	♠ 8652	
	♥ A864	
	♦ K8	
	♣ AK5	

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♦3. East plays the ♦Q. How do you plan the play?

The opening lead has done you no harm at all and it would appear that West has led from a four-card suit headed by the ace. So if you can make four club tricks the contract is secure via two spades, two hearts, one diamond and four clubs. But there is a catch. If you play three rounds of clubs then there will be no way back to the ace of hearts and the defenders will be able to set up a winning spade to defeat you. Once seen, the answer is simple. Just lead a low club at trick two and play low from dummy. You retain the top cards in the suit for entries.

2.

	♠ 752	
	♥ 10873	
	♦ AJ10	
	♣ J106	
♠ Q106		♠ 9843
♥ 52		♥ 96
♦ 9864		♦ Q53
♣ AK52		♣ Q943
	♠ AKJ	
	♥ AKQJ4	
	♦ K72	
	♣ 87	

You are declarer in 4♥ and West leads three rounds of clubs. How do you plan the play?

This looks like a finesser's paradise and you might draw trumps ending in dummy to finesse the spades. If that loses and a spade is returned then you are on two-way guess for the queen of diamonds – and you deserve to get it wrong! Strangely you should take no finesses at all and the contract is 100% guaranteed once hearts are not 4-0. After drawing trumps simply play spades from the top and lose the third one to the queen, most likely. But whoever wins is in an unenviable position, for a black suit return will yield a ruff and discard while a diamond return will find the queen for you.