



Karol & Guy Monroe

# THINK LIKE AN EXPERT ... AND TAKE MORE TRICKS!

Bridge is a partnership game, and each player contributes both individual and partnership skills at the table. Regardless of the final contract, the bottom line is about taking tricks and the score.

## #1 Expert Tip: Be a Good Partner !

### ...at the Table

- Be COURTEOUS to your opponents and to your partner.
- Be SUPPORTIVE – not critical - of partner’s efforts.
- IMPROVE your skills through study and constructive discussion *away* from the table.

### ...as Declarer

- FOCUS** on the goal of the contract at hand – even if it’s a poor contract. Avoid distractions related to the auction.
- Consider what could go wrong, even when the contract appears assured.
  - Apply expert techniques to improve your card playing skills and increase the odds for success.
    - Look for the best play in the suit that offers tricks.
  - Beware of risks that may not help with the goal.
    - Avoid unnecessary finesses and look for less risky alternatives to taking a finesse.
    - With a choice of finesses, focus on the goal.
  - Look for useful clues from the auction or during play and inference.
- Always remember that Declarer Play is NOT a partnership skill!**

### ...as Defender

- FOCUS** on the number of tricks needed to defeat the contract.
- Consider the guidelines, but use logic and judgment.
  - Try not to set up tricks for Declarer.
  - Try to anticipate the types of problems facing partner.
  - Look for opportunities to make the best defense as clear as possible.
    - 1) Lead suits that are most effectively led from one side of the table or the other.
    - 2) Give the clearest signal whenever possible.
    - 3) Take charge when you know what to do to meet the goal.
- Partners must work together on defense to take tricks!**



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## What Do You Do When You Don't Know What to Do?

*How You Can Play Like an Expert (Without Having to Be One)*

*By Mel Colchamiro*

### *Mel Says*

Don't worry about the fact that you don't know what to do . . . instead of being a worrier, be a decision-maker.

So when you don't know what to do use this check-list.

1. Take a deep breath.
2. Tell yourself that it's okay that you don't know. You're only human.
3. Make a short list of possibilities that come to mind.
4. Choose one of the choices on your list.
5. Hope you made the right choice.
6. Praise yourself if it works out well.
7. Forgive yourself if it turns out poorly.
8. No matter what the result, forge ahead. Go on to the next bid, next trick, or next hand and do not dwell on past success or failures.

Don't get emotional when playing bridge. It clouds your judgment.	
	It's easy to find excuses for losing. <b>Find ways to win.</b>
Never let one bad result . . . beget another. Move on.	
	Remember that there is only one important hand per session – the one you are playing.
<b>Don't be the Salmon</b>	
Swim with the tide, not against it. Don't make plays and bids that are against the odds.	
	Don't take a risk if you don't have to.
Be sure it is safe to play a suit before you do so; or at least understand the risks. Ask yourself: "Do I have to play this suit <i>now</i> , or can it wait, maybe forever?"	

*From the Monroes* .... Keep a sense of humor and be kind to yourself. Some days bridge makes more sense than other days. Do your best and remember to enjoy the game!

## Think Like an Expert - Declarer Takes More Tricks

### Go For The 100% Promotion

**Board 1**  
North Deals

♠ K 9 6 4 ♥ K J 5 4 ♦ J 10 3 ♣ 10 2	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ J 10 5 3 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ A 6 2 ♣ Q J 9	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ Q 7 ♥ 10 7 2 ♦ K 8 4 ♣ K 8 7 6 5		♠ A 8 2 ♥ A 9 3 ♦ Q 9 7 5 ♣ A 4 3										
	8 8 10 14											
West	North	East	South									
	Pass	Pass	1 ♦									
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 N <sup>1</sup>									
All pass												

1. 2-3 ♥s, 12-14 Points

**Contract:** 1 NT South, 7 Tricks  
**Lead:** ♣ 6, 4th highest  
**Sure Tricks:** 2-♠, 2-♥, 1-♣ = 5.

**Play:** South ducks twice (rule of 7) and promotes two ♦s. Declarer loses four ♣s and two ♦s.

### Opening Lead of a Two

**Board 2**  
East Deals

♠ A 9 ♥ Q 10 7 ♦ 8 6 4 3 ♣ 10 8 7 2	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q 10 6 5 ♥ 9 8 ♦ J 10 7 5 ♣ J 5 4	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ K J 7 2 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ K 9 2 ♣ 9 6 3		♠ 8 4 3 ♥ A J 6 5 3 ♦ A Q ♣ A K Q										
	6 10 4 20											
West	North	East	South									
		Pass	2 N <sup>1</sup>									
Pass	3 N	All pass										

1. Balanced, 20-21 Points

**Contract:** 3 NT South, 9 Tricks  
**Lead:** ♠ 2, East Plays ♠ 10, Encouraging  
**Sure Tricks:** 1-♠, 1-♥, 1-♦, 3-♣ = 6.

**Play:** South wins the ♠ A, and finesses ♥s, losing to the ♥ K. Even when the ♥ finesse loses, there are nine tricks, as long as the ♠ suit splits 4-4 (clue, opening lead, the ♠ 2).

### Trick One, Finesse?

**Board 3**  
South Deals

♠ A J 4 3 ♥ K Q 8 ♦ K 5 ♣ A Q 5 4	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 9 ♥ 10 9 ♦ J 10 9 ♣ K J 10 9 6 2	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ 7 5 ♥ J 5 4 3 2 ♦ Q 8 7 6 4 ♣ 3		♠ K Q 8 6 2 ♥ A 7 6 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ 8 7										
	19 3 5 13											
West	North	East	South									
			1 ♠									
Pass	4 N <sup>1</sup>	Pass	5 ♥									
Pass	5 N	Pass	6 ♦									
Pass	6 ♠	All pass										

1. 20+ Support Points, Ace Asking

**Contract:** 6 ♠ South, 12 Tricks  
**Lead:** ♣ 3, Singleton  
**Losers:** 1-♦, 1-♣ = 2.

**Play:** Finesse or not? What can go wrong? South wins the ♣ A, draws trump, wins the ♦ KA, and ruffs a ♦ in Dummy.

### Defender May Win 5 ♦s

**Board 4**  
West Deals

♠ A Q 4 ♥ K J 8 6 ♦ 5 4 3 ♣ J 10 9	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K 6 ♥ 7 4 3 ♦ K Q 7 6 2 ♣ K 7 5	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♠ 10 7 5 3 2 ♥ 10 9 2 ♦ A 9 ♣ 8 3 2		♠ J 9 8 ♥ A Q 5 ♦ J 10 8 ♣ A Q 6 4										
	11 4 11 14											
West	North	East	South									
	Pass	Pass	1 ♣									
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 N <sup>1</sup>									
Pass	2 N <sup>2</sup>	Pass	3 N									

All pass  
 1. 12-14 Points  
 2. 11-12 Points

**Contract:** 3 NT South, 9 Tricks  
**Lead:** ♠ 3, 4th Highest  
**Sure Tricks:** 1-♠, 4-♥, 1-♣ = 6.

**Play:** Declarer wins the ♠ A, wins four ♥s, and must act quickly. Finesses (repeating) ♣s for four more tricks before losing ♦s.

## Think Like an Expert - Declarer Takes More Tricks

### Draw Trump When Needing to Ruff?

**Board 5**

North Deals

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

  

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



5  
10 8  
17

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	1 N	Pass	3 ♥ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
All pass			

1. 19-21 Points, Jump Shift

**Contract:** 4 ♠ South, 10 Tricks

**Lead:** ♦ Q, Does East hold up?

**Losers:** 1-♠, 2-♥, 2-♦ = 5.

**Play:** East wins the ♦ A and plays a trump, to eliminate a ♥ ruff by Dummy. South wins the ♠ A, the ♥ AK, ruffs the ♥ 7, wins the ♦ K, draws trump, and wins the ♣ A.