

## MINI UNIT D2 **Second Hand Low** ♠♥♦♣

### **Guideline #1: "Second Hand Plays Low" if a small card is led**

The "second hand" is the hand which contributes the second card of the trick. The defender in second position must remember that partner has still to play, so it is usually correct to play a small card.

**Example 1** - You are sitting West, South leads ♥4.

	♥ <b>A 9 2</b>	
	North (dummy)	
♥ <b>Q 6 3</b>	?	
West (you)	East	West is the "second hand"
	♥ <b>4</b> (led)	
	South	

You should play a small card. Do not think "I need to play the queen to force out the ace". Your partner has still to play. Declarer is reasonably sure to play the ace anyway.

This might be the layout of the suit.

	♥ <b>A 9 2</b>	
	North (dummy)	
♥ <b>Q 6 3</b>		♥ <b>K T 8 7</b>
West		East
	♥ <b>J 5 4</b>	
	South	

If you play the queen, declarer wins both the ace and the jack. If you play low, s/he only makes the ace.

**Example 2** - Once again you are West and South leads ♥4

	♥ <b>J 7 2</b>	
	North (dummy)	
♥ <b>Q 6 3</b>	?	
West (you)	East	
	♥ <b>4</b> (led)	
	South	

This is not nearly so easy. It is very tempting to think "I can win this trick" and put on the queen. However, the guideline still applies: "second hand plays low". Unless you have a pressing reason to go against the guideline, play low, because the layout might be like this:

♥ J72

North (dummy)

♥ Q63

West

♥ K985

East

♥ AT4

South

If West plays the queen on the first round, declarer makes two tricks by finessing East for the king on the second round. If West plays low, declarer makes only 1 trick.

## Guideline #2: "Cover an Honour With an Honour"

This sounds like a contradiction of the previous guideline. The difference is that the previous guideline referred to the lead of a small card, whereas this time an **honour** card has been led.

**Example 1** - For this example, you are East and the lead is from dummy (North). Declarer calls for the queen from dummy.

♥ Q2 (Q led)

North (dummy)

?

West

♥ KT9

East (you)

?

South

As the queen is an honour, it is right to "cover an honour with an honour". You can assume that South has the ace and will take your king, but look at your ♥T and ♥9. You can see that if you cover ♥Q, you will now make one of these, as they have been "promoted". This might be the layout:

♥ Q2

North (dummy)

♥ 8543

West

♥ KT9

East (you)

♥ AJ76

South

Even if your holding apart from ♥K is just small cards, so you cannot see the advantage in covering the queen, you should do so anyway, in the hope that a card or cards in partner's hand will be "promoted".

**Example 2** - You are still East and North leads ♥Q

♥ Q J 9

North (dummy)

♥ T 8 3 2

West

♥ K 6 4

East (you)

♥ A 7 5

South

Do **not** cover the first honour led i.e. the queen. You can see a sequence of honours in the North hand – in this case a partial sequence of the queen and jack. Wait until the **last** honour in a sequence is led. If East covers the first honour led, declarer can then lead from the South hand and finesse ♥T on the next trick. Cover the **last played** honour in a sequence of honours.

## QUIZZES

<p style="text-align: center;">K 9 <b>5</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">A <b>J</b> 7 4</p> <p><b>5</b> led from North. East should play <b>J</b>. South may win with the Q but East still has North's K covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Q 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">K 8 7 <b>5</b>                      A 10 9 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J 6 <b>3</b></p> <p><b>3</b> led from South. West should play low. If plays the K then N/S will still have Q &amp; J to win a trick</p>
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SET BOARDS ♠♥♦♣

<p><b>Board 1</b></p> <p><b>North Deals</b></p> <p><b>None Vul</b></p> <p>♠ A J 3 ♥ Q J 10 5 ♦ 9 7 5 4 ♣ 10 7</p> <p>♠ K 9 7 2 ♥ K 7 3 ♦ A Q ♣ A Q J 5</p> <p>♠ 10 5 ♥ A 9 8 2 ♦ J 10 6 3 ♣ 8 3 2</p> <p>♠ Q 8 6 4 ♥ 6 4 ♦ K 8 2 ♣ K 9 6 4</p> <p><b>West</b>      <b>North</b>      <b>East</b>      <b>South</b></p> <p>Pass      1 ♣      Pass      1 ♠</p> <p>4 ♠</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> ♥ Q</p>	<p>Bid game, 2nd hand low</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> ♥Q (top of sequence)</p> <p><b>Losers:</b> 1 maybe 2S 2H</p> <p><b>Play:</b> When South gets on lead they play the ♠4 towards Dummy's ♠K. West <b>must</b> play low - this way West retains the ♠AJ over South's ♠Q guaranteeing 2 spades tricks. Contract goes 1 down.</p>
<p><b>Board 2</b></p> <p><b>East Deals</b></p> <p><b>N-S Vul</b></p> <p>♠ 8 3 ♥ A K 8 7 5 ♦ 7 3 ♣ A Q 9 5</p> <p>♠ A 9 6 2 ♥ 9 3 ♦ J 10 9 5 2 ♣ 7 6</p> <p>♠ K J ♥ Q J 6 4 ♦ K 6 4 ♣ K J 8 4</p> <p>♠ Q 10 7 5 4 ♥ 10 2 ♦ A Q 8 ♣ 10 3 2</p> <p><b>West</b>      <b>North</b>      <b>East</b>      <b>South</b></p> <p>1 ♥      Pass      1 ♣      Pass</p> <p>4 ♥      All pass      2 ♥      Pass</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> ♦ J</p>	<p>Bid game, 2nd hand low (make Declarer guess)</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> ♦J (top of sequence)</p> <p><b>Losers:</b> 1 maybe 2S 2D</p> <p><b>Play:</b> When South gets on lead, after playing trumps, they play ♠3 toward Dummy's ♠KJ hoping that North rises with an honour. North <b>must</b> play low - this way Declarer has to guess whether to play ♠K or ♠J from Dummy. If plays ♠J South will win with ♠Q &amp; contract goes down</p>