

Preamble

- I believe that the most important word in bridge is “visualization”. Without that, you can never get to a high level.
- Part 1 of visualizing is listening to the auctions and getting rough distributions
- Part 2 of visualizing is giving partner count when necessary (which is always until you know it's not necessary!)
- I'm going to give some examples in visualizing your partners hand in bidding, opponents hands in bidding, and opening leads that are suggested by their bidding
- At IMPS - on defence, give your partner the perfect cards to beat a contract, even if it means giving up an overtrick if you're wrong
- Bidding - don't give your partner the perfect maximum, but go ahead and give them the perfect minimum.

A helpful personal preference in this type of auction:

1D 2C

2D ← You can play this where you always bid 2D when you have 5+ D. This will help partner visualize your hand as the auction proceeds.

Hand #1 - Introducing visualizing during the play

N	North
♠	AJ9x
♥	AQx
♦	AQx
♣	AQx
S	South
♠	87xx
♥	Kxx
♦	Kxx
♣	Kxx

Playing in 6NT. The only place to get your 12th winner is to play spades for 3 tricks.

If E has any 3+ card holding including 2 of these three cards; K,Q,T of spades, 3 tricks are impossible (i.e. KTx). So ignore those types of hands and concentrate on W holding one of these 3 combinations (possibly with more cards of course):

KQx
KTx
QTx

Because the Ten shows up in 2 of the 3 key holdings, it's right to finesse it.

Hand #2 - Introducing visualizing based on the auction

W	N	E	S
1♥	P	1♠	P
2♣	P	2NT	P
3NT			
S	South		
♠	KJxxx		
♥	xx		
♦	QJxx		
♣	xx		

You are on lead as South. You expect West to have 5 hearts and 4 clubs, and East to have 4 spades, and 3-5 diamonds, including a stopper.

It's best to lead your higher heart, so that you don't give away a trick in diamonds or spades (East's suits). Wait for your astute partner to lead one of those suits **through** East later in the hand.

Hand #3

N You	KC 2 + Q			
♠ AKQxxx				
♥ x				
♦ AJxxx				
♣ x				
S South	W	N	E	S
♠ J9		1♠	P	2♦
♥ AJx	P	4NT	P	5♠
♦ KQxxx	P	6♦	P	P
♣ K9x	P		P	

When South bids 2 D all North needs to know is does South have the 2 missing aces and K of Diamonds to make 7
 South shows only 2 controls and the Q so 6 Diamonds is bid.

South can always convert 6D to 6S with previously unshown spade support.

Hand #4

N You	KC 2 KC			
♠ AQJxxx				
♥ x				
♦ x				
♣ AKQxx				
S South	W	N	E	S
♠ K10xxx				1♠
♥ AQJx	P	4NT	P	5♥
♦ Qxx	P	6♠	P	P
♣ x	P		P	

North looks at the hand and knows that all he needs to make 7 is 2 Aces and the king of Spades.
 He therefore bids 4NT immediately to prevent interference from the opponents.
 South only has 2 keycards so North signs off in 6 Spades. If South had 3 key cards North would have bid 7 Spades
 The lesson here is when to ask and when to show.
 There is no need for North to show his hand to partner.
 Show S as a separate step, after the discussion starts

Hand #5

N North				
♠ Axx				
♥ AQJxx	1 or 4			
♦ AQJx	W	N	E	S
♣ A		2♣	P	2♠
S You	P	3♥	P	4♥
♠ KQJ10xxx	P	4NT	P	5♣
♥ Kxx	P	5NT	P	7♠
♦ xx				
♣ x				

Bidding review

South bids 2 S with 2 of the top 3 honours

North keycards in Hearts to find out about the King of Hearts

After the ace asking auction, North bids 5NT to ask about kings, which guarantees all the keycards and the Q of hearts have been found.

South knows N will have the A of Spades, and with 2 extra spades (beyond the 5 promised by bidding 2S). South can safely bid 7S.

He can count 7 Spades, at least 4 hearts and 2 minor suit aces. He knows N has the AQ of Hearts as he didn't ask for the queen and even if

the Hearts break 4/1 he can ruff one to set up the 5th heart

In Matchpoints if North visualizes as well as South he can bid 7NT as he knows he has the J of Hearts

Hand #6

N North				
♠ x				
♥ Jxxx				
♦ KQ10x	W	N	E	S
♣ Axxx			2♦	4♠
S You	X	P	P	P
♠ AKxxxxx				
♥ Ax				
♦ J2				
♣ Kx				

West leads the 9 of Diamonds. You can immediately see that the 9D is a singleton. Now's a good time to pause and examine dummy.

What's your plan for the play of the hand? If you play the KD, East very likely plays the Ace.

Once you've decided that, what discard in D encourages the right continuation?

You can guess that Spades are going to break 4-1 or worse (based on the double). You have the potential for 2-3

Spade losers, a Heart loser and a

Diamond loser (4-5 total). If you convince East to continue Diamonds, West will be forced to ruff. Whatever West returns, you can win, draw two rounds of trump (assume East follows once, if it's 5-0 you are doomed anyways), then cross to dummy's A of Clubs, and play a winning Diamond. You pitch your loser Heart, and if West ruffs, that's your last loser (a total of 1 Diamond and 2 Spades).

(Hand #6 continued) The key here is that if East switches to a Heart at trick 2, you're forced to win, and now your Heart loser is exposed. If you try to enter dummy with a Diamond, you will be ruffed by W and then a Heart will sink the contract. If you enter dummy with a Club then play a Diamond, you don't get to throw your Heart because you still have a Diamond left.

Hand #7

		N North				
		♠ Jxxxx				
		♥ Jxx				
		♦ Ax				
		♣ Axx				
W West		S You	W	N	E	S
♠ Q10x		♠ AKxxx	3♦	P	P	3♠
♥ x		♥ Axx	P	4♦	P	4♠
♦ KQxxxxx		♦ Jx	P	P	P	
♣ xx		♣ Kxx				

West leads the King of Diamonds. South wins the the A in dummy and lead a low Spade to the A, finds out that Spades are 3-0 with West having 3. Now we know 10 of Wests cards.

The hand was given in the paper, and the suggestion was after cashing one Spade, play the Ace of Hearts and AK of Clubs, then exit Jack of Diamonds. Now if West wins, and leads back a Diamond, giving you a ruff and sluff, and then you can put them in again with a Spade for another potential ruff and stuff to make the contract.

Notice that if West returns a spade, anticipating the 2nd ruff and sluff, they can avoid the whole situation. Either way, the technique by South is correct to avoid going down 2.

Hand #8

N North				
♠ QJxxxx				
♥ Axxx				
♦ A				
♣ Qx				
S You	W	N	E	S
♠ A	P	1♠	P	2♣
♥ J	P	2♠	P	3♣
♦ KQJ109	P	4♣	P	4NT
♣ AKJxxx	P	5♠	P	7NT

The key thing is that South should immediately be looking for slam

South has 9 or 10 tricks and partner has opened

Therefore the key thing for South to find out to make 7 is how many aces does partner have and do they have the Q of Clubs?

That is why South rebid 3 Clubs instead of 3 Diamonds hoping partner will be able to raise. If partner can't raise Clubs, they may have a 4 card Diamond suit, previously hidden due to a 6 card Spade suit. So, a Diamond fit is not lost.

If North raises clubs South keycards and bids 7NT if partner has 2 Aces and the Club Q

If partner only has 1, South (would partner raise Clubs with 2 small-if the answer is yes South asks for the Q and bids 6 Clubs).

Hand #9

N North				
♠ Qxx				
♥ Axxxx				
♦ xxxxx				
♣				
S You	W	N	E	S
♠ AK10xxxx	1♥	P	1♦	X
♥ x	P	3♠	P	4♦
♦ A	P	4♥	P	4NT
♣ AKxx	P	5♣	P	5♦
	P	6♠	P	7♠

East opens the bidding and S doubles, West bids 1 Heart and partner passes.

When East passes, South knows he probably has 3 hearts and no more than 5 D.

South now bids 2S to show a big hand and West passes which means he probably doesn't have 5H and 4D. Therefore opponents have at most 8 cards in each of the red suits and North is likely to have 8+ cards in the red suits.

North bids 3S and therefore has at most 2 C.

South bid 4D and North bid 4H (Cue bids)

South bid 4NT and when North showed one ace asked for the Q of S and bid 7S

South can count 13 tricks by ruffing the 2 clubs