

♠♥♦♣ LOOKING FOR A DISCARD ♠♥♦♣

North and East both pass. This is your hand:

S	South
♠	A9
♥	AQJ1086
♦	A76
♣	A8

You open 1♥. West passes and your partner raises to 2♥. It's back to you.

When your partner makes a simple raise of your Major, you should get in the habit of counting your "losers". I don't mean all the losers in your hand. I mean the loser in the first 3 positions of each suit. This is your "Losing Trick Count" (LTC) This number gives you help in judging what to rebid. A losing trick count of 7 is normal for a minimum opening. Opposite a single raise, there is no hope in making a game. If your LTC is 6, you should consider making a game try. That is bidding another suit, asking for help in that suit. But, with a LTC of 5 or less, just jump to game. You only need 2 cover cards. These are cards that can eliminate 2 of your 5 losers; leaving you with 10 winners.

You have 1 Spade loser, 1 Heart Loser, 2 Diamond Losers and 1 Club. That is a LTC of 5 and your rebid is 4♥.

West leads the ♠K and this is your dummy. Plan your play:

N	North
♠	432
♥	K53
♦	9854
♣	QJ6

West lead: ♠K

S	South
♠	A9
♥	AQJ1086
♦	A76
♣	A8

You are thankful that you don't have to risk a Heart finesse. But you still have one too many losers. You have 1 Spade, 2 Diamonds and 1 Club loser. How can you eliminate one of the losers?

There are 4 main ways to eliminate losers in a suit contract:

Ruffing in the dummy; finessing, end plays and discarding.

Of these four, only the last offers hope in this situation. You have a "long" suit in the dummy on which you can discard a Diamond. That is the Club suit - such as it is.

Once you drive out the ♣K with the ♣Q, your ♣J is a card you can discard on.

Before you start playing, you must consider the order in which you will take your tricks. Whenever you plan to discard on dummy's long suit, you must make sure you have entries enough to accomplish it. You have only one entry outside of Clubs. That is the ♥K and you must conserve it.

Win the ♠K in your hand and start drawing trump with the ♥AQ. If they break 2-2, you're all set. If they break 3-1, stop drawing after the first two rounds and set up the Clubs. Here, they the trump split 2-2, so you can now turn to the Clubs. You can't afford to take a Club finesse because you will have to use your Heart entry prematurely. Cash the ♣A and give up the ♣Q.

The defenders will take their Spade trick, but you will regain the lead. Lead a Heart to the dummy's carefully preserved ♥K and discard a losing Diamond on the ♣J.

This is the entire deal:

D	N North	
	♠432	
	♥K53	
	♦9854	
	♣QJ6	
W West	W N E S	E East
♠KQ107	Pass Pass 1♥	♠J865
♥97	Pass 2♥ Pass 4♥	♥42
♦K32	Pass Pass Pass	♦QJ10
♣9754		♣K1032
	S South	
	♠A9	
	♥AQJ1086	
	♦A76	
	♣A8	
		4♥ South
		0 0

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/y42zwcga>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. If you don't want to see the opponents hands, click on the white area in the South hand before you start.

Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.