

♠♥♦♣ COUNT YOUR CASINO POINTS ♠♥♦♣

West is the dealer and passes. North and East also pass. This is your hand in the passout seat:

S	euvid
♠	A107
♥	K
♦	AQ42
♣	87643

If you pass you will receive a 0 and beat every other South who goes minus on this board. How do you know if you will receive a minus score in the ultimate contract?

There are clues. You only have one Heart, and if you open a minor, one of the opponents might overcall or double and find their fit in Hearts or even Spades. Or you will compete and end up too high and be set.

There is a rule to help you decide. It's called The Rule of 15. If you add your HCP to the number of Spades in your hand, and if it totals 15 or more, then open. Otherwise, pass. These points are called Casino Points. The Rule is based on which side has the most cards in the master suit – Spades. This is the side that can win the auction without going to the next level.

You have 13 HCP and 3 Spades. Therefore, with 16 Casino Points, you should open the bidding. But what should you open?

Your longest suit is Clubs. But what will you rebid if your partner responds 1♥, 1♠ or 1NT? You can't rebid 2♦. That is a reverse and requires 17 HCP – a much stronger hand than you have.

This is a common bidding problem. Many solve it by opening 1♦. Then you will be able to rebid 2♣ and still show a minimum opener. You are only distorting the distribution of your hand, not the strength. This is a much safer lie.

As expected, your partner responds 1♥ and East pipes up with a 1♠ overcall. You can make the 2♣ rebid you were planning on, but West supports his partner with 2♠.

Now it's up to your partner to either pass, double or raise one of your minors to the 3-level. He rebids 3♣.

East passes and it's back to you. Since partner was a passed hand, you don't have enough to make a minor suit game. You pass and you declare the contract in 3♣.

West leads the highest card in his partner's suit – the ♠J. This is a standard lead in a suit you've supported. If you hadn't supported, the lead would be the ♠2, showing count. You see this dummy:

N	Robot
♠	53
♥	10954
♦	J8
♣	AKQ52

Lead: ♠J

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♠	A107
♥	K
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Your plan should be to win the ♠A, draw trump ending in the dummy and lead a low Heart to your ♥K. If the ♥A is in East, she may play low to this first Heart, giving you a sneaky extra winner. You must lose a Spade to ruff the 3rd Spade. Then you can run the ♦J to finesse against the ♦K.

Unfortunately, both the Heart and the Diamond finesse lose. But you should end up only losing to the ♥A, ♦K and ♠K – making 4 Clubs.

This is the entire deal:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">8</div>	N Robot	♠ 53	♥ 10954	♦ J8	♣ AKQ52
	W Robot	♠ J42	♥ A63	♦ K10953	♣ 109
	S euvid	♠ A107	♥ K	♦ AQ42	♣ 87643
	E Robot	♠ KQ986	♥ QJ872	♦ 76	♣ J
		W	N	E	S
		P	P	P	1♦
		P	1♥	1♠	2♣
		2♠	3♣	P	P
		P			
		3♣ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/23sfcrho> 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.

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