

♠♥♦♣ TAP THE DECLARER ♠♥♦♣

Take a look at this deal:

You are sitting South and East/West have an uncontested auction, ending in 4♠, by East. It's your lead.

When you are blessed with 4 or more cards in the trump suit, the best lead is a singleton – for obvious reasons. Without a singleton, the best lead is from a “lump”. This is a long chunky suit. Declarer will be short in that suit and will probably ruff after a few rounds. But, that's the objective. Make the declarer use his 5-card trump suit and reduce his trump holding to fewer than your own. That's called “Tapping the Declarer.”

You lead the ♥5 and dummy plays low. North has two honors in the suit – one above and one below the dummy's honor. The correct play is to insert the lower honor – the ♥J. This wins the trick and partner now leads the ♥A and another Heart. Declarer will ruff and start to pull trump. You will wait until East plays dummy's last spade and take your ♠A. Now the ♥K will force the Declarer to use his last trump.

East will now take all his remaining winners. But, when he gets to the third Diamond, you will ruff with your ♠5 and win your last Heart. That's down 2. And that's Tapping the Declarer.

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yyl69vek>, 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.