

ENDPLAY

In bridge, giving a trick to one of the Opponents (Defenders), for a return which will supply more tricks is called an “endplay”. An **endplay** (“*throw-in*”) is a tactical playeclarer, applied normally towards the end of the hand, where a Defender is purposefully put on lead at a strategic moment, and then, as a result, has to make a play that loses one or more tricks by forcing the Defender to lead disadvantageously. Most commonly the endplay causes the Defender to give Declarer a free finesse, or a ruff and a sluff, or it causes the Defender to lead a card which allows Declarer entry into Dummy or Declarer’s hand, into which Declarer could otherwise not enter without assistance. An simple example of an endplay might be where the Defender, having been thrown in on the 11th trick must lead from the last two cards of his/her hand when those cards are KJ of a suit, when Declarer or Dummy holds the AQ.

Examples of an Endplay

1. South is playing in 6-Spades with these hands:

♠	A 9 8 5 3 2
♥	K J 5 4
♦	4
♣	K 4
N	
S	
♠	K 7 6 4
♥	A 10 9
♦	A 8 7
♣	A Q 9
♠	9 8
♥	K J 5
♦	-
♣	-
N	
S	
♠	7 6
♥	A 10 9
♦	-
♣	-

West leads the Diamond King. If the Defender’s Spades are divided 2-1, there are 12 certain tricks (6 Spade tricks, 2 Hearts, 1 Diamond, 3 Clubs) and the possibility of a 13th by correctly guessing the two-way finesse (or dropping the Queen) in Hearts. But if the spades are 3-0, the Declarer will need an endplay to avoid the Heart guess. He should start by winning the Diamond Ace and ruffing a Diamond in Dummy, then cash the Spade Ace and Spade King. If this reveals a 3-0 trump split, he now ruffs another Diamond in Dummy. If this is not trumped, the contract is now assured. Declarer's plan now is to play the King, Ace, and Queen of clubs, discarding a Heart from Dummy to reach this end position

South now exits with a Spade, and whoever wins is endplayed. If the Defender leads a Heart, North-South must make three Heart tricks; if a Club or Diamond, Declarer will ruff in one hand and discard a Heart from the other, making an extra trump trick. Or if the Defender has fewer than 3 Clubs and chooses to ruff before the above position is reached, he is likewise endplayed, having to lead a Heart or a Diamond.

2. South is on lead and needs to win 2 tricks.

	<u>North</u>	
	--	
	♥8 7 6	
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>
J		--
♥Q 5		♥10 9 4
	<u>South</u>	
	3	
	♥K J	

If South cashes the Heart King, as most Players would, that would be the only trick for his/her side. Instead, south plays the Spade 3. West must win and is now endplayed. West's forced Heart return gives South two winners.