PLANNING THE PLAY

The bidding has finished - the opening lead has been placed - dummy has laid out his/her hand:-

PAUSE

Dummy **don't play that singleton until declarer asks you to;**
Declarer **don't play the obvious card immediately.**

At this point everyone should take a few moments to

plan their play.

Declarer

How many tricks can you count?
Are there enough to make your contract?
Do you need to develop some extra ones?
Do you need to get rid of some losers early?

For example

Suit contracts

Do you need to clear trumps so that you can cash your side-suit winners without any danger of their being trumped?
Do you need to take a ruff in the short trump suit to create an extra trick, before clearing trumps?
Do you need to take your side-suit winners and then cross-ruff so that you can make your trumps separately?

No trump contracts

Do you need to set up a long suit before taking your top tricks?
Do you need to make any risky plays (finesses) before cashing your top winners.

Defenders

Can you read declarer's likely line of play?
What can you do to undermine it?

Suit contracts

Has declarer got an obvious source of tricks (good long suit)?
Can you stop him getting to it?
Can you make your tricks before he throws his losers away?
Is he trying to make an extra trick by trumping in dummy?
Can you stop him by clearing dummy's trumps?

No trump contracts

Can you set up a long suit before declarer can set his up?

Everyone

Can you tell where the missing cards are from the opening lead and the play of the cards?

What will you do if an opponent leads a particular suit - will you play high or low?
be ready for it so that you can play a card smoothly - you don't want to sit there dithering when it happens - that just gives the game away about the missing card.