

Some Basics:

- What to lead from specific suit holdings?
- What suit to choose to lead?
- Third hand play
- Second hand play
- When to break the rules?

5 lines of defense and when should we chose one?

- Forcing declarer to lose control
- Going on attack
- Remaining passive
- Cutting down declarer's ruffing power
- Creating trump tricks

Opening Leads

What to lead from various suit holdings?

What Card should I lead against notrump?

- Top from “perfect sequence” of 3 or more honors: ace from A-K-Q, king from K-Q-J
- Top from “broken sequence” of 3 or more honors: ace from A-K-J, queen from Q-J-9
- Top of the touching honors from an interior sequence: jack from K-J-10, ten from Q-10-9
- From a holding of 4 or more cards with at least 1 honor card; lead 4th best:
2 from K-8-7-2, 4 from Q-J-6-4-3
- Bottom card from holding of 3 cards with 1 honor or 2 non touching honors: 5 from Q-8-5, 3 from K-J-3
- Top from 3 card holdings with two touching honors: king from K-Q-4, jack from J-10-5
- Top from a doubleton

Opening Leads

What Card should I lead against a suit contract?

- Most of the time you choose the same card from a given combination, except:
- Don't underlead an ace: ace from A-10-8-6-3
 - Also don't underlead an unsupported King if you have other choices
- Lead higher of touching honors: king from K-Q-8-5-2
 - In a NT contract 5 is an admirable lead

What Card should I lead from 3 or 4 small cards?

- Top of nothing from a 3 card: 8 from 8-5-2
- Second best from 4 cards: 7 from 9-7-6-2

^a Q 5 3

^a 9 7 6 2

^a J 10

^a A K 8 4

Now try these ...

What Card would you lead against a 3NT?

- (a) ^a A 9 7 6 2 4th best
- (b) © Q J 10 5 2 top of sequence
- (c) © 8 6 3 top of nothing
- (d) § K Q 6 3 top from two touching honors
- (e) ^a J 10 8 5 2 top from a broken sequence
- (f) © Q 10 9 2 top of the interior sequence
- (g) ^{..} 9 7 5 2 second best from 4 small cards
- (h) § J 7 6 3rd from 3 cards with an honor

What Card would you lead against contract of 4©

- (a) ^a K J 3 3rd from 3 cards and two nontouching honors
- (b) ^{..} 10 6 top from a doubleton
- (c) § K Q 6 3 top from two touching honors
- (d) ^a A K 6 2 top from two touching honors
- (e) ^{..} A 9 7 5 ace
- (f) § K 10 9 3 top from interior sequence

Opening Leads- Attitude Signal

How do I tell partner that I like his lead?

West partner leads ^a A

^a 8 6 5

^a A K 10 3

^a Q 9 2

^a J 7 4

Now suppose that spade layout had been different:

^a 8 6 5

^a A K 10 3

^a J 9 2

^a Q 7 4

Opening Leads

What suit to chose to lead against notrump?

- When choosing a lead against NT, we compare chance of setting up tricks in a suit and risk of giving away a trick
- Leading from a sequence (such as Q-J-10-5) is good and less risky
- Leading from a strong 4 card suit such as K-J-7-2 and Q-J-8-5 is a fair prospect
- Leading from a 4 card suit when your second-best card is low such as K-7-6-2 and Q-8-6-2 is less attractive. Try to select a safer lead from another suit
- It is usually wrong to lead your strongest suit when it has been bid by opponents
- When your hand is very weak, it may be better to lead a short suit and not your longest suit
- If partner has bid a suit, lead it. Unless you have an excellent suit of your own
- Be passive against 6NT contract and don't lead away from your honor

Opening Leads - What suit to chose to lead against notrump?

What lead after 1NT-3NT bid by opponents:

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| a) ♠ J 7 6 2 | ♥ <u>10</u> 9 3 | ♦ A 8 6 | ♣ Q 7 4 |
| b) ♠ K 7 6 2 | ♥ Q 10 8 <u>3</u> | ♦ J 8 4 | ♣ 8 5 |
| c) ♠ A 4 | ♥ K 10 7 <u>2</u> | ♦ Q 10 6 2 | ♣ 9 8 3 |
| d) ♠ K 10 3 <u>2</u> | ♥ 10 8 3 | ♦ K 10 6 4 | ♣ 9 4 |
| e) ♠ 10 9 8 5 | ♥ 7 | ♦ <u>K</u> Q 10 8 3 | ♣ A 9 4 |
| f) ♠ 10 5 | ♥ <u>J</u> 10 4 | ♦ 10 8 7 2 | ♣ 9 7 6 2 |

Opening Leads against NT - Auction:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
pass	3NT	all pass	1NT

What lead against 3NT after above auction?

- a) ♠ J 7 3 ♥ 10 8 ♦ K J 6 4 2 ♣ J 10 4
- b) ♠ 8 6 4 ♥ 10 9 8 2 ♦ Q J 5 ♣ 8 5 3
- c) ♠ Q 10 5 3 ♥ 7 6 3 ♦ Q 2 ♣ K 10 7 4

Opening Leads

What suit to chose to lead in a suit contract?

- A singleton particularly spot card in an unbid suit is usually promising
- Leading a doubleton is less likely to result in a ruff. Be reluctant to lead a doubleton with a honor
- When suspecting a healthy side suit in the dummy, make an attacking lead in an unbid suit:
 - A sequence of K-Q-J-x is the most promising attacking lead
 - Next best is a holding of two honors K-Q-x-x or K-J-x-x
 - A holding of Q-10-x-x is better than Q-9-x-x Or Q-8-x-x
- It is rarely a good idea to lead from A-x-x-x or A-x-x. If you decide to lead from such a suit, lead the ace.
- Lead a trump because bidding tells that such lead is beneficial and not because your are nervous making an attacking lead!!
- Usually make an attacking lead against a small slam in a suit. This is to try to setup a second trick for defence before declarer can establish any discards.

Opening Leads, suit contract:

What lead from each of the West hands below, after:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
pass	4♠	all pass	2♠

a) ♠ 3 2	♥ Q 9 7 2	♦ K 10 8 <u>3</u>	♣ J 9 4
b) ♠ 9 7 <u>5</u>	♥ A 10 7 3	♦ A J 8 4	♣ 9 2
c) ♠ 10 5	♥ K J <u>3</u>	♦ J 8 7 2	♣ Q 7 6 2
d) ♠ Q 9 3	♥ K J 8 <u>2</u>	♦ J 9 6	♣ 10 8 5

Opening Leads, suit contract:

What lead from each of the West hands below, after:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	3♥	Pass	1♥
all pass			4♥

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| a) ♠ <u>Q</u> J 8 2 | ♥ Q 9 3 | ♦ 10 7 4 2 | ♣ J 3 |
| b) ♠ J 8 2 | ♥ J 6 | ♦ J 9 8 <u>5</u> 2 | ♣ J 7 3 |
| c) ♠ Q 8 5 4 | ♥ 9 7 6 | ♦ K J 7 5 2 | ♣ <u>6</u> |
| d) ♠ K 7 6 2 | ♥ 9 7 <u>3</u> | ♦ J 8 4 | ♣ A 10 4 |

Opening Leads, suit contract:

What lead from each of the West hands below, after:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	3♣	Pass	1♠ 3♠
Pass	4NT	pass	5♦
Pass	6♠	all pass	

- | | | | |
|------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------|
| a) ♠ 7 5 | ♥ 10 7 6 2 | ♦ K 10 7 <u>3</u> | ♣ 9 6 3 |
| b) ♠ 10 2 | ♥ <u>Q</u> J 7 | ♦ K 9 6 5 2 | ♣ J 6 4 |
| c) ♠ A 6 4 | ♥ 5 | ♦ <u>10</u> 9 7 4 2 | ♣ J 7 5 3 |

Third-Hand Play

You undoubtedly heard "3rd hand play high" but why?

a	Q 9 6 <u>3</u>	a	7 4 2	a	K 10 8 5
		a	A J		

What if dummy has a high card in the suit led?

a	Q 9 8 <u>2</u>	a	J 6 4	a	K 10 3
		a	A 7 5		

In 3rd seat, when your top card can beat dummy's honor, play your second highest card when it is 9 or higher and dummy plays low

What if you have two cards of equal rank?

a	K 10 7 <u>2</u>	a	9 6 4	a	Q J 5
		a	A 8 3		

When you have two touching honors, play the lowest of the touching honors

Third-Hand Play

Suppose the cards lie differently:

	a 9 6 4	
a K 10 7 <u>2</u>		a Q 8 5
	a A J 3	

West lead 2 against a suit contract:

	a Q 6 4	
a J 8 7 <u>2</u>		a K 10 9
	a A 5 3	

Suppose the cards lie differently:

	a Q 6 4	
a J 8 7 <u>2</u>		a K 10 5
	a A 9 3	

Third-Hand Play

When should you break the "3rd hand play high" rule?

Partner leads jack against a suit contract:

	a 9 4 3	
a <u>J</u> 10 5		a K 8 6 2
	a A Q 7	

Against NT contract you can go up with K as partner may have led from A-J-10-X holding and to prevent declarer scoring a undeserved trick with his Q-x

Many players go wrong in next situation, West leads 2 in a suit contract:

	a A 10 <u>7</u>	
a K 8 5 <u>2</u>		a J 6 3
	a Q 9 4	

In a NT contract might as well play J as partner may have led from K-Q-5-2

Another common situation for breaking the rule:

Auction:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	4 [©]	1 ^a all Pass	2 [©]

North
 a 3
 © A 9 4 3
 .. Q J 7 6 4
 § Q 9 6

West
 a 8 4
 © 8 2
 .. K 10 5 2
 ♣ 10 8 7 4 2

East
 a K 10 9 7 5 2
 © 7 6
 .. A 9
 § A K 5

South
 a A Q J 6
 © K Q J 10 5
 .. 8 3
 § J 3

What about this situation?

Auction:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	
pass	3♣	Pass	1♣ 4♣	all pass

North

a 7 6

♣ A 10 8 6

♦ A Q J 3

§ 9 8 4

West

a Q led

East

a A 9 5 4 2

♣ 4

♦ 10 8 6 2

§ K 7 5

The full hand, P leads the Q of Spades

North

a 7 6

© A 10 8 6

.. A Q J 3

§ 9 8 4

West

a Q J 10 3

© 9 3

.. 9 7 5

♣ A J 6 3

East

a A 9 5 4 2

© 4

.. 10 8 6 2

§ K 7 5

South

a K 8

© K Q J 7 5 2

.. K 4

§ Q 10 2

Second-Hand Play

- As a general rule, you should play low in 2nd seat. For reasons such as
 - You hope to capture a big card with an ace or king.
 - To leave declarer guessing. Suppose declarer is leading towards K-J holding and you have the ace, If you rise with the ace, you will save him a guess
- Split your honors in second seat when fear that declarer will otherwise finesse and you will not score either of your cards
- It is often wrong to rise with the ace when declarer leads a side-suit singleton from dummy:
 - If he holds K-J-x-x you will save him guessing
 - If he holds Q-J-x-x, you will setup a ruffing finesse against partner's king
 - Rise with the ace only when you can see a chance of beating the contract

Second-Hand Play

What should you do when declarer leads ^a 2?

^a K 10 7 4

^a A 8 6

^a J 9 5 3

^a Q 2

In 6NT contract, needing one trick, declarer leads ^a 4?

^a K J 5

^a A 10 7 3

^a Q 9 6 2

^a 8 4

Declarer leads 2 from his hand should you split your honors?

^a A 10 4

^a Q J 5

^a 8 7 3

^a K 9 6 2

Declarer leads 2 from dummy, should you split your honors?

^a 7 4 2

^a 10

^a Q J 6

^a A K 9 8 5 3

Forcing Declarer to lose control

Most powerful line of defence, aiming for declarer to lose control of the trump suit

Patterns where it is used

- Declarer has a two suiters
- You have 4 trumps or believe your partner does
- 4-3 trump contracts
- When long trump hand can be forced to ruff early

Contract 4H, lead Ace of D

Auction:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	Pass	Pass	1♣
2♣	3♣	Pass	4♣
All pass			

North

^a K Q 8 4

♣ Q 10 7 2

♣ 8 3

§ K 9 5

West

^a 9 2

♣ A 6 5 3

♣ A K Q 10 9

§ 6 4

Going “Active” when tricks can disappear

You must take tricks that belong to you. We should get very active whenever we think declarer is going to set up winners to pitch his losers on.

Patterns where it is used

- Anytime it is obvious tricks can go away
- Declarer’s side suit is breaking
- Vigorous bidding (slam interest)
- Long running suits (e.g. gambling 3NT)

Contract 4H, lead Ace of D

Auction:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	2§	Pass	1©
pass	3©	pass	2©
all pass			4©

On this hand you know dummy has a good suit in clubs and by looking at your clubs, is likely to break. You need to attack with your best suit (diamonds)

West

a A 7 2

© 9 4

· K J 4 2

§ 10 6 5

The full hand

West

a A 7 4 2

© 9 4

.. K J 4 2

♣ 10 6 5

North

a Q 10 3

© K 8

.. 10 8 3

§ A K J 8 3

East

a J 9 6 5

© 10 6 5

.. A 9 7

§ 9 4 2

South

a K 8

© A Q J 7 4 2

.. Q 6 5

§ Q 7

Remain “Passive” when your tricks are safe

You must relax, don't snatch winners, break suits for declarer and if on lead (prefer not to be), choose worthless suits, or top from sequences and generally give declarer nothing !!

Patterns where it indicates remaining passive:

- No evidence of strong side suit for declarer
- Declarer very strong, dummy weak
- A misfit or bad split in key suits
- No real suit to lead against NT
- Defending 6NT or grand slams

Auction:

West
pass
pass

North
pass
2NT

East
pass
Pass

South
1NT
3NT all pass

On this hand you have no suit of your own, attacking from any other suit will give declarer a gift. Play passive by playing 8 of C.

North

^a Q J 4

© 8 7 5

.. K 5 4 3

§ K 10 3

West

^a A 6

© Q 9 4 3

.. J 8 7 6

♣ 8 5 4

East

^a K 8 7 3

© 10 6 2

.. 9 2

§ A J 9 7

♣ South

^a 10 9 5 2

© A K J

.. A Q 10

§ Q 6 2

Cutting Down Declarer's Ruffing Power

This is the case that you should be leading a trump

Patterns where it indicates leading a trump:

- Partial or total misfit
 - Mere suit preference given
 - Misfit in general
 - Your side has trump stack (control)
- Bidding suggest Dummy Shortness
 - Dummy denied NT due to flaw
 - Dummy bid two suits and raised a third
- You are strong in Other Suits
 - You control opponents side suit
 - You control all other suits
 - Opponents are sacrificing

Auction:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	1NT	Pass	$\frac{1^a}{2^{**}}$ all pass

In this auction partner left declarer in his 2nd suit. Neither defenders were able to balance (clearly a misfit), dummy will be short in spades. Lead 3 of D

North

^a 6

© Q 9 7 4 3

** Q 7 6

§ K 10 6 4

West

^a K 3 2

© A 10 8 3 2

** A 9 3

♣ 8 7 5

East

^a Q 10 9 5

© J 6

** 8 5 2

§ A Q 9 3

South

^a A J 8 7 4

© K 5

** K J 10 4

§ J 2

Creating Trump Tricks

There are two conditions to create trump tricks:

- Ruffing Declarer's Tricks
 - You are short in any unbid suit
 - You are long in opponent's side suit (both bid and raised, then partner is short)

Use this when you have no natural trump trick of your own and when you can reasonably expect an entry such as a high trump honor to bring in the ruff.

- Promoting Trump Tricks of your own
 - Trump promotion
 - Trump uppercut

Trump Promotion

Case 1: Here any lead that both North and East can ruff will promote East's Queen into a trick !

North

^a A K J 10 7

East

^a Q 6

Case 2: Here also both North and West can ruff. If East refuses to over ruff the Jack or Ten, a second trump trick is created !

North

^a A K J 10 7

East

^a Q 9 8 2

Trump Promotion

Case 3: Sometimes just forcing dummy to ruff will promote a trump trick

North

^a A Q J

© 6

.. K Q J 10 7

§ A 7 5 3

East

^a 10 9 7 4

© A 9 2

.. 4 2

§ J 10 8 2

The declarer is in 6S and partner leads King of Heart. Overtake the king and lead a heart back. This guarantees (promotes a trump trick)

Trump Uppercut:

Auction:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	2§	3 ^{..}	1 ^a
pass	3 ^a	pass	3 [©]
			4 ^a all pass

North

^a A Q 7

[©] Q 9

^{..} Q 5

§ K J 5 4 3 2

West

^a J 10 8

[©] 10 3

^{..} A 8 6

♣ A Q 8 7 6

East

^a 9 5

[©] 7 6 4 2

^{..} K J 10 9 7 4

§ 10

South

^a K 6 4 3 2

[©] A K J 8 5

^{..} 3 2

§ 9

West leads ace of D and another D. East takes the king and lead back 10 of C.