

OPENING LEADS

It is important to consider your opening lead. In the long run a good opening lead can break declarer's contract; conversely a poor opening lead can gift declarer an extra trick.

Consider carefully what you will lead. You may want to consider the bidding. The bids will still be on the table for you to look at.

Against No Trumps

The conventional opening lead against a NT contract is **4th highest card from your longest suit**. But if you have a sequence, such as K Q J x or Q J 10 x or J 10 9 x, you should lead the top card in the sequence

However, if partner has bid a suit, you should lead your highest card of partner's bid suit.

When leading against a suit contract experience shows that there are some leads that usually turn out to be **good** and some that are definitely **bad**.

Against Suit Contracts - Good leads

Top of a sequence preferably a sequence of 3 cards but 2 is OK. AKxx KQxx QJ10

Low from an honour Lead low from a suit headed by the K, Q or J.

Top of nothing lead the top of a suit in which you do not hold an honour.

Partner's bid suit lead your highest card of partner's bid suit or low from an honour.

Singleton hoping that partner will be able to return the suit for you to ruff.

Against Suit Contracts - Poor leads

Your opponent's bid suit(s)

An Ace unless it is top of a sequence or your partner's bid suit

Underleading an Ace but it is OK to lead J from A J 10 9 and it is OK to lead 4th highest from a suit headed by the ace when defending a NT contract

Broken honours don't lead suits headed by A Q or K J unless it is partner's bid suit.

Doubleton hoping that partner will be able to return the suit for you to ruff. In practice this rarely happens because declarer will have removed your trumps before you get chance to ruff.

There are two exceptions .

If you hold A x, you can lead the ace and then the low card. Now there is a better chance of gaining the ruff but beware you may be helping to set up that suit for declarer.

If you hold a doubleton in partner's bid suit you can lead the highest card first.

When your partner makes the opening lead, take a look at dummy's cards and your cards and from what partner has lead, try to work out what cards partner might hold in that suit and play accordingly. If in doubt play high and hope!!