

Opening
Leads
Against
Suit Contracts
5th November
2014

First a
refresher on
standard
opening leads

*(Similar leads
can be made*

*against NT
contracts)*

Sequence
leads – lead
the **TOP** of a
sequence

A K 6 5 (two card
sequence)

Q J 10 2 (*three
card sequence*)

Interior
sequence –
lead the top
card of the
sequence . . .

K **I** 10 8

Q **10** 9 2

It's generally
accepted that
with “lower”

interior
sequences to
lead 4th best ...

e.g.

Q ~~9~~ 8 5 4

J ~~8~~ 7 6 2

Very
important
point

(assuming an
honour is
held) ...

Only lead 4th
best with a
broken
suit/poor
interior
sequence

Q 10 7 5 2 /

J ~~8~~ 7 6 2

... so sequence
leads take
priority over
4th best leads

...

K Q J ~~2~~ (never the 2;

may give a

cheap trick to

10)

Q 10 9 ~~3~~ (never the

3)

With three
cards to an
honour *(and no
sequence)* lead the
lowest card

Q 8 5 K

6 4

With three or
more poor
cards lead the
2nd highest (or
top if you prefer) ...

10 8 6 3 /

9 7 3

With a
doubleton
lead the
higher card ...

I 4

8 6 (*doubleton – and
singleton – leads are
dangerous but don't dismiss
them*)

... and most
importantly
when
defending
against suit
contracts ...

NEVER
UNDERLEAD
A SIDE SUIT
ACE AT TRICK
ONE ...

(if you take away just one
thing from this morning
make it this) ...

(until you
become a
bridge genius
... 1st January
2015?)

... for
example:

8 6 4

A Q 7 ~~5~~ 3

10 2

K J 9

Today's hands
are less about
standard
leads than
how to
approach the
defence –

passively or
actively

(Board 1 Talk)

– passive
defence

(Board 2 Talk
– active
defence)

Approach to Leading Against Suit Contracts – Some General Pointers

- * Think about the bidding before you lead. Against a trump contract it is often best (but not always) to make a passive lead.
- * Usually lead a suit bid by partner.
- *(Very) long suits are less attractive leads as declarer will often ruff our winners.
- * Leading from a sequence of honours may quickly set up winners that may be cashable (i.e. not ruffed out).
- * Make passive leads to avoid giving away tricks that do not come back. Sometimes a trump lead may be a good passive lead.
- * (Again) **Never underlead, at trick one, an ace in a suit contract. Avoid, if possible, leading a suit headed by the ace unless you hold the king as well.**

PTO!

Additional points (about trump leads)

* Have a positive reason for leading trumps. Such reasons include:

- * stopping (or reducing) ruffs in dummy
- * preventing a crossruff
- * being passive when no other lead appeals
- * when our side has most of the points
- * partner has passed our take out

Double (i.e. converted it to a penalty)

- * Try not to lead a singleton trump – it often exposes partner's honour and costs a trick.
- * With long trumps prefer a forcing defence (i.e. seek to force declarer to ruff in his long trump hand thereby promoting our trump length to winning status).
- * lead your lowest trump unless holding a sequence.