

Defending against NT contracts - Revision

Leads

Generally fourth best card of our 'longest and strongest' suit.

♠ 6 4

♥ K 7 3

♦ Q T 7 4 2

♣ A 5 2

♦ 4 is the best lead here

If you have (at least) three high cards together lead "top of a sequence"

♠ K 9 4

♥ J 4 2

♦ K 7

♣ K Q J 7 3

♣ K is the best lead here

Also lead "top of an interior sequence"

♠ A J T 9 3

♥ 6 4

♦ 9 2

♣ K 7 4 2

♣ J is the best lead here

If you only have two cards in sequence it is usually best to lead "4th highest"

♠ K Q 6 2

♥ Q J 7 4 2

♦ J 3

♣ 9 4

♥ 4 is the best lead here

With three honours you need to lead an honour

♠ Q T 8 4

♥ 9

♦ K J T 7 2

♣ Q J 7

♦ J is the best lead here

If you have a poor suit, with no honour, then second highest is usually best

♠ 8 6 5 3 2

♥ K 9

♦ J 6 3

♣ A 7 5

♣ 6 is the best lead here (and play the two on the next round of the suit)

Prefer a major suit to a minor suit

♠ Q T 7 5 3

♥ 9

♦ Q T 9 4 2

♣ K 5

♣5 is the best lead here

Lead partner's suit (if he has bid)

Partner has bid Diamonds

♠ K 9 3

♥ Q 8 6 2

♦ 7 4

♣ Q J 4 3

♦7 is the best lead here

.....unless you are very, very short in it

Partner has bid hearts

♠ K 3 2

♥ 2

♦ J T 9 4 2

♣ K 9 4 2

♦J is probably the safest lead here

Even if partner has bid sometimes you have a better suit yourself

Partner has bid hearts

♠ 9 6 3

♥ J 4 2

♦ A 6

♣ K Q J T 7

♣K is the best lead here, ignoring partner's bid

Avoid leading declarer's suit

Declarer has bid spades

♠ K 9 6 3 2

♥ 9 7

♦ Q 4

♣ Q J T 3

Do not lead a spade. ♣Q is the best lead here

.....unless you have a very good holding in declarer's suit

Declarer has bid Diamonds

♠ 5 3

♥ K 6

♦ K Q J T 4

♣ Q J T 3

Here ♦K is the best lead

What should partner play?

The general rule for partner is 'third hand plays high'.

♥ 8 4 3

(dummy)

♥5 (lead)

(you) ♥ K J 2

Here you should play ♥K on the first trick

Partner should play the lowest of touching cards

♠ 8 6 4

(dummy)

♠5 (lead)

(you) ♠ Q J 9

Here you should play the ♠J on the first trick

Don't play unnecessarily high

♣ J 8 7

(dummy)

♣3 (lead)

(you) ♣ Q T 5

Here you should play the ♣T (unless dummy plays the Jack)