

## Standard Leads Table

What to lead from a particular card holding	Leads against NT contracts	Leads against Suit Contracts
<b>Top of an honour sequence</b> e.g. <u>A</u> KQx(x), <u>K</u> QJx(x), <u>Q</u> JTx(x) NB x = any spot card.	The lead promises a sequence of 3 touching cards	The lead promises a sequence of 2 touching cards
<b>A sequence of 2 honours</b> and any additional spot cards e.g. KQxx(x), AKxx(x)	<b>4<sup>th</sup> highest</b> e.g. KQ4 <u>3</u> , AK6 <u>4</u> 3	<b>Top of sequence</b> As above e.g. <u>K</u> Q54, <u>A</u> K73
<b>A near sequence:</b> Two touching honours, missing the next, holding the 3 <sup>rd</sup> honour or a 9.	<b>Lead top of the near sequence.</b> e.g. <u>K</u> Q10x(X), <u>Q</u> J9x(x)	<b>Lead top of the near sequence.</b> e.g. <u>K</u> Q10x(X), <u>Q</u> J9x(x)
<b>Top of an interior sequence</b> e.g. <u>A</u> J10xx, <u>K</u> J10x(x),	Lead the top of the sequence in the middle of the holding e.g. <u>A</u> J10x(x), <u>K</u> J10x(x)	<b>Avoid</b> leading from an interior sequence against a suit contract. Choose another suit.
<b>A suit headed by an ace</b> e.g. Axxx(x),	4 <sup>th</sup> highest e.g. A87 <u>6</u> 3, A95 <u>3</u>	Choose another suit. <b>NEVER</b> lead away from an ace against a suit contract. It usually gives declarer a trick they don't deserve! <b>And don't lead the Ace – it promises you also have the King!</b>
<b>A suit headed by any other honour - lead low from an honour</b> e.g. Kxx, Qxxx, Kxxx	Avoid leading from a 3 card suit head by an honour – unless it is partner's suit otherwise lead <b>4<sup>th</sup> highest</b>	<b>Lead low from an honour</b> but it can be risky leading away from a King. e.g. K7 <u>3</u> , K73 <u>2</u> . Don't lead a low card if you only hold 3 cards to the Queen. E.g. Qxx – find another suit to lead from. Leading from Jxxx can also be risky and often costs the defence a trick.
<b><u>A</u>K doubleton</b>	<b>Avoid leading from this suit</b>	<b>Lead the King, then the Ace</b> – shows exactly these two cards in the suit. If you can get partner to win the next trick, they will be able to give you a ruff
<b>Any Doubleton</b> e.g. <u>10</u> 5, <u>8</u> 3	<b>Avoid leading against a NT contract</b> unless it is a suit partner has bid.	<b>Lead top of a doubleton (playing high then low)</b> shows an even number of cards in the suit – usually two. You hope partner can win the next two tricks and give you ruff. Can be a good lead if you have a weak hand and a few trumps. Avoid leading a doubleton in a suit bid by declarer/dummy.
<b>3 worthless cards: MUD</b> Middle Up Down - e.g. <u>8</u> 7 <u>5</u> , <u>9</u> 6 <u>4</u> , <u>7</u> 4 <u>2</u>	<b>MUD - Lead the middle card, then lead the higher card and then lead the lowest card.</b> Playing a low card then a higher card tells partner you didn't start with an even number of cards.	<b>MUD - Lead the middle card, then lead the higher card and then lead the lowest card.</b> Playing a low card then a higher card tells partner you didn't start with an even number of cards.
<b>Four worthless cards</b> e.g. <u>9</u> 8 <u>7</u> 5, <u>9</u> 8 <u>6</u> 4, <u>9</u> 7 <u>4</u> 2	<b>Lead 2<sup>nd</sup> highest from rubbish.</b> Then play your lowest card. Shows an even number – partner will work out it is 4 when you play a 3 <sup>rd</sup> card from the holding.	<b>Lead 2<sup>nd</sup> highest from rubbish.</b> Then play your lowest card. Shows an even number – partner will work out it is 4 when you play a 3 <sup>rd</sup> card from the holding the next time the suit is played.

## Extract from Andrew Robson's lesson on Defence:

Did you know that about half of all contracts that start life in the balance are decided one way or the other by the opening lead? Here is a list of the various types of lead v a suit contract and their approximate effectiveness (0-10) assuming the suit has not been bid:

Holding	Effectiveness	Holding	Effectiveness
<b>A</b> K74	10	<b>8</b> 52	4
<b>3</b>	9	Q <b>9</b> 5 <b>2</b>	4
<b>K</b> QJ6	9	<b>J</b> 4	2
<b>K</b> Q76	8	K <b>7</b> 5 <b>2</b>	2
<b>Q</b> J104	8	K <b>J</b> 5 <b>3</b>	2
<b>Q</b> J52	7	A10 <b>7</b> 4	0
<b>8</b> 3	5		

Note that the lead card has been red, according to the following guidelines:

- (1) Lead top of two+ touching high cards.
- (2) Lead low from a suit you like.
- (3) Lead high from a suit you hate.
- (4) Lead top of a doubleton.