



Opening Leads against No Trumps

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Opening Leads against No Trump Contracts

♥ Primary objective:

- ♣ **Establish the long cards (4th & 5th) in your and your partner's best suits**
- ♣ **This is likely to require you to give up a early tricks – not what you would wish to do against a Trump contract.**

♦ Secondary objective:

- ♠ **Avoid giving declarer easy wins without promoting one of your or your partners' cards**

Some general considerations

- ♦ Consider who has the stronger hand that will win most tricks – partner or you
- ♠ Often, your priority should be to help your partner establish her longest suit.
- ♥ Opposition will have looked for a fit in a major before deciding to play in NT. This could indicate a vulnerability in a major, particularly if the other was bid.
- ♣ Suits bid by your partner and opponents indicate length – for discouraging or encouraging a lead suit.
- ♦ In unbid suits, partner likely to be longer in a suit if you are short, e.g. if you have a doubleton.

Suit to lead

Information available		Implication / Consideration	Suit to lead	
Has Partner bid a suit or doubled an artificial bid as a lead indicator?		Partner likely to be long and reasonably strong in suit	Lead suit bid by or indicated by partner	
Suit bid by Declarer		Avoid unless you are very strong in it		
Suit bid by Dummy (or indicated by a transfer)		Avoid, particularly if you are strong in it		
Estimated strength of your Partner	10+ HCP	Partner likely to win more tricks than you	Lead a short suit, hoping that Partner has length and strength in suit	
	4- 9 HCP	Partner likely to win only a couple of tricks. It will be a joint effort.	Without 5+card suit and points spread across suits	Lead from a suit with no or least honours
			With a 5+card suit	Lead from a long suit
	1 – 3 HCP	Partner unlikely to win tricks – it's down to you!	Lead from a long suit	

Card to lead from chosen suit

Criteria		Examples of what to lead	
1	Top card from a sequence of 3 cards, headed by an honour (incl. 10)	K Q J 8 3	J 10 9 5 2
2	Top card from a broken sequence, headed by an honour	A K J 5 4	Q J 9 6 3
3	Top of an internal sequence, headed by an honour	A Q J 6 2	Q 10 9 7 3
4	The middle of three separated honours	A Q T 6 2	
5	The fourth highest from a long suit with one or two honours ("low" for "like") *	K Q 5 3 2	J 10 8 5 3
6	The second highest from a long suit with no honours ("high" for "hate")	9 8 5 3 2	9 7 4 2

* Avoid leading from a suit where you hold a "tenace", (AQ, KJ)

Also, try to avoid leading a low card from a long suit where you hold only the King or the Queen

When leading from a doubleton, always lead the top card first,