

CHOOSE WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU GAIN THE LEAD

		K73			
		53	2 Spades		
		A7652			
		864			
J94				105	PASS
Q104	PASS			KJ872	
KQ10				J984	
Q1093				J7	

AQ862			
A96	DEALER – 1 SPADE		
3	4 SPADES		
AK52			

West leads K Diamonds, you win Ace in dummy. What should you now lead from Dummy? As declarer, when dummy comes down, you should be able to count 9 certain tricks, 5 spades, AH, AD, AC and KC. You need to develop one more trick. Does ruffing a diamond in your hand produce another trick? NO, you already counted 5 spade tricks and now you would be down to just 4 more.

		Q64	3 SPADES		
		J105			
		52			
		KQJ102			
107				832	PASS
9872	PASS			KQ43	
Q10964				J8	
76				A983	

AKJ95	DEALER – 1 SPADE		
A6	4 SPADES		
AK73			
52			

West leads the 9 of hearts. You play the 10 from dummy, Easy plays the Q and you win the Ace of hearts in your hand. What should you now lead from your hand? North only has 9 HCP But felt it was worth a limit raise with a doubleton and healthy clubs. When declarer wins the A of hearts, it's tempting to cash A&K of diamonds and ruff a diamond, but there's a snag.

		K1043	DOUBLE	
		85		
		A9		
		AJ973		
A8	DEALER – 1 Heart			QJ9765
AQ1042				J6
K63	DOUBLE			2 Spades
KQ6				4 (WJS)
				10854
		2		
		K973	3 Diamonds	
		QJ108752		
		2		

West leads the club K, you win the A in dummy. What would you now lead from dummy? A good way for declarer to think about this problem is to decide what he/she DOESN'T want to lead. Definitely not a spade, because the K of spades will most certainly be a trick if it's led up to. Definitely not the A of diamonds because the finesse might be on and declarer might not lose a diamond. Also, not a club because we don't want to tell West that his Q of clubs is not going to be a trick, if he's on lead, he might try to cash the Q of clubs, we ruff and J of clubs is now a good trick. That only leaves leading a heart. I you think about it, a heart makes sense. The hearts are sitting over declarer's KH, but if 2 rounds are played, South can now ruff in the dummy. (Notice dummy's A9 of diamonds.

So, south leads a heart from dummy, East plays the 6, South puts in the 7, and West wins the 10. What does West lead now? What would you lead if you were West? Cashing the A spades sets up the K, not good. Playing Q of clubs, South ruffs and sets up club J, not good, cashing the A of hearts, trying to give East a ruff doesn't work because dummy's trumps are higher than East. The only successful switch by West is to lead a trump. WHENEVER YOU SEE A DECLARER LEADING DUMMY'S SHORT SUIT BEFORE DRAWING TRUMP, IT'S USUALLY RIGHT TO SWITCH TO A TRUMP TO TRY TO PREVENT THE RUFF OR RUFFS.

This is one of the most useful tips for you when you are defending.

FAULT SIGNS

Playing too fast – many errors, such as winning the opening lead in your hand when you should have won in the dummy can be prevented by just slowing down.

Cashing tricks, especially Aces, too early – Planning ahead is good for defenders, too. Aces should capture kings and queens, not 2s and 3s. When the dummy on your left, tables a suit such as K-J-5-4, decide ahead of time that when declarer leads toward that suit, you will duck smoothly.