

HARDEST PART of the GAME is DEFENSE

	QJ9	2 Spades
	K104	4 Spades
	873	
	K1076	
A876		5
86	PASS	9532 Pass
KJ62	Pass	A1054 Pass
J52		Q984
	K10432	
	AQJ7	DEALER 1 Spade
	Q9	3 Hearts
	A3	

3 Hearts is a game try, North accepts the game try. Your lead, how do you defend?

	Q102	
	K10	2 Clubs
	842	4 Spades
	AQJ63	
A		8753 Pass
A653	PASS	QJ972 Pass
10975	Pass	QJ63
10872		VOID
	KJ964	
	84	DEALER 1 Spade
	AK	3 Clubs
	K954	

Your lead against 4 spades, what do you lead and why?

Whoever said defense was the hardest part of the game was right on. More tricks are dropped on defense than on bidding and play combined. You can muddle through the bidding, and playing the hand has to be easier than defending because you can see your partner's hand. Not so on defense.

When defending a hand, you are dealing with a partner: a partner whose leads, signals and discards you must trust implicitly. A tall order. Most defenders don't know how to organize their thinking. They haven't learned to project the necessary cards in partner's hand that are vital to defeating the contract.

AQ102	
QJ3	2 Clubs (Stayman)
Q872	3 NT
109	
KJ865	3
7	PASS
103	PASS
KJ865	96542 PASS
	9654 PASS
	A42
743	
AK109	DEALER 1 NT
AKJ	2 Hearts
Q73	PASS

Your lead against 3 NT after a stayman auction, what do you lead?

62	BOTH VUL.
98	DEALER 3 Clubs
54	PASS
KQJ10987	
J1098	KQ53 PASS
AQ4	PASS
Q832	K10753 PASS
53	KJ
	62
A74	
J62	3 NT
A10976	
A4	

The vulnerability tells you that dummy has 7 good clubs and South is likely to have any missing club honors. You have to find some way to cash a fast 5 tricks, What's your lead and why?

The conventional wisdom is that selecting an opening lead is a two-part decision. you choose the suit first, then the specific card. The “which card?” decision is usually automatic once you’ve decided on the suit, so the main challenge is “which suit?”. This decision will be easier – and more successful – if you back up and ask yourself a broader question. Does this auction call for a passive lead or an aggressive lead? An aggressive lead may give declarer a “gift” if partner has no help in that suit but offers you the best chance to beat the contract if partner has an honor or two. A passive lead isn’t likely to give declarer an extra trick. How do you know when an aggressive lead is the best choice? One of your strongest clues comes when the opponents have identified a long suit for tricks.