



Defence in Trump Suit



The aim of Duplicate Bridge is to gain maximum points for yourself and give minimum points to your opponents. If you have points, don't be shy to bid them by using doubles. As responder, don't be shy to use negative & responsive doubles as you can describe your hand without increasing the bidding.

Your aim in Defending a suit contract is to prevent Declarer from: 1. making the contract and 2. minimising over tricks if they do make their contract.

Although you and your partner are defending, you are both still communicating during play.

Bidding can sometimes give an indication of best lead and best side suit fit ie. intervening overcall; take out double after an opening hand, t/o double after passing (shows 10-11 HCP and usually length in unbid suit/s), negative or responsive double as you and partner may have a 4-4 fit in an unbid suit; weak 2 or pre-empts (length in one suit can mean shortage in other suits).

Opening Leads:

- if partner has bid then lead their suit
- lead Ace if hold AKx(x) as this also provides an opportunity to view dummy.
- singleton of unbid suit, partner may have Ace and can return lead for a ruff.
- strong sequence of own long suit ie. KQJx, QJ10x, J1098 (promotion)
- top of touching honours ie. KQxx, QJxx, J10xx, 109xx
- fourth highest of longest & strongest (length) as partner can use Rule of 11.
- doubleton – lead highest providing hand holds trumps to ruff third round – except if you have Kx or Qx as you may win these through a finesse by declarer
- unbid non-trump suit. MUD or top of nothing with xxx.
- trump if dummy has likely ruffs in short hand or other leads unattractive – “If in doubt, lead trumps”

Note: Never underlead an Ace (declarer's length in trumps means shortages elsewhere) thus always lead the Ace rather than a small one.

Attitude Signals to partner's lead: low like (encourage) / high hate (discourage)

Discards to signal partner which suit you would like led to you; same as Attitude – low like/high hate. Only your very first discard is a signal to partner.

Return partner's lead if possible and if it safe to do so. If partner's lead is **not** returned yet it would be safe and advisable, your partner may have held a singleton and is ready to ruff the second round.

Mid Game: Lead through dummy's strength when dummy is LHO (left hand opponent) as dummy may have gaps in their strong suit ie. A Q 10 and partner may hold K & J. Lead to dummy's weakness when dummy is RHO (right hand opponent) as declarer and partner must share the honours if neither you nor dummy hold them and partner sits after declarer.