

Leads Against No-trump contracts

ANSWERS

- 1.A. ♥ always unless you have a very strong suit of your own
- 1.B. ♠ this is your longest suit, lead the 6 so that partner can work out what Declarer has
- 1.C. ♦ your spades are not strong so you need to bid your best suit
- 1.D. ♣ when you get back in with your A♦ you might make you Q♣
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- 2.A. J - the top of a doubleton
- 2.B. Q - top of touching high cards
- 2.C. 5 - low from three cards not led by touching high cards.
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- 3.A. J - top of a sequence, 3 tricks
If declarer plays dummy's king, partner can win the ace and lead the suit back, driving out declarer's queen. You get three tricks in the suit. If declarer plays a low card from dummy, partner can save the ace to capture dummy's king and let declarer win the first trick with the queen. When the defenders next gain the lead, they again can take three tricks in the suit
- 3.B. Q - top of a broken sequence, 3 tricks
If declarer wins the first trick with the king, either defender can lead the suit next time to drive out dummy's ace and set up three tricks for the defence. If declarer wins the first trick with dummy's ace, partner will have to lead the suit next to trap declarer's 10.
- 3.C. J - top of an interior sequence; 4 tricks
If declarer wins the first trick with dummy's king, to take the four tricks your partner must lead the suit next.
- 3.D. K - top of a three-card sequence; 5 tricks
Your partner must be careful to win the first or second trick with the ace to play a low card back to you. Otherwise, the lead will be stuck in their hand after the first three tricks and you cannot get to your remaining winners.
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- 4.A. 7 - 4th highest, 3 tricks
if you lead low, partner plays the jack and declarer wins the trick with the queen. Declarer wins a second trick with the ace, but if partner later leads

the suit, declarer's 10 is trapped. Declarer takes two tricks and you take three. If you led the king originally, declarer would get three tricks.

4.B. 3 - 4th highest, 3 tricks

If you lead low, partner can win the first trick with the king if declarer plays low from the dummy. Declarer takes a trick with the ace, but your queen takes a third trick and you end up with three tricks in the suit. If you were to lead the queen, declarer would take two tricks in the suit.

4.C. 3 - 4th highest, 5 tricks

If you lead low, partner can win the first trick with the king if declarer plays low from the dummy. Declarer takes a trick with the ace, but your queen takes a third trick and you end up with three tricks in the suit. If you were to lead the queen, declarer would take two tricks in the suit.

5.A. 4♥, your longest suit. With no sequence, lead the 4th highest.

5.B. Q♦, you have a choice of long suits, spades and diamonds, so you should pick the stronger suit. Lead the top of the 3-card sequence.

5.C. 6♠, your long, again you should lead the 4th highest.

6.A. 2♦, the opponents have bid spades, hearts and clubs. The only unbid suit is diamonds, so you should turn to that suit. Your heart suit is stronger than your diamond suit, but since declarer bid the suit your partner is unlikely to have help for you in hearts and you should wait for Declarer to play hearts. Lead a diamond. With no sequence, lead the 4th highest.

6.B. J♦, your only long suit is spades, but the opponent on your left has bid that suit twice. Ignore the general guideline about leading your longest and pick the unbid suit, diamonds. Your partner is likely to have some length and strength in that suit. Lead the top of a sequence.

6.C. K♣, even though the opponents have bid a suit, you should lead it when it obviously presents the best chance to defeat the contract. Lead the K, top of a sequence, establishing three tricks for the defence even if declarer has the Ace

WHY LEAD 4TH IN YOUR LONGEST AND STRONGEST – THE RULE OF 11

If you are the third player, you can use the rule of 11 if you think that your partner led with the 4th highest card in their longest suit.

In most cases the 4th highest card lead is a card lower than the 8.

After your partner has lead, you can see the cards in dummy's hand and you know the cards in your own hand. The Rule of 11 will let you work out if declarer has any cards that are higher than the card led by your partner. If they don't and dummy plays low, then you don't need to play a higher card than your partner to win the trick. It helps you win the trick as cheaply as possible.

You can calculate the number of cards higher than the card lead by subtracting the face value of the card from 11. The result gives the number of cards in the suit that are in the hands of Dummy, Declarer and your own combined. Because you can see both dummy and your own hands you now know if how many cards declarer holds in the suit that are higher than the card lead.

Example

Your partner has played the 7.

Dummy played 2 and you can see that dummy also holds Q and 8.

You hold A, 10 and 3.

Should you play a higher card than your partner to win the trick?

Answer

You think your partner played their 4th highest card so you can use the rule of 11 to work out which card you should play.

Subtract 7 (the card played by your partner) from 11.

This gives you 4

there are four cards higher than 7 **NOT** held by your partner.

You hold A and 10 and dummy holds Q and 8 - all are higher than 7

This tells you that the declarer doesn't hold any card higher than 7, so you can play your 3 and your partnership will still win the trick.

If your holding was A, 5 and 3 instead then

You hold A and dummy holds Q and 8 - 3 higher than 7

This tells you that the declarer holds a card higher than 7, so you must play your A and your partnership will win the trick.