

## Leading Partner's Suit Through Declarer

There are in general 2 situations in which you are going to be doing this. (In either case to be on lead you must have won either the opening lead or a subsequent trick.)

1. Partner led some other suit to begin
2. Partner led the suit originally

### Case 1. Partner led some other suit to begin with.

Examples of auctions include

a)      West              North              East              South  
         2♥              X              Pass              3N  
         AP

b)      West              North              East              South  
         1♥              1♠              2♥              3N  
         AP

c)      West              North              East              South  
         1♥              X              2♥              4♠  
         AP

d)      West              North              East              South  
         1♥              X              Pass              4♠  
         AP

In all of the cases above, partner had some reason for not leading their suit. Sometimes it's because they want a ruff, but often it's because they have a holding that is likely to give up a trick should they lead from it. It's wise to consider ignoring the suit partner led in favor of returning the one that they bid.

When returning partner's suit that they didn't lead, you will often lead the card that you would have led had you been on opening lead.






The rules for this vary depending upon whether or not you have shown 3 cards or more in the auction. In auctions b) & c) you have shown 3 cards and in auctions a) & d) you have not. In auctions in which you have not shown length, it is usually most important to reveal that length to your partner. As such the rules for leading when you didn't support partner are as follows:

1. With touching honors, lead the top of your touching honors
2. From 3 or more lead 3rd highest (even from an honor)
3. From 2 or fewer lead high

In auctions in which you have shown length already, we can apply the BOSTON principle to get the following rules:

1. With touching honors, lead the top of your touching honors
2. With an honor, lead 3rd highest (bottom of something)
3. Without an honor lead your highest (top of nothing)

i) Which card should East lead when switching to the suit if they never supported partner in the auction?

A. 32  K94	B. 32  864	C. 32  A3	D. 32  J104	E. 32  J64
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ii) What changes if they did support partner in the auction?






### Case 2. Partner led their suit to begin with

We should still carefully consider switching if the suit led was passive or dummy makes it clear that there's no future there. However the default should be to help partner out by returning the suit that they led. The difference here *is that you already played a card in your suit to the opening lead*.

It doesn't really matter which card you played. Maybe it was an honor (3rd hand high) and maybe it was an attitude signal when partner led an honor or you couldn't beat dummy. The rules for returning when you have already played a card in the suit are as follows:

1. With touching honors, lead the top of your touching honors
2. With 3 or more remaining, lead 3rd highest
3. With 2 or fewer remaining, lead the highest

iii) Which card should East play when returning the suit partner led?

A. T75  2 J83 Q	B. 96  K 852 A	C. AT3  5 J942 Q	D. 54  3 K86 2	E. K7  T A J853 2
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### Answers

i) A. 4 B. 4 C. A D. J E. J or 4 \*

\*If partner didn't lead their suit it's possible that they started with something like AQTxx. In which case you need to be able to repeat the finesse in case declarer started with Kxx. If you lead a low card declarer will simply duck to partner and partner will be unable to profitably continue the suit. When your honor is the K or A you can lead low, because partner can safely return the suit for you to lead again.

ii) Only B. you would switch to the 8.

iii) A. 8 B. 5 C. 2 D. 8 E. 5

In C and E you lead original 4th best back to partner.