

## **Primer on leading**

### **DONTs**

- Don't lead away from a King or KJ, if you have another option.
- Don't lead trump unless the auction calls for it.
- Don't lead an Ace in suit contract.
- Don't lead the unbid suit when the opponents have jumped to game in NT.
- Don't lead 4<sup>th</sup> best in NT when your hand is weak or your suit is bad.

**Don't do it only when it is wrong!**

## DOs

- Lead 4<sup>th</sup> best from **longest and strongest** in NT contracts.
- Lead top card in **partner's suit**, even if you have a good 5-card suit as an alternative.
- When the opponents are in a major suit contract, lead the **other major**.
- Lead the **unbid suit** in NT or a suit contract if the opponents reached the contract slowly.
- When you have a choice between **two suits**, lead the one with the strongest secondary cards.
- When partner has bid two suits, lead his **2nd suit**.
- When the opponents were aggressive, it is time to be **passive**.
- Lead an **ace** against preempts.
- Lead the **top card** in partner's suit (some exceptions!)

**Do it only when it is right!**

**The lower the card you lead the more you like the suit.**

Example – suit preference.

♠ 7 5  
 ♥ 6 5 4  
 ♦ A K J 6 4 3  
 ♣ 8 7

W	N	E	S
-	-	-	P
2 ♦	2 ♥	3 ♦	4 ♥
All Pass			

What card do you play from

♠ A K 3  
 ♥ 9 8 7  
 ♦ Q 9 7 2  
 ♣ 6 5 4

Full deal:

	♠ Q J 10 9 ♥ A Q 10 2 ♦ 5 ♣ A 10 9 2	
♠ 7 5 ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ A K J 6 4 3 ♣ 8 7	Contract: 4 ♥	♠ A K 3 ♥ 9 8 7 ♦ Q 9 7 2 ♣ 6 5 4
	♠ 8 6 4 2 ♥ K J 3 ♦ 10 8 ♣ K Q J 3	

### **Rule of 11:**

when you are 3rd hand and the opening lead is the 4th highest of a long suit.

You deduct the number of the card led from 11. The result tells you **how many cards**, higher than the one led, are in the other three hands (i.e. in your hand, the dummy and declarer's hand). Once you see the dummy you can then work out how many of those higher cards are held by the declarer.

Let's look at an example.

	North	
	K 9 2	
West		East - You
Lead: 7		A J 3

Math:  $11 - 7 = 4$

So there are **four cards** higher than 7 in the other three hands.

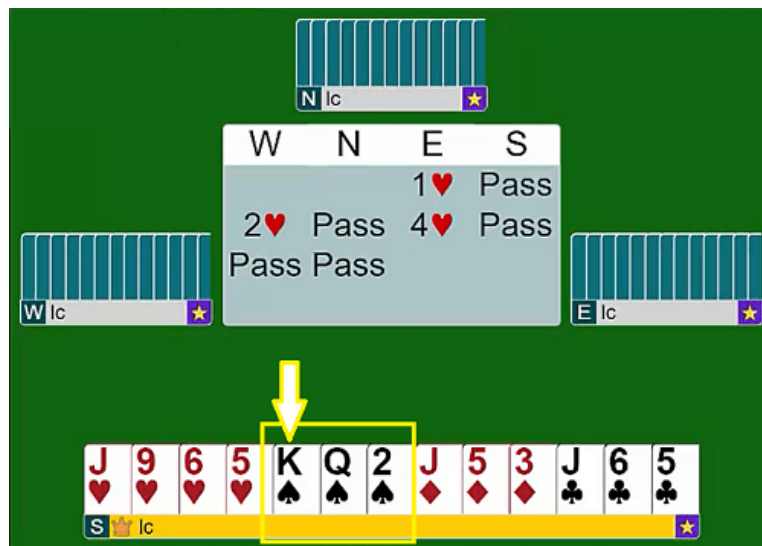
**You see** four cards higher than 7!

You conclude that declarer has **no card higher than 7**.

Four hands:

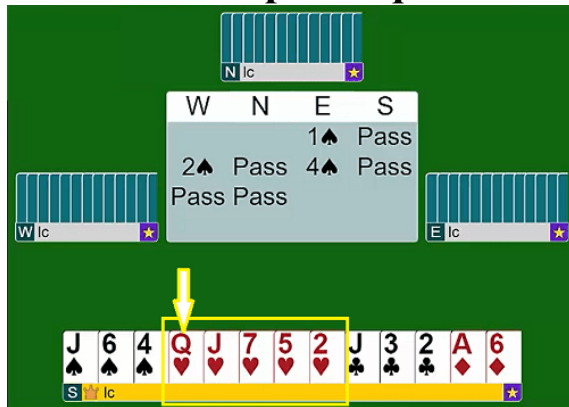
	North	
	K 9 2	
West		East
Q T 8 7 4		A J 3
	South	
	6 5	

**From two-card sequence:**

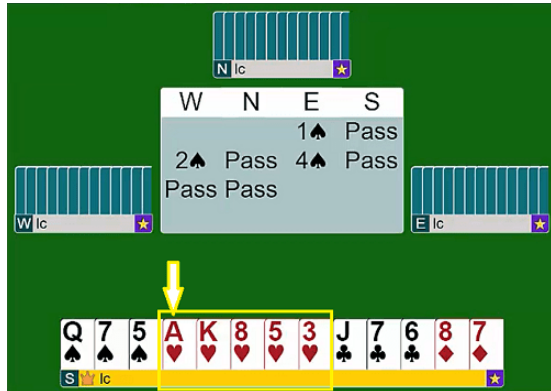


**Against suit contract:**

- Do not lead or underlead Aces.
- Lead top of sequence when leading against suit.

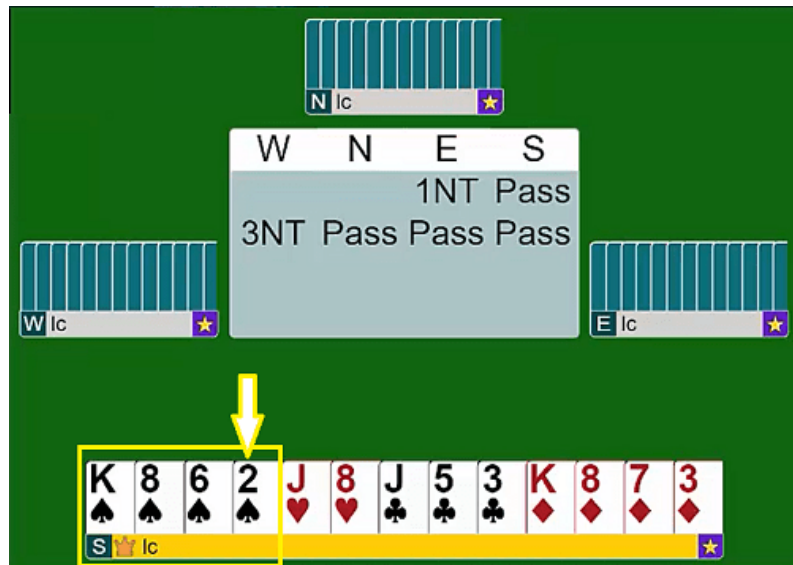


**From the same suit, if leading against no-trump, lead 4th best.**



**Lead Ace from Ace-King against a suit contract**

**Against NT lead 4th best.**



**Equal strength suits.**

Against NT it's preferable to choose **the major**.



## Leads against 3NT.

The bidding has gone 1NT—3NT.

(1) ♠ Q105 ♥ KQ853 ♦ K83 ♣ 82

Clearly your best suit is ♥. Lead **4th best** - the ♥5.

(2) ♠ 953 ♥ Q53 ♦ 762 ♣ J842

You have a weak hand and should try to **find partner's** best suit. Leading an unbid **M** is usually better than leading an unbid minor. With values in hearts lead the ♥3.

(3) ♠ QJ976 ♥ K5 ♦ J7632 ♣ 7

Lead the ♠Q.

(4) ♠ AQ73 ♥ AQ8 ♦ T9874 ♣ 7

You do not want to lead from your AQ tenaces so lead the ♦T.

(5) ♠ 73 ♥ A54 ♦ QT86 ♣ Q765

You have two nice 4-card suits; lead the 4<sup>th</sup> best from the stronger suit, the ♦6.

(6) ♠ 532 ♥ AQ754 ♦ QJT3 ♣ 4

You have two strong suits, one 5-card and one 4-card. Lead from the stronger 5-card suit. Lead the ♥5, 4th best.

(7) ♠ 973 ♥ K4 ♦ 876543 ♣ K7

You have a weak suit.  
Unlikely you will develop a trick in ♦.  
Lead the ♠9.

(8) ♠ Q97 ♥ AJ7 ♦ KJ2 ♣ 9863

You have a great hand, lead the 2<sup>nd</sup> of nothing ♣8.  
Declarer will play for you.  
Partner **if/when** she gets in will switch to another suit.

(9) ♠ AQ97 ♥ AQ54 ♦ T965 ♣ 7

Protect your tenaces and lead the ♦T.

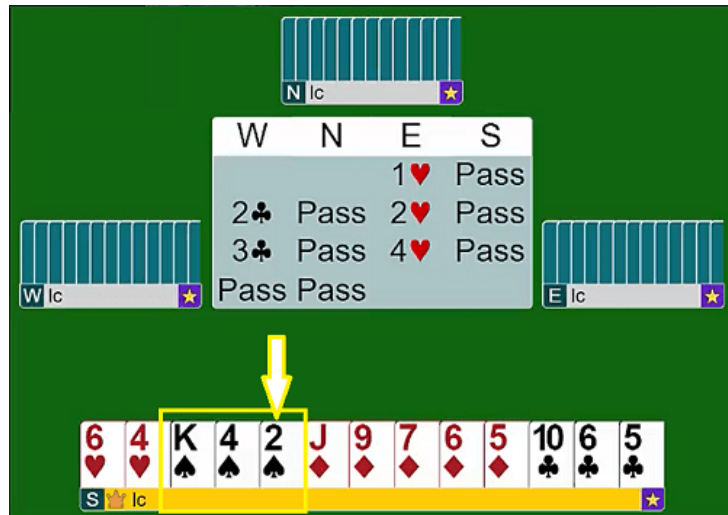
(10) ♠ KT852 ♥ 7 ♦ QJ864 ♣ 73

You have two suits of equal length, lead from the stronger  
and safer - the ♦Q.

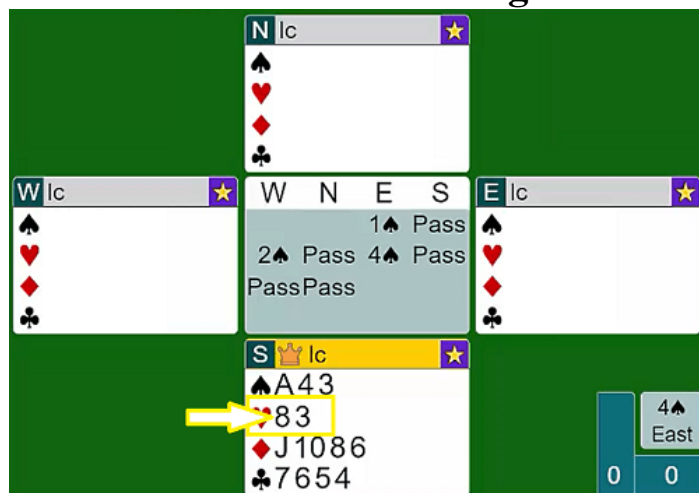
(11) ♠ A7 ♥ A53 ♦ A76 ♣ 76432

You have three entries to your club suit, lead the ♣6

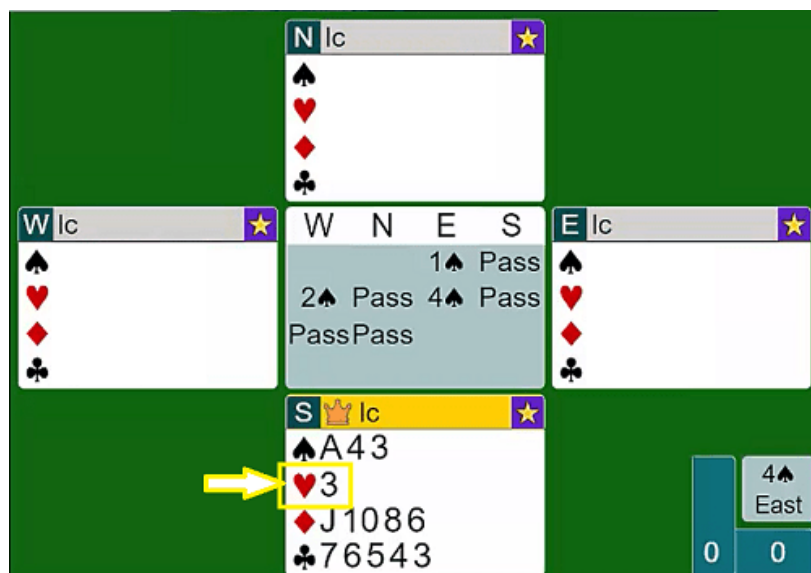
**When to lead away from a King? It's an aggressive lead, but some auctions call for it. For example, opps show a solid suit on which they can throw all their losers:**



**Here the preference is leading the doubleton due to holding the trump Ace:**



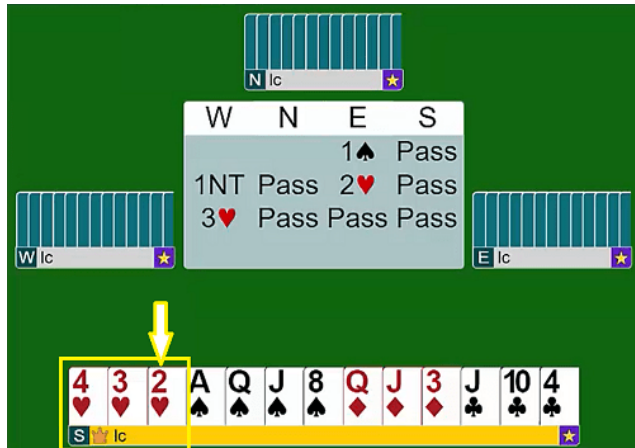
**Both top of sequence in ♦, and heart doubleton are good choices.**



Lead the singleton, and not top of ♦ sequence.

Leading a ♦ works against NT, but against suit, lead the ♥.

**About trump leads. If your opponents have bid a suit, but end up playing in a different suit -- you need to lead trumps.**



Example:

West	North	East	South
			2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

♠ QJT62

♥ 5

♦ K95

♣ 9742

What do you lead?