

Opening Leads Against Suit Contracts

Charles Durrin

- The choice of opening lead often determines whether or not the contract can be defeated
- Against NT, the defense is normally aggressive: one tries to establish winners to set declarer before declarer can establish enough tricks to make the contract
- Defending against a suit contract, the opening lead is more varied:
 - Sometimes **AGGRESSIVE** to set up tricks (similar to NT)
 - Sometimes **PASSIVE** to avoid giving up tricks
 - Sometimes to prevent Declarer from ruffing
 - Sometimes to get a ruff or give one to partner
- You have two sources of information:
 - The auction
 - Your hand
- Defending against a Suit Contract, it is time to think.....

If you form the habit of thinking about what the auction means about Declarer's plans, you've made the most important step toward winning defense.

Sample Auction for Analysis

AUCTION 1. All Vulnerable

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	3 Passes

YOUR HAND

♠ K1083
♥ Q106
♦ J84
♣ 975

What do I know from the bidding? Can you figure out the opponent's distribution?

Declarer has ____ hearts [Ask: Does 2 ♥ promise a six card suit?]

Dummy has ____ diamonds and ____ hearts. [Why not more hearts?]

What did the bids mean?

Was 2 ♦ game forcing?

Do the opponents have a fit or a misfit?

A fit.

Is one hand significantly stronger than the other?

Doesn't sound like it

Does your hand add useful information?"

Yes. Declarer may not be able to draw trumps without letting you in.

How do you think Declarer will try to play the hand?

Answer: _____

Then how should we defend?

Answer: _____

Sample Auction for Analysis

AUCTION 2. Nobody vulnerable

YOUR HAND

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
			1 ♥
2 ♠	3 ♦	3 ♠	4 ♣
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
4 ♠	Double	3 Passes	

♠ A43
♥ J102
♦ QJ1087
♣ AJ

What do I know from the bidding? Can you figure out the opponent's distribution?

The opponents have about ___ spades, probably distributed ____.

You and partner have the majority of High Card Points and are odds on to make four hearts.

In spite of a lack of strength, the opponents sacrificed.

Does your hand add useful information?"

Yes. You can control trumps for a round. Your strength outside trumps will prevent declarer from winning many tricks using high cards.

How do you think Declarer will try to play the hand?

Answer:

How should we defend?

Answer:

Sample Auction for Analysis

AUCTION 3.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	3 Passes

YOUR HAND

♠ Q742
♥ A
♦ A975
♣ J1042

What do I know from the bidding? Can you figure out the opponent's distribution?

Declarer has ___ hearts and ___ Diamonds.

Dummy has ___ or more diamonds and ___ hearts.

They have a **two-suited** fit.

Opponents have about 23-29 HCP

Does your hand add useful information?"

Yes. Declarer can not draw trumps without letting you in.

QUESTION: What is your partner's distribution?

How do you think Declarer will try to play the hand?

Answer:

How should we defend?

Answer:

Sample Auction for Analysis

AUCTION 4.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♣	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

YOUR HAND

♠ Q1084
♥ AQ107
♦ KQ98
♣ 5

What do I know from the bidding? Can you figure out the opponent's distribution?

Declarer opened 1 ♣ and sat for the double. Dummy didn't have enough points to bid over 1 ♣ or any clear suit to pull to.

What did the bids mean?

Nothing unusual.

Is one hand significantly stronger than the other?

Yes. Dummy is "broke".

Did Partner bid?

Not explicitly. Partner has clubs.

Does your hand add useful information?"

Yes. You have strong cards everywhere but clubs. Your partner has clubs.

How do you think Declarer will try to play the hand?

Answer: _____

How should we defend?

Answer: _____

Lead Guidelines against a Suit Contract

First Decision: Decide which suit to lead

Second Decision: Which card to lead from the suit chosen

The Opening Lead against a Suit Contract is driven by how you think declarer will play the hand.

The Six most important lines of defense:

1. Be aggressive (**Aggressive**) when your tricks may disappear
 - a) Opponents have aside suit on which to pitch losers.
 - b) Set up your tricks as fast as possible.
2. Cut down on Declarer's ruffing power if it sounds like they will ruff losers.
3. Get ruffs or create ruffs for your partner.
4. Lead partner's bid (implied) suit if appropriate.
5. Don't take risks (be **Passive**) when your tricks are secure or when the opponents have most of the power. Make them guess. Don't help them.
6. Force Declarer to Lose Control of the Hand ("Tapping Declarer")

Lets review each of these and see what we can do about each.

Defense 1. Be aggressive when your tricks may disappear

- Think back to Auction 1, page 3. What did we conclude?

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	3 Passes

♠ K1083
♥ Q106
♦ J84
♣ 975

- Declare wants to draw trump and play diamonds to pitch losers
- We need to set up our tricks as quickly as possible
- It is worth a risky lead to get a trick if you have one or can quickly promote one.
 - Lead aggressively
 - Attack to get your tricks before they go away.
 - Even if you cannot set Declarer, it is particularly important in match points to get your tricks so that declarer doesn't get an overtrick.
- **Lead a low Spade (from the K1083!)**

Lead to set up tricks quickly.

2. Cut down on Declarer's ruffing power

- Refer back to hand 2 on page 4.

AUCTION 2. Nobody vulnerable

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
			1 ♥
2 ♠	3 ♦	3 ♠	4 ♣
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
4 ♠	Double	3 Passes	

YOUR HAND

♠ A43
 ♥ J102
 ♦ QJ1087
 ♣ AJ

- Partner opened the bidding and has hearts and clubs.
- You have an opening hand, diamonds stopped, and the Ace of trumps.
- The opponent's do not have much high card strength [fewer than 15 HCP].
- They need to win some tricks by ruffing in dummy.
- Lead trumps [Ace, then another] and if you get in again, lead your third trump.
- Make the opponents play Notrump and you win!

EXAMPLE: Cut down on Declarer's ruffing power

You

♠ Q6
 ♥ Q10562
 ♦ 32
 ♣ QJ98

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	3 ♣ ¹	Pass
3NT	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	4NT ²	Pass
5 ♣ ³	Pass	6 ♦	3 Passes

1. Artificial, Fourth suit forcing to game
2. Key card Blackwood
3. 0 or 3 Keycards

What to lead and why? Hint: refer to the title at top of the page!

- Don't lead a spade (Dummy bid) or a heart (Declarer bid).
- There is no tactical reason to lead clubs, other than it is a safe. Club strength will be on your right [she bid 3NT].
- Nobody should criticize you for leading a club, but I think there is something better.

Lead a trump, by process elimination.

You

♠ Q6
 ♥ Q10562
 ♦ 32
 ♣ QJ98

♠ 10842
 ♥ 4
 ♦ AKQ4
 ♣ 7432

♠ A
 ♥ AJ873
 ♦ J1095
 ♣ AK5

Partner

♠ KJ9753
 ♥ K9
 ♦ 876
 ♣ 106

- The only lead to set the hand is a trump (♦).
- On any other lead, Declarer will get A ♠, A ♥, AK ♣, and eight trump tricks!

3. Get ruffs or create ruffs for your partner.

- Leading a singleton is effective when:
 - The suit is unbid. There is a decent chance partner holds the ace or king.
 - When we expect partner can gain the lead and return the suit before declarer can draw all of our trumps.
 - When we hold the trump ace or king, so that we are likely to regain the lead before our trumps are all gone.
- Leading a singleton is less likely to be effective when:
 - It is in a suit bid by the opponents.
 - First, there is less chance partner holds the ace and can give us a ruff.
 - Second, we may be helping declarer establish winners in that suit for later use.
 - When we hold four or more trumps.
 - Getting a ruff may make it easier for declarer to draw our remaining trumps.
 - It's usually better to lead our long suit, hoping to force declarer to ruff. We may then end up with control of the trump suit. (more later)

An old bridge saying (which isn't always true, but is a reasonable guideline) is that "If partner doesn't lead a singleton, then they don't have one!"

3. Get ruffs or create ruffs for your partner.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♠	Pass	2NT ¹	Pass
3 ♦ ²	Pass	4 ♣ ³	Pass
4 ♦ ³	Pass	4NT ⁴	Pass
5 ♠	Pass	6 ♠	3 Passes

Your Hand

♠ 93
 ♥ 5
 ♦ 10865
 ♣ J109742

1. Strong raise, game forcing with four card support
2. Singleton or void
3. Cue bid, first or second round controls (A, K, or void or singleton)
4. Key Card
5. Two key cards with the Q ♠

- Your best chance to defeat this contract is to lead the 5 ♥.
- If partner holds the A ♥ he will win the first trick and give you a ruff.
- Even if he doesn't have the A ♥ he might have the Ace of trumps. If so, he could grab the first trump lead and again give you a ruff.

- **BUT** (why is there always a *but*?) what if you have this hand:

Your Hand

♠ 93
 ♥ 5
 ♦ A865
 ♣ J109742

- Now the lead of the singleton heart offers little hope
- You know that partner does not have the A ♥; If they lead A ♠ and a ♠, you are out of trumps with which to ruff
- Lead the J ♣ (safe)

3. Get ruffs or create ruffs for your partner.

Referring back to Auction 3 on page 4.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	3 Passes

YOU

♠ Q742
♥ A
♦ A975
♣ J1042

How are the suits distributed?

Declarer: ___ Hearts ___ Diamonds

Dummy : ___ Hearts ___ Diamonds

What is your partner's distribution?

Partner: ___ Hearts ___ Diamonds

Ideas?

Can you envision what tricks your side might get?

OK, it is your lead.....

4. Don't take risks (be PASSIVE) when the opponents have most of the power

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1NT	Pass	2 ♣ ¹	Pass
2 ♥ ²	Pass	4 ♥	3 Passes

YOU

♠ Q104

♥ A2

♦ KJ32

♣ K1054

1. Stayman

2. I have 4 or 5 hearts

- Can you figure out the opponent's distribution?
 - Declarer has 15-17 HCPs and 4 (or 5) hearts and a balanced hand.
 - Dummy has four hearts and enough to force to game (9-13 HCP)
 - Opponents total HCPs: 24-30
- Does your hand add useful information?
 - Yes. With your 13 HCPs, partner has 0-3 HCPs
- It is time to be PASSIVE. Don't risk losing a trick you might otherwise get.
- Lead the A ♥ and a heart and sit back and wait for your tricks.
- Leave the guessing to the opponents.

4. Don't take risks (be PASSIVE) when the opponents have most of the power

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	3 Passes		

YOU
 ♠ Q6
 ♥ Q92
 ♦ K104
 ♣ Q7542

No lead looks completely safe.

Minimize the risk of giving something up.

Lead your fourth best club, the 4 ♣.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All Pass

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	All Pass		

If the opponents can **barely reach game**, then try not to give anything up. Lead passively and sit back and be ready to collect your tricks.

EXAMPLES: Force Declarer to Lose Control of the Hand (“Tapping Declarer”)

- Consider this approach when you have four or more trumps
- You want for Declarer to run out of trumps by ruffing your winners
- You will end up with more trumps than Declarer and you will WIN!

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	3 Passes		

YOU

♠ 10865
 ♥ 987
 ♦ AK962
 ♣ 10

- You are tempted to lead your singleton club, BUT
 - Even if partner has the A ♣, you may be trumping with your natural trump trick, OR you may be shortening your trumps, making it easier for Declarer to draw your trumps.
- Lead the A ♦, then the K ♦, and if your partner has the Q or has a doubleton, lead another ♦.
- Declarer will run have to start trumping, leaving you with more trumps than she has.
- The complete hand is on page 32

Remember: The Convention Card shows the "Standard leads" Against Suit Contracts in **bold**.

Charles Durrin

LEADS (circle card led, if not in bold)				DEFENSIVE CARDING			
versus Suits		versus Notrump		vs SUITS		vs NT	
X X	X X X X	X X	X X X X	Standard:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
X X X	X X X X X	X X X	X X X X X	Except	<input type="checkbox"/>		
A K x	T 9 x	A K J x	A Q J x	<hr/>			
K Q x	K J T x	A J T 9	A T 9 x	Upside-Down:			
Q J x	K T 9 x	K Q J x	K Q T 9	count	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
J T 9	Q T 9 x	Q J T x	Q T 9 x	attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
K Q T 9		J T 9 x	T 9 x x	<hr/>			
LENGTH LEADS:				FIRST DISCARD			
4th Best	vs SUITS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	vs NT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
3rd/5th Best	vs SUITS	<input type="checkbox"/>	vs NT	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	Attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>	vs NT	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Primary signal to partner's leads				OTHER CARDING			
Attitude	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Count	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suit preference	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		Suit preference	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith Echo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				Trump Suit Pref.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				Foster Echo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Charles:
I prefer
A from
AK.

A Few DON'TS (the exceptions are RARE!)

- Without a strong reason.....
 - Don't lead a singleton trump (and worst of all is singleton 10!)
 - It endangers partner's trump holding
 - Don't lead an unsupported Ace without strong reason
 - Don't underlead an Ace
 - Don't lead a singleton to try and get a ruff if you only have one (or two) trumps OR if you have a natural trump trick (QJ10)

Summary

- Leading against a suit contract is less mechanical than leading against NT
- Think about
 - What the bidding said; ask (after the auction is over) if you are uncertain
 - Did you partner bid?
 - How is the strength distributed around the table?
 - **How do you think Declarer will play the contract?**
- Decide which suit to lead (Most Important Decision)
- Then decide which card in that suit to lead

Quiz: Leads Against Suit Contracts

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

1 ♠ QJ102
♥ 6
♦ A876
♣ K943
Lead? _____

2 ♠ KQ32
♥ Q96
♦ AJ109
♣ 74
Lead? _____

3 ♠ Q72
♥ 6
♦ A876
♣ KQ943
Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	1NT	2 ♦
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

4 ♠ QJ102
♥ 963
♦ K6
♣ K943
Lead? _____

5 ♠ KJ102
♥ 62
♦ Q76
♣ 10943
Lead? _____

6 ♠ Q72
♥ 9763
♦ 76
♣ QJ43
Lead? _____

Sample Hands

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	All Pass

7 ♠ A2
 ♥ 754
 ♦ KJ93
 ♣ Q753
 Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	6 ♥	All Pass

8 ♠ 109874
 ♥ 762
 ♦ A3
 ♣ K102
 Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	4 ♠	All Pass

9 ♠ 743
 ♥ 3
 ♦ 10983
 ♣ AQ10
 Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
2NT	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

10 ♠ AJ92
 ♥ 987
 ♦ KQ54
 ♣ Q10
 Lead? _____

11

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

- What do you know about declarer's distribution? _____
 - What do you know about Dummy's distribution and strength? _____
 - How do you think Declarer will play? _____
 - What could counter his plan before he gets started? In other words, what should you lead? _____
- For the auction above, what do you lead from each of the following hands?

12

♠ 1075
 ♥ AQ10
 ♦ K9432
 ♣ 76

Lead? _____

13

♠ QJ10
 ♥ 98
 ♦ J10987
 ♣ AK4

Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

14 ♠ K8532
♥ A64
♦ J762
♣ 7
Lead? _____

15 ♠ K832
♥ A64
♦ 2
♣ KQJ52
Lead? _____

16 ♠ K832
♥ J1094
♦ 10
♣ KQ1052
Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	3 Passes		

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	3 Passes		

17 ♠ 632
♥ 942
♦ KQJ7
♣ A43
Lead? _____

18 ♠ Q6
♥ Q92
♦ K104
♣ Q6543
Lead? _____

Others

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

19 ♠ 10832
 ♥ 764
 ♦ Q762
 ♣ AK
 Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	3 Passes

20 ♠ 942
 ♥ Q109
 ♦ K1082
 ♣ K75
 Lead? _____

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	3 Passes

21 ♠ 8
 ♥ J1072
 ♦ Q76
 ♣ KQJ97
 Lead? _____





Hands 1-10 Solutions

1. Q ♠ . Lead might set up a spade trick for your team. Club lead is too risky, given the strength is on your right.
2. 7 ♣ . There is temptation everywhere in this hand. K ♠ is top of a sequence. J ♦ is top of an interior sequence. The 7 ♣ is an excellent passive lead. Any other lead might lose a trick forever.
3. K ♣ . Aggressive lead to set up a club trick.
4. K ♦ . Highest from a doubleton in partner's suit.
5. 6 ♦ . Lowest from three to an honor in partner's suit.
6. 7 ♦ . Highest from a doubleton in partner's suit.
7. 3 ♦ . Calls for an aggressive lead to set up tricks before Declarer can set up and run hearts to pitch losers.
8. 2 ♣ . Calls for an aggressive lead to set up tricks before Declarer can set up and run diamonds to pitch losers. You will get in with the A ♦ and cash your winner(s) then.
9. 10 ♦ . Opponents have a misfit. Don't try for a heart ruff: declarer is also short and you probably cannot over-ruff declarer. Don't lead a trump – you are probably hurting partner's trump honor(s). You hope to win 2-3 club tricks. Lead the unbid suit.
10. 9 ♥ . All of the strength is on your right. Don't sacrifice one of your honors (K ♦ , Q ♣) needlessly. Lead passively and wait for your tricks.

Hands 11-16 Solutions

- 11.
- a) Declarer has five hearts. She would have rebid them with six or more. Was 1NT forcing? If so, then declarer could have as few as three clubs. If not, then declarer has at least four clubs.
 - b) Dummy doesn't have much. Maybe 5-8 HCPs. Dummy is also short in hearts, probably one or fewer. With two, dummy would have probably taken a preference for hearts, unless she has a fist full of clubs. A 5-2 heart fit is good enough at a low level and may score better than even a longer club fit. So dummy probably has at most one heart.
 - c) Sound like declarer will ruff hearts in Dummy. Also, declarer may have shortness: if she has four clubs, then she might be 2-2 or 3-1 in the other suits. If 3-1, then she will want to ruff the short suit in her hand.
 - d) Lead a trump to cut down on ruffs in both hands. Every trump you lead **MAY** reduce their tricks by one! Think about it. Instead of scoring their trumps separately (ruffing hearts in dummy and another suit in declarer's hand) two trumps fall in one trick.
12. 7 ♣. Lead a trump based on the discussion in 11. A-d, above.
13. JACKPOT. Lead the A ♣, K ♣, and a club. They won't get many ruffs with you on lead!
14. 7 ♣. Go for your ruff. You have 8 HCPs. Partner isn't broke. She may have the A ♣ or may be able to get in the lead in another suit. It is worthwhile trying for the ruff.
15. K ♣. You have 13 HCPs. They opponents are in game. How many high cards could your partner have? It would be very lucky indeed if you could get a ruff. Instead, lead the K ♣ to establish a club trick.
16. K ♣. You are going to get (at least) one trump trick as it is. If you lead a diamond to get a ruff, you will just make it easy for declarer to draw your trumps. Lead the K ♣ and, if your partner has something like the J ♣ or A ♣, you may be able to "tap" declarer enough that she loses control and you win a lot of tricks.

Hands 18-21 Solutions

17. K  to aggressively set up a diamond trick. Don't even think about leading the Ace! Aces are meant to kill Kings and Queens!
18. 4 . Dangerous hand to lead from. Anything could give up a trick. The safest approach is to lead fourth best from length. It stands the best chance of not giving something up unnecessarily.
19. Lead a . Which one? Let's ask this: what do you and partner lead from AKx(x). If you lead the Ace from AKxx, then lead the K here. If you lead the K from AKxx, then lead the A. If you lead the opposite of your agreement, you are telling partner "I have a doubleton in this suit". Partner has enough strength that there is a reasonable chance she can get in the lead to give you a club ruff.
20. Any trump. Your left-hand opponent has bid three suits and must therefore be short in diamonds. Lead a trump to prevent Declarer from ruffing diamonds. Any other lead is unattractive from this hand.
21. K . You may be tempted to try to ruff a spade. Do not do that when you have four trumps. Instead, lead clubs and keep leading clubs whenever you are in and Declarer may lose control. Beside, you probably have a natural trump trick anyway.

APPENDIX: Extra Information

What does it mean to Lead Aggressively or Passively?

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

- In the absence of strong clues, it may be best to try a passive lead.

YOUR HAND

♠ K82
♥ 73
♦ Q9643
♣ K3

“NORMAL” LEADS

- 2 ♠ may set up a trick for the defense, or lose a trick; so this is **aggressive**
- A Trump lead may finesse partner’s holding, but partner’s trump honor (if any) is likely finessable anyway
- 4 ♦ may set up a trick for the defense, or lose a trick, but with five cards in the suit, the risk is lessened
- K ♣ is a very **aggressive** lead: it works well if partner has the Ace, but otherwise may give up a trick you might have won

Most Passive < ----- >Least Passive

3 ♥

Lead these if there is too much risk of giving up the farm.

4 ♦

2 ♠

Lead these if you need to set up your winners before Declarer can pitch them

K ♣

Auction 2, Page 3. The whole hand.

- The opponents are sacrificing.
- You cannot make five hearts (Diamond, diamond ruff, and Ace of hearts)
- You and partner need to get as many tricks as you can.
- Only an opening trump lead (or a Club lead and switch to a trump) will set four spades!

Your Hand	Dummy	Partner's Hand
♠ A43	♠ K108	♠ 5
♥ J102	♥ 7	♥ KQ963
♦ QJ1087	♦ A9532	♦ K6
♣ AJ	♣ 8532	♣ KQ1096
	Declarer	
	♠ QJ9762	
	♥ A854	
	♦ 4	
	♣ 74	

EXAMPLES: Be aggressive when your tricks may disappear

- Another time to get active is where opponents bid two suits and you can see from your hand that a key honor in the side suit is "on side" or that the side suit is going to break favorably for declarer.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	3 Passes

You

♠ K1083
 ♥ Q106
 ♦ K84
 ♣ 975

Your K ♦ is probably not well-placed. Lead a spade to set up your tricks quickly.

- Another "be aggressive" sign is when opponents make a slam try and then back off. It usually means they are close to slam and loaded and you should think about setting up tricks quickly.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
1 ♥	Pass	2NT ¹	Pass
3 ♥ ²	Pass	4 ♣ ³	Pass
4 ♦ ³	Pass	4NT ⁴	Pass
5 ♥ ⁵	Pass	Pass ⁶	Pass

You

♠ K1083
 ♥ Q106
 ♦ K84
 ♣ 975

- Strong raise, game forcing with four card support
- Some more values than a normal opener
- Cue bid, first or second round controls (A, K, or void or singleton)
- Key Card
- Two key cards without the Q ♥
- I give up. No slam here!

EXAMPLES: Get ruffs or create ruffs for your partner.

Opp	You	Opp	Partner
			3 ♥
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
4 ♠	3 Passes		

- **WARNING: Complex situation. Many will miss this one!**
- Your partner bid Hearts. Lead the Ace to look at dummy.

YOU

♠ J94
♥ A2
♦ 9532
♣ 10954

DUMMY

♠ A65
♥ 87
♦ KQ4
♣ AKJ76

- Where might tricks come from?
 - Hearts will provide no more than two tricks. [Dummy has a doubleton]
 - Clubs don't look like a source of tricks (you are looking at nine of them)
 - Could partner have opened three hearts with the Ace of diamonds? Unlikely.
 - Should we give up? NO!
- How about trump tricks?
 - Lead another heart to partner and hope she figures out to lead another heart!
 - If partner has the K of spades, watch what happens!

EXAMPLES: Get ruffs or create ruffs for your partner. The whole Hand

- Lead
 - Ace hearts
 - Another Heart
 - And partner leads another heart (giving Declarer a ruff and sluff!)
 - **What does declarer do?**
 - Ruff with the Q, the 10, or the 7?

YOU

♠ J94
♥ A2
♦ 9532
♣ 10954

DUMMY

♠ A65
♥ 87
♦ KQ4
♣ AKJ76

PARTNER

♠ K8
♥ KQJ6543
♦ 106
♣ 83

DECLARER

♠ Q10732
♥ 109
♦ AJ87
♣ Q2

EXAMPLES: Force Declarer to Lose Control of the Hand ("Tapping Declarer") The Whole Hand

	YOU	DUMMY	PARTNER	DECLARER
♠	10865	A32	9	KQJ74
♥	987	Q52	J643	AK10
♦	AK962	1085	Q743	J
♣	10	Q765	AJ94	K832