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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♠️</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♦️</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 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?
- Is one hand significantly stronger than the other?
- Does you hand add useful information”

- A fit.
- Doesn’t sound like it
- 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: ___________________________________________________________
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♠</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOUR HAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♠ Q742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♥ A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ A975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♣ J1042</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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:**
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?
  - 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!)**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2♣</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4♦</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

♠️ K1083
♥️ Q106
♦️ J84
♣️ 975

Lead to set up tricks quickly.
2. Cut down on Declarer’s ruffling power

• Refer back to hand 2 on page 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUCTION 2. Nobody vulnerable</th>
<th>YOUR HAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opp</strong></td>
<td><strong>You</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>3 ♥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ♠</td>
<td>Double</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 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 ruffling 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♠ Q6</td>
<td>1 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♥ Q10562</td>
<td>2 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>3 ♣²</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ 32</td>
<td>3NT</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♣ QJ98</td>
<td>4 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4NT²</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 ♣³</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>6 ♦</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

• 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2NT¹</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♠ ³</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4NT⁴</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>6 ♠</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Hand
- ♠ 93
- ♥ 5
- ♦ 10865
- ♣ J109742

• 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♥</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1NT</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♠️¹</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♥️²</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♥️</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YOU
- ♠️ Q104
- ♥️ A2
- ♦️ KJ32
- ♣️ K1054

• 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 you 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>3♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♠</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YOU**
- ♠ Q6  
- ♥ Q92  
- ♦ K104  
- ♣ Q7542

No lead looks completely safe.  
Minimize the risk of giving something up.  
Lead your fourth best club, the 4♣.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4♥</td>
<td>All Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1NT</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2♣</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>3♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♥</td>
<td>All Pass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ♠</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEADS (circle card) vs Suits</th>
<th>DEFENSIVE CARDING vs SUITS vs NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Except</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upside-Down: count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FIRST DISCARD Lavinthal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OTHER CARDING Smith Echo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foster Echo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Charles: I prefer A from AK.

**LENGTH LEADS:**

- 4th Best vs SUITS | vs NT
- 3rd/5th Best vs SUITS | vs NT
  - Attitude vs NT

**Primary signal to partner's leads**

- Attitude | Count | Suit preference
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. ♠️ QJ102  
   ♥️ 6  
   ♦️ A876  
   ♣️ K943  
   Lead?_______

2. ♠️ KQ32  
   ♥️ Q96  
   ♦️ AJ109  
   ♣️ 74  
   Lead?_______

3. ♠️ Q72  
   ♥️ 6  
   ♦️ A876  
   ♣️ KQ943  
   Lead?_______

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>1NT</td>
<td>2   ♦️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. ♠️ QJ102  
   ♥️ 963  
   ♦️ K6  
   ♣️ K943  
   Lead?_______

5. ♠️ KJ102  
   ♥️ 62  
   ♦️ Q76  
   ♣️ 10943  
   Lead?_______

6. ♠️ Q72  
   ♥️ 9763  
   ♦️ 76  
   ♣️ QJ43  
   Lead?_______
## Sample Hands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♠</td>
<td>All Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 ♠ A2  
♥ 754  
♦ KJ93  
♣ Q753

#### Lead?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4NT</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>6 ♥</td>
<td>All Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 ♠ 109874  
♥ 762  
♦ A3  
♣ K102

#### Lead?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2NT</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>3 ♦</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 ♠ 743  
♥ 3  
♦ 10983  
♣ AQ10

#### Lead?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♠</td>
<td>All Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 ♠ AJ92  
♥ 987  
♦ KQ54  
♣ Q10

#### Lead?
a. What do you know about declarer’s distribution? ______________________
b. What do you know about Dummy’s distribution and strength? ________________
c. How do you think Declarer will play? ______________________
d. 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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>1NT</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12  ♠ 1075
    ♠ AQ10
    ♠ K9432
    ♠ 76
    Lead?______

13  ♠ QJ10
    ♥ 98
    ♦ J10987
    ♣ AK4
    Lead?______
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ♥</td>
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<td>Pass</td>
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</table>

**14**
- ♠ K8532
- ♥ A64
- ♦ J762
- ♣ 7

**15**
- ♠ K832
- ♥ A64
- ♦ 2
- ♣ KQJ52

**16**
- ♠ K832
- ♥ J1094
- ♦ 10
- ♣ KQ1052

---

**Opp | You | Opp | Partner**
**-----|-----|-----|---------**
| 1 ♠ | Pass | 3 ♠ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | 3 Passes | | |

**17**
- ♠ 632
- ♥ 942
- ♦ KQJ7
- ♣ A43

**18**
- ♠ Q6
- ♥ Q92
- ♦ K104
- ♣ Q6543

---

**Opp | You | Opp | Partner**
**-----|-----|-----|---------**
| 1 ♠ | Pass | 3 ♠ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | 3 Passes | | |
Others

<table>
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<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
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<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
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19 ♠ 10832
♥ 764
♦ Q762
♣ AK

Lead?________

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<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pass</td>
<td>1 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♠</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
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</table>

20 ♠ 942
♥ Q109
♦ K1082
♣ K75

Lead?________

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<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1 ♥</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♥</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.


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 (ruffling 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 13HCPs. 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.
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 ruffling 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.
What does it mean to Lead Aggressively or Passively?

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

“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 finesseable 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 ♥ 4 ♦ 2 ♠ K ♣

Lead these if there is too much risk of giving up the farm.
Lead these if you need to set up your winners before Declarer can pitch them
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!

**Dummy**
- ♠ K108
- ♥ 7
- ♦ A9532
- ♣ 8532

**Your Hand**
- ♠ A43
- ♥ J102
- ♦ QJ1087
- ♣ AJ

**Partner’s Hand**
- ♠ 5
- ♥ KQ963
- ♦ K6
- ♣ 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.

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<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♥</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♥</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Opp</th>
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<th>Opp</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ♥</td>
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<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♥  2</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4 ♥ 3</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ♦  3</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>4NT 4</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ♥  5</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass 6</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
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</table>

1. Strong raise, game forcing with four card support
2. Some more values than a normal opener
3. Cue bid, first or second round controls (A, K, or void or singleton)
4. Key Card
5. Two key cards without the Q ♥
6. I give up. No slam here!
EXAMPLES: Get ruffs or create ruffs for your partner.

<table>
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<th>Partner</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pass</td>
<td>Double</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ♠</td>
<td>3 Passes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **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?

DUMMY
- ♠️ A65
- ♥️ 87
- ♦️ KQ4
- ♣️ AKJ76

YOU
- ♠️ J94
- ♥️ A2
- ♦️ 9532
- ♣️ 10954

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

♦ 10865
♥ 987
♦ AK962
♣ 10

DECLARER

♠ KQJ74
♥ AK10
♦ J
♣ K832

PARTNER

♠ 9
♥ J643
♦ Q743
♣ AJ94

DUMMY

♠ A32
♥ Q52
♦ 1085
♣ Q765