

Opening Leads

The only absolute rule: NEVER underlead an ace on opening lead against a suit contract.

The best leads against suit contracts:

- A side suit singleton
- Ace from AK or King from KQ or Queen from QJ.
- A side suit doubleton
- Low from xxx or xxxx
- A trump when you have high cards in declarer's second suit

If you have no good choices, it's better to lead from a Jack than a Queen and better to lead from a Queen than a King.

The best leads against NT contracts:

- In general, it's better to lead a major than a minor. An exception is when both opponents have shown a 4-card major (e.g., 1N-2C-2M-3N). It's better to lead from xx or xxx in a major than from four to an honor in the other major or in a minor.
- Top of an honor sequence (not AK). A 3-card sequence is best (KQJ, QJ10, or J109). Next best is KQ10, QJ9, or J108. Top of a 2-card sequence (KQxxx) is better than fourth-best.

If partner opened the bidding in a major, it's usually right to lead her suit.

If you have a weak hand, it's rarely right to lead your longest suit. Try to "hit" partner's long suit.

If you have to lead from a suit with one honor, lead fourth-best from the suit with the lowest honor. If the suit with the lowest honor has only 3 cards, lead low.