



# WELCOME TO PAM'S PLACE



## Defense

### Opening Leads Against Suit Contracts

# DEFENSE

## Opening Leads Against Suit Contracts

*Playing in a suit contract influences both the way declarer plays and the way the defenders try to defeat the contract.*

- Starting with the opening lead, the defenders must take a different approach in choosing the suit to attack and in choosing the specific card to lead.

## The Opening Lead Against a Suit Contract

- First, you have to choose which suit to lead.
- Next, you have to choose which card in that suit to lead.

## Choosing the Suit:

*There are several options when considering your opening lead.*

**Here are Three Considerations:**

- Lead partner's suit.
- Lead your short suit.
- Lead an unbid suit.

# DEFENSE

## Leading Partner's Suit:

*Often your best option is to lead your partner's suit unless you clearly have something better to do.*

For example, suppose your partner opens the bidding with 1♥ and the opponents bid all the way up to 6♠. It's your lead from the following hand:

- |                |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|
| ♠ 8            | • | When your hand is this weak, you think it doesn't matter what you lead, but you are the player in the key position. |
| ♥ 7 4          |   |   |
| ♦ 9 6 3 2      | • | Whatever tricks your side has coming will likely be from the suit your partner bid.                                 |
| ♣ 10 9 8 7 4 3 | • | Lead your partner's suit, hearts.   |

## This could be the complete deal:

Contract: 6♠

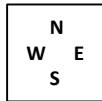
Lead: ♥ 7

**YOU**

♠ 8  
♥ 7 4  
♦ 9 6 3 2  
♣ 10 9 8 7 4 3

**DUMMY**

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



**DECLARER**

♠ K Q 9 7 6 3  
♥ A 6  
♦ 10 5  
♣ A K Q

**PARTNER**

♠ J 2  
♥ K Q J 10 5  
♦ A 8 4  
♣ J 5 2

- If you lead anything other than partner's suit, the contract of 6♠ makes.

## Leading a Short Suit:

# DEFENSE

***In order for the lead of a short suit (singleton or doubleton) to work, one or both of the following conditions must be present:***

- Partner must be able to win a trick in the suit led and then lead it back, so that you can ruff it.
- If partner can't win an early trick in the suit you led, partner will need to regain the lead in another suit or by winning a trick with a high trump before declarer draws all your trump.

*For example, you're on lead against 4♥ after declarer opened with 1♥, his partner bid 1♠, declarer rebid 1NT and then his partner bid 4♥ :*

♠ 8  
♥ 6 5 2  
♦ J 9 7 6 5 2  
♣ 10 8 3

- Lead your singleton spade even though the opponent bid it.

*Here is the complete deal:*

Contract: 4♥

DUMMY

Lead: ♠ 8

♠ K Q J 4

♥ Q 9 8 3

♦ A K

♣ 6 5 4

YOU

♠ 8

♥ 6 5 2

♦ J 9 7 6 5 2

♣ 10 8 3

PARTNER

♠ A 10 7 5 3

♥ 10

♦ Q 4 3

♣ A 9 7 2

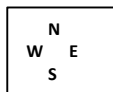
DECLARER

♠ 9 6 2

♥ A K J 7 4

♦ 10 8

♣ K Q J



- The lead of the singleton spade is a good lead because south has less than 4 spades increasing the likelihood that your partner has some spades and maybe a high card in spades.
- Partner must be willing to “visualize” why you led a spade and lead it back.
- After partner wins with the ♠A, he should lead the very lowest spade in his hand to indicate a club lead back to him.

# DEFENSE

## Leading the Unbid Suits:

- As against a notrump contract, it is usually best to avoid leading opponents' suit(s).

For example, consider this auction:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
Responder	Partner	Opener	<b>You</b>
2♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
Pass	Pass	4♠	Pass
		<b>Declarer</b>	<b>On Lead</b>

Choose a lead from the following hand:

♠ 8 4  
♥ K 7 6 3  
♦ J 10 9  
♣ K 8 7 5

- You have a safe-looking sequence in diamonds but the opponents bid that suit.
- It is reasonable to hope that partner has some strength in whichever unbid suit you choose.

*Here is the complete deal:*

Contract: 4♠

Lead: ♥3 or ♣5

**YOU**

♠ 8 4  
♥ K 7 6 3  
♦ J 10 9  
♣ K 8 7 5

**DUMMY**

♠ Q 9 3  
♥ Q 5 4  
♦ A Q 7 5 3  
♣ J 10



**DECLARER**

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

**PARTNER**

♠ 10 6 2  
♥ A 10 9 2  
♦ 6  
♣ A 9 4 3 2

- It turns out that either lead is effective.

# DEFENSE

Consider this bidding sequence:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
Opener	Partner	Responder	You
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass	Declarer	On Lead

What would you lead from these suit holdings?

1) ♠ J 8 2  
♥ K Q 4  
♦ J 9 6 3 2  
♣ Q 2

What is your lead here?

Lead the top of touching honours, ♥K.

2) ♠ 6 4  
♥ K 9 3 2  
♦ A K 6 5  
♣ 10 8 4

What is your lead here?

Lead the top of touching honours, ♦A.

3) ♠ Q 3  
♥ Q 9 6 4  
♦ Q 8 5 3  
♣ J 8 2

What is your lead here?

Lead the ♥4 or the ♦3.

4) ♠ J 2  
♥ A J 9 8  
♦ A 10 6 4  
♣ Q 6 4

What is your lead here?

Lead the ♥A or the ♦A.