

Active V Passive Defence

As a defender, the most important concept to grasp is: Should we be "safe" or "attack?" Should we be "Passive or Aggressive?"

Aggressive is cashing your tricks before declarer discards losers in that suit, or leading trumps to stop declarer ruffing in dummy.

Passive is leading a solid sequence or a suit we know is safe even if we know declarer can ruff that suit.

The idea behind passive defence is you don't want to open up a suit for the declarer, so instead you lead back something safe and make declarer open that suit.

3 D	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ 1098 ♥ 85 ♦ AKQ1032 ♣ 73	P	2♦	P	1♠
W West		P	4♠	P	P
		P			
	E East				
	♠ 732 ♥ AQ93 ♦ 98 ♣ QJ109	♠ J ♥ J1072 ♦ 654 ♣ A8652			
	S South				
	♠ AKQ654 ♥ K64 ♦ J7 ♣ K4	4♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

In this example partner (west) leads the club Q.

East can see there is only one trick available with clubs, as declarer has the king and with the long diamond suit in dummy East must act aggressively and overtake with the club ace and lead into dummy's weakness in hearts. (otherwise declarer will make 12 tricks)

If there are no threatening side suits in dummy it is usually best to stay passive but always try to identify declarer's plan using dummy as a clue for the best defence.