Leads versus Suit Contracts I

Making an effective lead against suit contracts has many of the same issues as with NT contracts and made more complicated by the presence of a trump suit. Recall that the emphasis here is on matchpoint duplicate, where the difficulty is increased because it is not clear at the outset whether your objective is to beat the contract or minimize overtricks.

Before you select a lead, review the bidding. Suggestion: If the bidding is not competitive, try to picture the opponent's hands during the auction, which suit and card you'll lead if RHO becomes declarer.

Suggested Lead Priority vs Suit Contracts

> ❐ Suit headed by **A**Kx(x)
> ❐ Singleton if trying for a ruff: **x**
> ❐ Safe honor sequence: **K**QJ(x), **Q**JT(x)
> ❐ Worthless doubleton: **x**x
> ❐ Near-safe honor sequence: **K**QTx(x), **Q**J9x(x), **J**T8x(x)
> ❐ Ace (non-trump): **A**x(x)
> ❐ Safe trump lead: xx, xxx, xxx**x**, Ax**x**, Kx**x**
> ❐ 4th best from long suit: xxx**x**(x)
> ❐ Small from 3-cards headed by King: Kx**x**

AKx(x)

If you are fortunate enough to be dealt a non-trump suit headed by the AK, lead the Ace to view dummy and get a signal from partner.

Singleton Leads

Lead a small singleton from a suit not bid by the opponents when you have a realistic chance to obtain a ruff. If you have your own suit with an honor sequence and four trump, consider trying to run Declarer out of trumps, especially if by trumping you are giving up a natural trump trick. Leading a singleton honor, K, Q, J or T, usually gives away the suit and should be avoided.

Doubleton Leads

Leads from a worthless doubleton are more effective than once thought. Similar to a singleton lead, your hand should provide a reasonable chance for a ruff, e.g. you have more than one trump, a trump "stopper" and some hope of getting partner in to give you the ruff.

Quiz 8: Leads vs Suit Contracts I

You are on lead after the opponents win the auction. Select your 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ choices.

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

♠ A K 3
♥ 8 6 2
♦ 10 3 2
♣ 9 8 7 6

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥		

1. _____   2. _____

Board 2
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ A 10 2
♥ K 6 4
♦ Q J 10 9 3 2
♣ 2

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥	All pass	

1. _____   2. _____

Board 3
North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ J 5
♥ A
♦ J 9 7 6 5 4 2
♣ K 8 2

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	4 ♥		

1. _____   2. _____

Board 4
North Deals
Both Vul

♠ 6 4
♥ 10 8 7 3
♦ 8 5
♣ K Q J 4 2

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥		

1. _____   2. _____

Board 5
South Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 10 8 7
♥ 8 7
♦ K Q 10 5 3
♣ 8 5 3

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
All pass			

1. _____   2. _____

Board 6
North Deals
Both Vul

♠ A 10 7
♥ 8 7 6
♦ 10 6 5
♣ Q 10 9 7

West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠¹
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥		

1. Natural

1. _____   2. _____

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

♠ K 6 5
♥ J 3 2
♦ A 8 6 5 4
♣ A 4

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣!¹
4 ♥	All pass		

1. 3+card Heart raise (10-12 HE)

1. _____   2. _____

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 10 5
♥ A Q 5
♦ 8 6 5 4 3
♣ 8 4

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			

1. _____   2. _____