

WHAT CARD SHOULD YOU LEAD?

The bidding has been 1 spade on your right, 2 spades on you left, all pass. Sometimes the bidding will give you enough information to sway you from your “normal lead.” On this sequence, you don’t know much, other than opener has a minimum opening bid with at least five spades and responder has 6 to 9 points with three or four spades.

In the following examples, the suit in question is a side suit.

- A-10-7-6-5 Don’t lead this suit, Leading the Ace is bad. Leading a low card is bad. Leading a suit headed by the ace against a suit contract is a virtual no-no.
- K-J-5-3 Lead the 3 if you choose to lead this suit. Fourth best. Leading from a K is something to consider, not something to automatically reject.
- Q-10-8-5-2 Lead the 5, fourth best.
- K-8-2 Lead the 2. When you have 3 cards, you lead the lowest. If partner has bid the suit, the 2 is the correct lead.
- Q-J-10-5 Lead the Q. This is a standard lead, the top of a sequence. Sequence leads are important. You never lead 4th best with this sequence.
- Q-J-9-6 Lead the Q. This is also a sequence, not quite as good as the one above. If you lead fourth best, declarer might win the 10. Be aware, you might find K103 in the dummy and declarer having A72.
- Learn to accept the fact that the best leads don’t always work and the worst leads can sometimes work out.
- J-10-7 Lead the J. This is a sequence lead. You hope your partner has some help in the suit for you. In general, a sequence lead is one of your best choices.
- 10-9-4 Lead the 10, another sequence lead. If no one has bid this suit, the 10-9-4 is a good choice. Partner understands what you have, and if he has some help, the lead will turn out to be both safe and constructive.
- 9-8-7 Lead the 9. This is a poor man’s sequence. It helps let partner know what’s going on.
- 10-8-7 Do not lead the 10. Leading the 10 when you don’t have the 9 is a dangerous lead. Don’t do it. I suggest leading the 7.

9-7-6 Do not lead the 9. It, too, is dangerous. I suggest leading the 6 or another suit.

A-K-9-5 Some players lead the A from A-K-x-x combinations. Some will lead the K.
Both leads are acceptable. Discuss with your partnership leads & stick to it.

A-Q-J-10 Don't lead this suit. Remember the rule. When the opponents are in a suit contract, you should not lead suits headed by the Ace. You have a perfect sequence, but your Ace tells you not to lead this suit.

K-Q-J-3 Ideal, lead the King.

K-Q-10-4 This is also a good suit to lead from. Lead the King. It won't always be best, but it has huge potential.

K-J-10-5 If you lead this suit, don't lead the 5. Lead the Jack. This is known as an interior sequence.

You hold: 4 A853 A875 Q1082

Dealer opens 1 diamond, responder bids 1 heart, dealer rebids 1 NT, responder bids 3 NT.
Lead the 2 of clubs, the unbid suit.

You hold: 962 KJ109 1043 A94

Dealer opens 1 diamond, responder bids 1 spade, dealer rebids 1 NT, responder bids 3 NT.
Lead the J of hearts, top of an interior sequence.

LEADING FROM 3 LOW CARDS is a lousy lead. If you have anything better to lead, you should shun the suit altogether, but some of the time you have no choice.

Just remember "IYLAAYWOLWYSHL". If you lead an Ace, you will often learn what you should have led.