

BRIDGE

Unit 4

BASIC DEFENSIVE PLAY

Well done you are still with us. You now have a basic Acol system of bidding. You won't remember it all and you will make lots of mistakes because it is quite complicated. In unit 1 we looked at the way that Bridge is played and most of the guidance was given from the declarers point of view.

Now we will look at the game from the defender's perspective. You will see that many of the techniques that declarer uses, such as unblocking and ducking are also strategies that the defenders must apply.

It is recognised that defence is the hardest part of the game. While declarer can see the two hands that will enable him to plan his play, the defenders cannot see each others hands. Therefore they must use legal signalling methods and standard plays to convey information to each other.

We will look at the opening leads to NT and to suit contracts, basic count and attitude signals and trying to notice which cards are being played and why. Every card tells a story!

Please use the North Eastern Bridge Association's web site at www.neba.co.uk where you will find lots of useful information on bidding and play techniques, events, links, news and results from our area.

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BASIC PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DEFENCE

Although these general guidelines are useful, each hand is different and you do have to THINK!

OPENING LEADS

- If partner has bid a suit during the auction, lead it.
 - With two cards in partner's suit, lead hi-lo e.g. 63 or Q3
 - With three or four cards in partner's to an honour, lead low e.g. Q83. or Q873.
 - With three rags, cards in partner's lead MUD e.g. 874 or 982 (Middle Up Down)

2. Long suits against NO TRUMP contracts.

Lead Top of Sequence (BEST) e.g. J1094, or KQJ4. Top of near sequence is also good e.g. KQ104
Lead 4th highest ONLY if no sequence is held. A10763

3. Short suits against suit contracts. (Looking for a ruff)

Lead singletons or doubletons (hi-lo) e.g. Lead 8 to AQ.

When east returns A play 2. The hi-lo tells partner you can ruff the next round

DO NOT lead hi-lo from a doubleton honour. e.g. Q6

	Dummy	
	<u>A</u> K743	
<u>A</u> 82	4♥	<u>A</u> O95
♥ 1052		♥ 96
♦ 9876		♦ 1053
♣ Q106		♣ KJ52
	<u>A</u> J106	

PLAYING 2ND IN HAND

- Usually play low. Be prepared for what declarer might lead.
- Against suit contracts, split your honours and play high, if you hold KQx and dummy has AJx.
- Usually cover an honour with an honour, particularly when led from the closed hand.

PLAYING 3RD IN HAND

- Usually play high to try and win the trick.
- Try to win - using the lower or lowest of touching high cards. e.g. with KQx - play the queen
- If partner leads top of a sequence and you have only Ax or Kx, unblock the honour and return.

PLAYING 4TH IN HAND

- Usually play to win if you can using the lowest card necessary
- Do not win if declarer is trying to force out your ace to establish winners in the dummy hand.

RECOGNIZE WHAT PARTNER'S LEAD MEANS

- An honour card lead, shows the card beneath the lead and denies the card above. e.g. QJ92
- A low card lead shows an honour in the suit. e.g. K982
- A high card (not an honour) is likely to be showing two cards and an interest in ruffing. e.g. 84
- Usually, it is correct to return your partner's suit if you get on lead.

LEADS IN MID GAME

- Usually return partner's suit! (Unless looking at dummy tells you otherwise).
- Lead UP to weakness in dummy, when dummy is on your right. (Last to play.)
- Lead through dummy's tenaces e.g. AQx or KJx if dummy is on your left. (Next to play.)

ASK YOURSELF WHY DECLARER IS PLAYING A PARTICULAR SUIT.

- If declarer in NTs is trying to establish a suit, it is often correct to duck. e.g. 983 - 54 - **KQJ108** - 762
- If declarer in 4♠ is going to ruff losers, lead trumps whenever you can. e.g. 983 - **6** - AJ1085 - K752

SIGNALLING (AN ADVANCED TOPIC WHICH WE WILL COVER LATER)

- When not playing to win the trick, show partner how many cards you have in the suit.
- When discarding you can tell partner which suit you would like to be led when partner gets in.

OPENING LEADS TO AVOID

When you make an opening lead, declarer, (your opponent) will be the last to play and that can often give a trick away.

Here if you lead the 3♦ against a spade contract, declarer wins with the queen. Playing diamonds himself, he will always lose a trick to your king. Your lead has cost your side a trick!

	♦ 7 4 2	
♦ K 9 6 3	□	♦ J 10 8 5
	♦ A Q	

As you can see here, to lead the unprotected honour is suicidal! The *ONLY* time that you would do this is if partner has bid the suit.

	♦ J 10 4 2	
♦ K 3	□	♦ 9 8 7 6 5
	♦ A Q	

Even playing off an ace is not very clever! By playing your ace here you simply allow declarer to make his king.

	♦ 9 7 4 2	
♦ A 8 3	□	♦ Q J 10 5
	♦ K 6	

Against a No Trump contract, leading an unprotected ace from a short suit can be disastrous, because all you may succeed in doing is to *establish* declarer's long suit. You have generously done declarer's work for him. How kind!

	♦ K Q J 9 7 4	
♦ A 5 3	□	♦ 10 8
	♦ 6 2	

Against suit contracts, leading *from* an ace is very unwise! Against 4♠, leading 4th highest results in declarer making his singleton king. You will never make your ace because declarer will ruff it!
Against NT contracts, leading *from* an ace is fine! Although it gives a trick away, it sets up all your remaining diamonds as winners

	♦ 9 6 3	
♦ A J 7 4 2	□	♦ Q 10 8 5
	♦ K	

Don't lead singleton honour cards, (unless partner has bid the suit). There is every chance that a competent declarer may finesse the ♦J on this hand. (*If short of entries to dummy*)

	♦ 6 3	
♦ Q	□	♦ 10 9 8 5 2
	♦ A K J 7 4	

Top of a sequence is always the best lead.
 (Three touching cards HEADED BY AN HONOUR! against NTs) e.g. KQJ73 - QJ104 1098542
 Remember that 10 is an honour card during play.
 Against suit contracts, two touching honours can be considered a sequence. e.g. KQ973

Generally avoid

1. Leading the opponent's suits, especially when bid by RHO.
 e.g. leading *into* a possible AQJ9
2. Leading an unprotected honour.
 e.g. K from K75
3. Leading a singleton honour.
 e.g. Q
4. Leading *from* an ace against suit contracts.
 e.g. from A7532 (The longer the suit the more dangerous it is.)

AVOID STUPID LEADS
 You *must* be able to see why a lead of 4th highest from west is idiotic!
 You *must* be able to see why a lead of ♦A from west is idiotic!

	♠ 642	
	♥ AK	
	♦ KQJ102	
	♣ J76	
♠ KQJ75		♠ 98
♥ 863		♥ Q1092
♦ A84	3NT	♦ 963
♣ 95		♣ 10843
	♠ A103	
	♥ J754	
	♦ 75	
	♣ AKQ2	

LEADS - AGAINST NO TRUMP CONTRACTS

When you make an opening lead, declarer, will be the last to play. That can often give a trick away.

On this hand if you lead the $\diamond 3$ against a $4\heartsuit$ contract, declarer wins with the queen. Playing diamonds himself, he will always lose a trick to your king. Your lead has cost your side a valuable trick!

Against NTs it is still annoying but at least it is a step nearer to setting up winners in your diamond suit. In Bridge you will find that it is often necessary to lose early tricks in order to establish tricks for your side later in the play.

Against NT contracts, usually lead from your longest suit!
Top of a Sequence is BEST. If you don't have a sequence, try **4th highest** e.g. From $\text{KJ9}\underline{6}3$ lead the 6.

♠ Q 10 ♥ J 8 6 ♦ 8 7 ♣ K J 10 9 7 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> 3NT or 4♥ </div>	♠ 8 6 5 2 ♥ 10 7 ♦ 10 5 4 ♣ Q 6 5 2
♠ K 9 7 3 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ K J 9 6 3 ♣ 6		♠ A J 4 ♥ A Q 9 5 3 ♦ A Q 2 ♣ A 8

Basic principles in finding safe opening leads against NTs are:

Lead the top card from a sequence of high cards

e.g. From	\underline{Q} J 10 9	lead the queen.
	\underline{J} 10 9 x	lead the jack
	\underline{K} Q J x	lead the king
	\underline{A} K Q x	lead the ace
	$\underline{10}$ 9 8 7	lead the ten

If partner leads any of these cards you know that they have the card below, e.g. if partner has led the jack, from an un-bid suit, you know that they have the 10. (and that they do not have the queen.)

NOTE: 9 8 7 6 is NOT a sequence so don't lead 9 from this holding. 8 then 7 is best.

Lead the top of a near sequence.

e.g. From	\underline{Q} J 9 x	lead the queen.
	\underline{J} 10 8 x	lead the jack
	\underline{K} Q 10 x	lead the king
	\underline{A} K J x	lead the ace
	$\underline{10}$ 9 7 x	lead the ten

Lead the top of an internal sequence

e.g. From	\underline{A} Q J 10	lead the queen.
	\underline{A} J 10 9 7	lead the jack
	\underline{K} J 10 9	lead the jack
	\underline{Q} 10 9 8	lead the 10
	\underline{K} 10 9 8	lead the 10

NOTE These leads GUARANTEE the card under the one led. NEVER queen from Q 10 9 x

IF partner has bid a suit, lead it.

With two cards in partner's suit, lead the higher.	e.g. From $\underline{Q}5$ lead the Q.
With three cards to an honour lead your lowest.	e.g. From $\underline{Q}8\underline{2}$ lead the 2
With three 'rags' lead Middle Up Down (M.U.D.)	e.g. From $\underline{8}\underline{5}\underline{2}$ lead the 5.

MUD leads

Middle Up Down leads **from three rags** are fairly safe. Do not use them if your top card is an honour, e.g. From $\underline{7}\underline{4}\underline{2}$ lead the 4, but with $\underline{K}\underline{4}\underline{2}$ lead the 2. (Low from an honour).

AND you must remember when the suit is played again, to play the HIGH card, or partner will think you started with only **two** cards in the suit.

These are standard leads - but page 5 reminds you that there are other considerations!

LEADS - WHAT HAS PARTNER GOT?

Ask yourself - How many points does partner have ? - - before making your lead

On hands 1,2, & 3 you are playing for (hoping) that the seven missing cards split 3-2-2.

LEADS AGAINST 3 NT CONTRACTS

Hand 1

You have no outside entries to your diamonds, but you do have six.
How will the other seven diamonds split between the three other hands?
You must hope that they will break 3-2-2 and that playing your A, K and Q will drop the defender's diamonds, establishing the 7 5 2 as winners.

Bidding on hands
1-4 was 1NT-3NT

♠ 93
♥ 862
♦ AKQ752
♣ 105
I've seen 4th highest !

1

Hand 2

With only A, K, as top tricks it becomes impossible to drop the defender's top diamonds so you have to rely on partner getting on lead at some stage of the play to return your suit. Lead the fourth highest, ♠7
With only seven HCPs in your hand, there is a reasonable chance that your partner will get in and that he has a 2nd spade to return your suit.

♠ AK9752
♥ 864
♦ 93
♣ 105
Here, lead 4th highest

2

Hand 3

Assuming that the opponents have 25 pts. to be in a contract of 3NT you must realise that partner cannot have any points!

Therefore you have to defend this contract on your own. With heart and spade honours you *should* get in again. Therefore it would seem reasonable to play off your ace, king and another club.

♠ A5
♥ KJ2
♦ 93
♣ AK9752
On your own!

3

Hand 4

Similarly, if you were sitting with virtually no points it might be worth leading for your partner, rather than expecting to establish your long suit when there is no real likelihood of you being able to reach the established winners.

If the opponents have not used Stayman, your partner is almost certain to have four, possibly more spades AND your partner will have HCPs. What about leading for partner? You are never likely to establish your club suit are you?

BUT if it goes wrong be quick to apologise!

♠ 52
♥ 974
♦ 632
♣ J9652
Think before you lead.

4

The message of this lesson is that you should always be able to estimate reasonably how many points your partner has. Then ask yourself where they might be.

The accuracy of your analysis will increase as declarer's points are revealed during the play - and of course you should try to work out why declarer is tackling some of the suits and not others. As your defence improves you will discover legitimate ways of signalling your strengths and weaknesses to partner.

OPENING LEADS AGAINST SUIT CONTRACTS

Best Lead

IF you are lucky enough to have a suit with the ace AND king, you probably don't have to search any further for a lead against a suit contract. Lead the ace to tell partner where the king is, AND it gives you the chance to see the dummy hand before deciding what to do next.

Singletons

On the this hand, if you lead your singleton $\spadesuit 3$ against a $4\heartsuit$ contract, you may be able to 'ruff' (*trump the 2nd round of diamonds with a spade*) any subsequent lead of the suit, assuming the unsuspecting declarer does not take out your trumps.

\spadesuit 852
\heartsuit K7432
\diamondsuit 3
\clubsuit Q863

DO NOT lead singleton honours UNLESS partner has bid the suit!

Doubletons

The order in which you play your two cards is crucial
Play your higher card FIRST and then your lower card.

8 followed by 3 is called a 'peter' showing two cards in the suit.

This hi-lo is called a 'peter' and it shows an even number of cards in that suit.

Usually two cards and an interest in ruffing the third round.

e.g. On the following hand, lead your $\diamondsuit 8$ against a contract of $4\heartsuit$ and if you 'get in' again before declarer has drawn trumps, lead the $\diamondsuit 3$, (*or follow with the $\diamondsuit 3$ whenever diamonds are led.*) This 8-3 will tell partner that you are now capable of ruffing any further leads of this suit.

\spadesuit 852
\heartsuit K743
\diamondsuit 83
\clubsuit A942

Short suit leads are common only against *suit contracts* when you are hoping to get a ruff, before declarer has drawn all of your trumps. BUT remember, if **you have lots of points**, your partner cannot have the aces and kings needed to get on lead to give you the ruff.

a.)	b.)
\spadesuit 82 \heartsuit 432 \diamondsuit J643 \clubsuit Q863	\spadesuit 82 \heartsuit K74 \diamondsuit KQJ5 \clubsuit K863

Against $4\heartsuit$, Hand a.) is suitable for $\spadesuit 8$ lead. In Hand b.) your partner cannot have any points! (Lead $\diamondsuit K$)

Do not make leads from $Kx - Qx - Jx - 10x$ unless partner has bid the suit.

Leading Trumps

Often a trump lead can work well. Declarer is playing in a suit contract rather than NTs because he is hoping to ruff his losers. Cut down his ruffing potential by leading trumps. Lead a trump if you hold two or three small trumps, or three to the ace or king.

K9 $\underline{5}$	YES	5
QJ87		
A10632		

Do not lead a singleton trump as this will often trap partner's three to an honour.

9	NO	Q54
KJ87		
A10632		

LEADING PARTNER'S SUIT

If partner has bid a suit then you must have a very good reason not to lead that suit.

Lead MUD* from three rags.

8 $\underline{52}$ but remember **M.U.D.** is ONLY a LEAD and remember to play Up (8) when the suit is led again.

Lead hi-lo from two (whether or not an honour is held).

$\underline{K}4$ or $\underline{7}4$ Follow suit in the same way

Lead low from three or four to an honour.

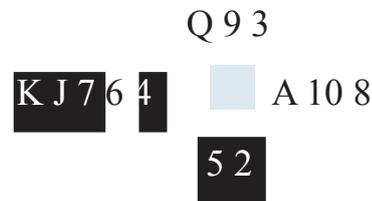
$\underline{J}7\mathbf{3}$ or $\underline{K}7\mathbf{4}\underline{2}$

When FOLLOWING SUIT with three small, play the cards naturally (Lowest 1st). e.g. Play 2 from 8 $\underline{52}$

4TH HIGHEST LEADS - THE RULE OF 11

Against a NT contract, IF, you do not have a sequence of three cards headed by an honour the standard lead is - 'The 4th highest of your longest and strongest suit' and it employs the 'Rule of 11'. Suppose you hold ♠ K J 7 6 4. Your 4th highest card is the ♠6.

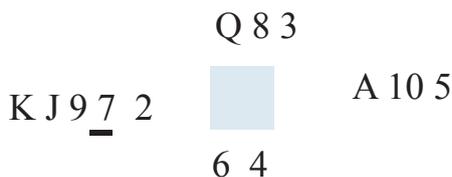
If you lead ♠6, your partner will subtract 6 from 11 and work out that there are FIVE cards higher than the six, in the other three hands.



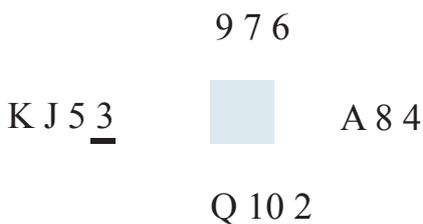
East can see his hand and the dummy hand and can therefore work out that declarer has no card higher than the 6.

If declarer plays low from dummy, east can now safely play the 8.

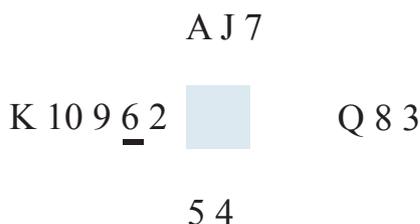
When this holds, east should now play the ace and then the 10. You will overtake and run the suit!



If west leads the 7, east subtracts 7 from 11 and can 'see' that there are only four cards higher than the 7 in the other three hands. He has two (ace and 10) and can see that dummy has two (queen and 8) East can therefore safely play the 10, knowing it will win the trick, and that declarer will not make any tricks in this suit, because east will play the ace and then the 5. West's king will **drop** north's queen. If east played the ace south must eventually win with the queen.



West leads the 3, declarer plays the 6 from dummy and east wins with the ace. When east continues the suit west will beat the ten with the jack, (or the queen with the king.) West can now lead the other winning card to which everyone follows. West is now left with the thirteenth card in the suit which is now a winner.

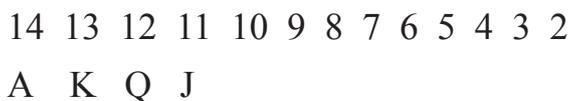


West leads the 6. Declarer plays 7
If you play the queen dummy will have a finesses position to make two tricks. Dummy's jack will become a 2nd trick for declarer. That's bad news!

Using the Rule of 11 guides you to the correct card!

If 6 is partner's 4th highest, $11 - 6 = 5$ (Five cards higher than the 6). Dummy has three and you have two. Therefore declarer has NO card higher than the 6. You should win the trick with the 8. Return the queen and if you get in again play the 3 to partner's king. The 10 and 9 will now be tricks for your side.

Many people cannot understand why it works. They forget that the thirteen cards begin with the 2.



PLEASE NOTE

4th highest leads should only be considered if you do not have a TOP OF A SEQUENCE lead available!

LEADS DURING THE PLAY

If your partner has bid a suit during the auction lead the suit. If partner *leads* a suit against a NT contract it is usually because they have lots of cards in that suit. It is therefore important for you to *return that suit* if you win the lead, even if you have only one card left in that suit.

During the play if this is not possible, when dummy is on your left, you can lead *through a tenace** in dummy which may be vulnerable to attack.

If dummy is on your right, do not lead a suit in which you surround dummy's honours. Spades in the second example shown.

Choose to lead *up to* a weak suit in dummy, hoping that your partner has something in the suit. If declarer opened 1NT, where are his 14 points?

**A tenace is a holding of two or more non-touching honours. e.g. K J, or A Q J, or K Q10*

Lead 'through' tenaces (in the 2nd hand to play)

Declarer has bid hearts but is playing this contract in 3NT.

After three tricks have been played west gets on lead.

West would lead a spade 'through' dummy's high card tenace.

You to lead



♠ 10 9 7 3
♥ Q 4 2
♦ K 8
♣ 6

Dummy

♠ K J
♥ 9 8 2
♦ 8 6 5
♣ A K

Partner



Declarer

♠ ?
♥ ?
♦ ?
♣ ?

Lead 'up to' the weakness! (in the last hand to play)

Declarer has bid hearts but is playing this contract in 3NT.

After three tricks have been played east gets on lead!

East would lead a diamond or a heart up to dummy's weakness

You



Dummy

♠ K J
♥ 9 8 2
♦ 8 6 5
♣ A K

Partner to lead

♠ A Q 2
♥ 6 3
♦ 9 7
♣ Q J 2

Declarer

♠ ?
♥ ?
♦ ?
♣ ?



Often when declarer is *running* a long suit it is difficult to know which cards to discard. Unless you are careful, you can discard the wrong cards which will allow declarer to make extra tricks. Sometimes you can use your discards to give your partner information about strengths and weaknesses in your hand.

ATTITUDE SIGNALS***The discard of a high card encourages.***

When declarer cashes tricks in his long suit it is often difficult to know which cards to throw away. Obviously you would throw away small cards rather than high cards, but not always.

Dummy		You
♠ K6		♠ AQJ82
♥ K6		♥ 4
♦ K8		♦ 9
♣ 4		♣
♣ J		

Declarer south has just played his last club and you cannot follow suit. You have to discard something.

The ♦9 looks fairly useless and so does the ♥4, but the card to throw away is the ♠8.

The simple principle is that an unnecessarily *high* discard, tells partner that you like the suit and want it led if s/he gets in. When south leads a heart to dummy's king partner wins with the ace and leads a spade.

The discard of a low card discourages.

Dummy		You
♠ K6		♠ AQJ
♥ K6		♥ 92
♦ K8		♦ 82
♣ 4		♣
♣ J9		

There is a similar situation on this hand when declarer is playing his fourth club.

The difference is that you cannot afford to throw a spade, you need them to win tricks.

So the solution is to discard a *low* diamond to tell partner that you have no interest in that suit. On the fifth club throw a low heart to complete the picture for partner.

Observation is as important as memory in Bridge.

KEEP LENGTH WITH DUMMY.

Dummy		You
♠ AQ52		♠ 9874
♠ J106		
♠ K3		

You can see four spades in dummy, and you have four spades. Admittedly they are not good spades, but one will make a trick providing you do not discard spades when declarer runs his his long suit.

KEEP YOUR HIGH CARDS PROTECTED.

Dummy		You
♠ Q875		♠ K93
♠ 1062		
♠ AJ4		

You are east, having to find discards as declarer runs his long clubs. Your ♠K needs protecting, so avoid discarding a spade.

If you do discard a spade, declarer will play low from dummy and finesse the ♠J. His ace will then drop your king.

If dummy plays ♠Q, ***cover an honour with an honour.*** Play ♠K. This will establish, eventually, partner's ♠10

COVER AN HONOUR WITH AN HONOUR

1. Cover immediately!

When declarer leads an honour card either from hand or dummy, and you have a higher honour, you should usually cover it to promote a trick in partner's hand or in your own hand.

You are defending as west and south leads the ♠Q.
You should cover the ♠Q with the ♠K.

- a) If you play small, south will then finesse the jack and make all four tricks.
- b) If you 'cover' with the king, east will take the third trick with the 10. Note that you can't see the 10 but you hope that partner has it. If declarer has it, all the spade tricks are his anyway!

♠ AJ87
♠ K62 ♠ 1054
♠ Q93
Declarer

2. Don't cover touching honours

If you can see two 'touching' honours, as a matter of principle, you should not cover the first honour but wait and cover the second.

You are defending as east and dummy leads the ♠Q.

- a) If you cover the queen, south will win and subsequently finesse against partner's 10 to make all four tricks.
- b) If you play low on the queen for the first trick and subsequently cover the jack on the second trick, partner's 10 is promoted for the third trick.

♠ QJ9
♠ 1086 ♠ K54
♠ A732
Declarer

3. Exceptions! Where you would not cover.

N	S
1♠	4♠

- a) When you know that partner has no card to promote. i.e. from the bidding and the cards that you can see in your hand and dummy. Declarer is **known** to have four spades from the bidding SO west should NOT cover ♠J with ♠Q

♠ A10862
♠ Q75 ♠ K
♠ J943
Declarer

- b) When you believe that declarer has a two way finesse and is 'fishing' for the queen of trumps, he hopes that you will cover the jack or 10 with your queen. Don't, and try not to hesitate when declarer plays the jack or 10 and you have the queen! You should have already decided to play low.

♠ A1086
♠ Q75 ♠ 42
♠ KJ93

- c) When declarer or dummy is short in the suit and your honour card cannot be 'dropped.' Save your king until the third trick.

♠ A3
♠ K65 ??
♠ QJ????

All these bridge sayings are helpful, but they are not an excuse for failing to think and not preparing yourself for what declarer is going to do.

2ND HAND PLAY - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Generally, 2nd hand plays low

When you are the first defender to play to a trick, it is normal to play low.

e.g. If your right hand opponent plays a low card to dummy, with A83, you would normally play the 3.

K 8 6
A J 7
You
3 led

Here is an excellent illustration of the one liner '*2nd hand plays low*'.
When south plays the 3 towards the king, you must play low or you will give declarer three tricks instead of two.

Try it!

K 8 6
A J 7
10 5 4
Q 9 3 2

K J 9 6
A 7 5
You
2 led

If you play the ace declarer will always make the king. If you duck there is a good chance that declarer will finesse the jack, and that partner has the queen.

K J 9 6
A 7 5
Q 10
8 4 3 2

But there are exceptions!

K J 9
A Q 5
You
2 led

When you have the queen as well, your best chance of making two tricks in the suit is to play the ace on the first round, and return the 5. Declarer may worry that it was a doubleton and that you will ruff when the second round finesse loses to east. So he will often rise with the king. Remember declarer cannot see your hand.

K J 9
A Q 5
10 7 6 4
8 3 2

♦ Q 5
♦ K 7 3
You
♦ 4 led

Contract 4♠. *With only two cards in dummy*, don't be fooled into never making your ♦K. Play ♦K or ♦Q wins, then ♦5 to declarer's ♦A and declarer's 3rd diamond is ruffed!

Q 5
K 7 3
J 9 7 2
A 10 8 4

A J 4 3
K Q 5 2
You
6 led

If declarer is in a trump contract, don't play low in this situation or you will not even make one trick! Declarer will finesse the jack, play the ace and then ruff the 4!

A J 4 3
K Q 5 2
10 9 8
7 6

Q 5 3
K 7
You
4 led

Contract 3NT. *With only two cards*, don't be fooled into losing your diamond trick. Play the king.

Q 5 3
K 7
10 9 2
A J 7 6 4

BIG TIP - As soon as dummy is faced you should predict what declarer is likely to do, and decide **BEFORE** declarer plays towards dummy what you will do!

PLAYING 2ND IN HAND

Generally, 2nd hand plays low

You are west.
 Declarer plays low from south towards high cards in dummy. West should play low. Not the 10!



Obviously if dummy has a singleton king you would be foolish not to play the ace.

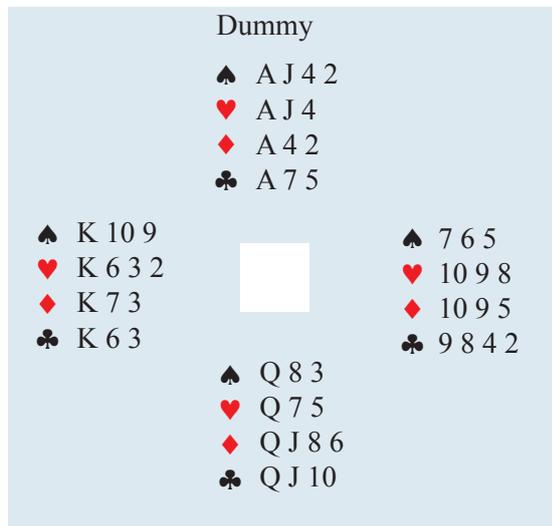


If declarer is in a 4♥/♠ contract, and you don't cash your ♦A you will never make it because declarer will ruff all subsequent rounds of the suit.

Cover an Honour with an Honour

"Cover an honour with an honour" is one of the most familiar sayings in Bridge, and there are many occasions when you should cover if declarer/dummy leads an honour card.

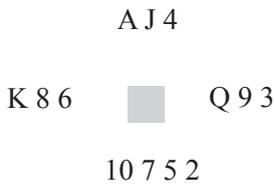
Second player should often play a higher honour even though it is clear that it will *not* win the trick. By covering the honour, you hope to set up an extra trick for your side, but it is not *always* correct. In the diagram, south, the closed hand, leads the queen. In which suits *should* west cover?



The answer in spades is easy for west to see, (YES) but it is equally true in the heart & diamond suits when *east* has the 10. It doesn't gain in the club suit, but nor is anything lost.

If south were to lead a low card towards the ace, west should also play low.

In diamonds if the 8 is led and west plays the king declarer will make four diamond tricks.



Try to get into declarer's mind. What is he up to when he leads the 10? Well, he is going to finesse it, isn't he? Has partner got the queen? If so east will win, but what then? Declarer will finesse the jack and your king will drop, setting up three tricks for declarer. You should cover the 10 with your king, hoping that partner has the queen, and the 9.

Exception (usually trumps).



If declarer has bid and shown length in a suit don't cover. e.g. Declarer leads ♠J and you hold ♠Q76, dummy has ♠A6432. Remember declarer holds four cards in the suit so partner has only one. Play low in case partner has the king. If you play your queen on the jack, declarer will play the ace *crashing* partners king, and giving declarer five tricks instead of four.

PLAYING IN 3RD POSITION (TO PARTNER'S LEAD)

The hardest part of this game is defence, because you have to guess what cards your partner holds.

When you are trying to win the trick in 3rd position!

If partner leads a suit you are usually expected to play high to try and win the trick.
With 'touching' high cards, play the lowest 'touching' e.g.

When partner leads a suit and you have	KQ102	play the queen;
When partner leads a suit and you have	AK32	play the king;
When partner leads a suit and you have	J10987	play the 7.

When your card cannot win the trick in 3rd position, give a count signal.

When you have an even number

With two cards in the suit led, play HI-LO. (Highest card first, then lowest). e.g. play 7 then 3
With four, play hi/lo from the middle two, e.g. with 8652 play 6 then 5

When you have an odd number

With three cards in the suit led play your lowest card first. e.g. with 863, play the 3

Trying to win

♠	KJ84_		
♥	982		
♦	A63		
♣	AK8		
		YOU	
		♠	109
leads ♦7	4♠	♥	Q42
		♦	KQJ2
		♣	643

When the ♦J holds the trick, partner knows that you hold the king and queen as well. Return ♦K and notice whether partner completes a hi-lo peter.

Can't win - holding a doubleton

♠	KJ84_		
♥	983		
♦	AQ5		
♣	Q84		
		YOU	
		♠	1097
leads ♣A	4♠	♥	742
		♦	K8432
		♣	73

When partner leads ♣A he also has the ♣K. Play the ♣7 on his ace. He will then play the king and notice that your 2nd card is the 3. This means that you can ruff the 3rd round.

Can't win - holding three cards

♠	KJ84_		
♥	983		
♦	AQ5		
♣	Q84		
		YOU	
		♠	1097
leads ♣A	4♠	♥	742
		♦	K843
		♣	1073

When partner leads ♣A he also has the ♣K. Tell partner that you have an odd number of cards by playing ♣3.
(Not a hi-lo)

When you cannot follow suit

When discarding, play a high card (*that you can afford*) in a suit that you want partner to lead.
Throw low cards from suits you are not interested in.

High discards encourage partner to lead the suit.

Low discards discourage.

NOTE for ambitious students.

The game moves on and these **attitude signals** are a very basic method of signalling.

We would prefer you to learn **suit preference signals**.

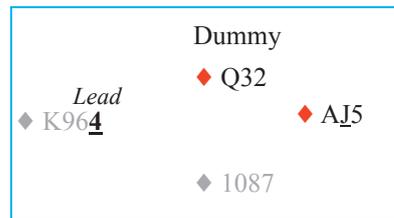
In this example east cannot follow when west wins with ♣Q.	♠	109
	♥	KJ3
	♦	KJ3
	♣	3
East can discard ♦9 to ask partner to switch to diamonds.	♣Q	3NT
		♠ 63 ♥ 942 ♦ AQ92 ♣

WHAT TO PLAY ON PARTNER'S LEAD

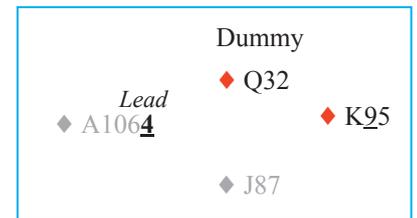
Keeping a Guard on Dummy's Honour Card



East, 3rd in hand, should play ♦10, **keeping ♦A to guard ♦Q**.
If east plays ♦A, declarer gets two tricks instead of one!

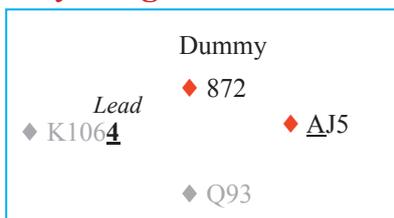


East, 3rd in hand, should play ♦J, **keeping ♦A to guard ♦Q**.
When ♦J holds, east cashes ♦A and returns ♦5

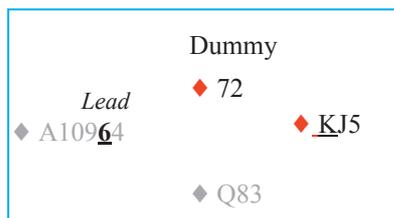


East, 3rd in hand, should play ♦9, **keeping ♦K to guard ♦Q**.
♦9 DOES NOT give a trick away.
Declarer is entitled to 1 diamond trick.

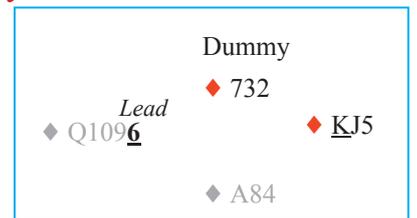
Play *Highest When there is NOTHING to Guard in Dummy.



With nothing to guard in dummy, east, 3rd in hand, should play ♦A.
On this layout, declarer is not entitled to any tricks.

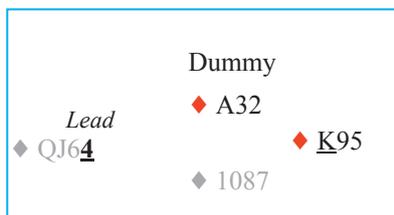


With nothing to guard in dummy, east, 3rd in hand, should play ♦K.
Important to return ♦J (hi-lo) from the two remaining diamonds.

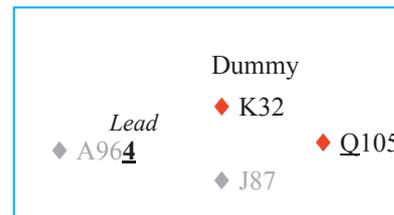


With nothing to guard in dummy, east, 3rd in hand, should play ♦K.
If declarer ducks, return ♦J (hi-lo) from the two remaining diamonds.

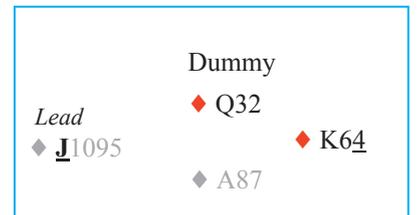
**When you are defending, ALWAYS try to win with the lower or lowest of touching honours. e.g. With QJ8*



Because east cannot beat the ♦A pretend it's not there and play ♦K
This holds declarer to one trick.



Because east cannot beat the ♦K pretend it's not there and play ♦Q
This holds declarer to one trick.



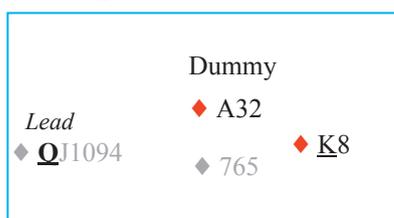
West leads Top of a Sequence.
East only plays ♦K if ♦Q is played from dummy. ♦4 is the correct card.
This is a count signal!

As you would if there was nothing to guard in dummy

What to Play on Partner's Top of Sequence Leads



The one card that west DOESN'T have, is the ♦Q. East must therefore play ♦K and return ♦8



With only two cards, east must unblock ♦K and return ♦8
This holds declarer to one trick.



With only two cards, east must overtake ♦K and return the ♦8.

**King leads against NTs are special!
More later!**

TOUCHING HIGH CARDS

Normally second hand plays low. Third hand will normally play high to try to win the trick. As defender, when you cannot win the trick and are simply following suit, you have previously been advised to give a count signal.

This means playing the cards in a high - low sequence to show an even number of cards in the suit, or low high to show an odd number of cards in the suit.

You are defending 4♠ by south.

		Dummy	
		♠ KQ74	
		♥ 975	
		♦ A72	
		♣ A96	
You		Partner	
♠ A8		♠ 32	
♥ 83	4♠	♥ KQ2	
♦ Q843		♦ 10965	
♣ J8754		♣ K1032	

You lead the ♥8. You will eventually play the ♥3 (a 'peter') to show two cards in the suit and partner will hopefully lead a third round of the suit so that you can ruff.

If partner plays the king, south will win with the ace, but you will assume that south also has the queen *because* your partner did not play it.

If east played the queen, south would still have to play the ace to win the trick, but now partner *could* hold the king.

When you get in with the ace of trumps your lead of the ♥3 will be won by partners ♥K. Partner will now play a 3rd heart for you to ruff.

As DEFENDER, when following suit, and trying to win the trick:

Play the *lowest of touching honours* to give information about where the missing honours might be.

Winning with the ace denies holding the king.
Trying to win with a king denies holding the queen.
Trying to win with a queen denies holding the jack. etc.

A simple example.

		Dummy	
		♠ Q85	
		♥ AK6	
		♦ K974	
		♣ A104	
You lead ♠4		Partner	
and declarer plays	3NT	♠ AK7	
low from dummy.		♥ 752	
		♦ J863	
		♣ 752	

If partner plays the ♠K - and south does not win with the ace you have a clear picture that *partner must have the ace as well!*

(If partner plays the ace, you know that partner doesn't have the king!)

BUT as DECLARER you should always try to conceal your hand by playing the highest of touching honours. Declarer should win with the ace even when holding the king and the queen.

Defenders need to give information to each other. Declarer needs to conceal his hand!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WIN THE TRICK!

As declarer you have been advised that sometimes you should duck early tricks to establish tricks later in the hand. Well, ducking tricks *that you could win* works equally well for defenders.

South opened 2NT and north raised to 3NT
 Partner leads ♥2.
 Declarer wins with the ♥J.

Dummy
 ♠ 752
 ♥ 63
 ♦ 965
 ♣ KQJ98

Declarer, south, leads ♣6 to the king and *partner plays* ♣2
 Do you win this trick and why?
 If you duck, declarer continues with the ♣Q from dummy.
 Do you win this trick and why?

a
 ♠ 962
 ♥ 875
 ♦ K872
 ♣ A73

South opened 2NT and north raised to 3NT
 Partner leads ♥2
 Declarer wins with the ♥J.
 Declarer, south, leads ♣6 to the queen and partner plays ♣2*

Dummy
 ♠ 752
 ♥ 63
 ♦ 965
 ♣ AQJ108

Do you win this trick and why?
 *Partner's ♣2 is a count signal from 952 *showing three clubs*
 (so declarer started with only two clubs.)

b
 ♠ 962
 ♥ 875
 ♦ K872
 ♣ K73

South opened 2NT and north raised to 3NT
 Partner leads ♥2
 Declarer wins with the ♥J.
 Declarer, south, leads ♣K and partner plays ♣2
 Do you win this trick and why?
 If you duck and declarer plays another club to the ♣Q do you take it this time?

Dummy
 ♠ 752
 ♥ 63
 ♦ 965
 ♣ QJ1098

Partner
 ♣652

c
 ♠ 962
 ♥ 875
 ♦ K872
 ♣ A73

On each hand, declarer is trying to get into the north hand to enjoy lots of winning clubs. As you can see, declarer has no entries to the dummy hand in spades, hearts or diamonds. Therefore, duck his attempts to get you to play your honour card too early.
Of course it would be helpful to know exactly how many clubs declarer has?

In each of these hands *partner* followed suit with ♣2 to shows three cards in the suit. Therefore *declarer* started with only TWO clubs in each of these hands.
 In hands **a** & **c**, you should duck declarer's first lead of clubs and play your ace on the 2nd round.
 In hand **b** you can ONLY hold off for 1 round (*or your king would be felled by the ace at round three*).

In hand **d**, where partner started with only two clubs, he would follow suit with a hi-lo signal. (playing ♣6 first). This would mean that declarer started with three clubs and you would need to hold up your ace for TWO rounds to stop declarer getting into dummy.

Dummy
 ♠ 752
 ♥ 63
 ♦ 965
 ♣ QJ1098

Partner
 ♣62

d
 ♠ 962
 ♥ 875
 ♦ K872
 ♣ A73

♣K54

When you learn to SEE the cards played by partner you will be able to take your ace at exactly the right time.
 (See pages 17 - 19)

COUNT SIGNALS 1.

Although all players can see the dummy hand, it is declarer who has the greatest advantage, because he sees the two hands on which his play strategy will be based.

It is therefore vitally important for each defender to build up a picture of their partner's hand, to enable them to determine where declarer's weakness, and partner's strength, may be.

WHEN FOLLOWING SUIT

Playing insignificant cards in a particular sequence can tell partner how many cards you hold in a suit. A defender, *when not playing to win the trick*, will play the cards :

High-low to show an even number of cards in the suit.
This is called a *peter*, or *petering*. e.g. from 8 - 3 play the 8 first and then the 3.

Low-high to show an odd number of cards in the suit.
e.g. from 8 - 5 - 3 play the 3 first and then the 5.

WHEN LEADING FROM TWO SMALL CARDS (*Exactly the same as if you were following suit!*)

With only two small cards in a side suit and defending a contract of 4♠ you might lead the ♦8 from 8-3 hoping to get a ruff before declarer has drawn your trumps. (Doubleton leads work best when *you* have few HCPs. (Partner needs some aces or kings to be able to get on lead, to give you the ruff.)

WHEN LEADING FROM THREE SMALL CARDS (*Please note that cards are played in a different order when - LEADING - from three small cards as to - FOLLOWING SUIT - with three small cards.*)

The standard LEAD from three small cards is called **M**iddle - **U**p - **D**own (MUD).

With 863 the lead would be the **M**iddle card, the 3. When the suit is played again you must play the 8. Your observant partner will be less than happy if you forget - and play the low card. S/He will think that you have played a hi-lo and that you are going to ruff the third round!

NOTES :

- Do not lead a hi-lo from an honour e.g. K-4, or Q-9 *unless partner had bid the suit*. The reason is simple. Those honours could make tricks if you leave declarer to find them! You *could* lead the ace from Ax against a suit contract, but not as a matter of course.
- If you hold 87652 and there is no better suit, lead the 7. When the suit is next played, play the 8 or partner will think the 7 was the start of a peter.
- From 8762 lead the 7. When the suit is next played play the 6. (Hopefully partner, will notice that the 2 has not appeared and will conclude that you have four, and not two, of the suit.
- The lead of a low card usually promises an honour in the suit.
- Although short suit leads are not made against NT contracts, MUD leads *are* a possibility.

Against 4♠ you decide to LEAD from the diamond suit. The appropriate card is underlined

♦ <u>2</u> 6	♦ K 6	♦ K J 9 <u>3</u>	♦ 9 <u>8</u> 6	♦ <u>K</u> Q J 7 6
Hi-lo	Wrong suit	Low from honour	M.U.D.	Top of sequence

COUNT SIGNALS 2.

Count signals when partner makes an opening lead.

Obviously if partner leads a low card, you, in third position must try to win the trick!

If partner leads the $\heartsuit A$, against a contract of $4\spadesuit$, (he will also have the $\heartsuit K$) and if you have 8-3, you must play the 8. When you subsequently play the 3 on partner's king, he will know that you can ruff the third round.

If you held $\heartsuit 8-5-2$, following to partner's $\heartsuit A$ with 2* will tell partner that you are unable to ruff the 3rd round because you have three or five cards in the suit.

NOTES :

1. Beginners are often confused about which card to play from three rags when following suit
When *following suit*, with 7 - 6 - 2 you would *play* the 2, to show count.
When *on lead*, with 7 - 6 - 2 you should *lead* the 6 (Middle) and then 7 (Up), & finally 2 (Down).
Don't confuse MUD LEADS with giving count when FOLLOWING SUIT.
2. On partner's lead, many pairs agree to play a high card to *encourage* partner to continue the suit, and a low card to discourage a continuation of the suit. Others play count signals whoever leads.
Often, attitude and count signals are the same, but eventually you will need to agree with partner which method you are playing!
3. If partner leads a queen and subsequently plays the jack, do not mistake this for a hi-lo peter.
The lead was simply a '*top of a sequence*' (and he is also showing the 10 or 9).
4. If partner LEADS a low card, they are telling you that they have something good in that suit.
5. Normally return partner's suit when you are on lead, unless dummy shows it to be unwise.

Count signals when declarer leads.

When *declarer* leads to a card in dummy which you cannot win, take it as an opportunity to tell partner how many cards you hold in that suit.

This can be crucial in stopping declarer from reaching his long suit in a dummy that has no outside entries.

	\spadesuit 8 6 2	
	\heartsuit Q 7 4 2	
	\diamondsuit K Q J 9 6	
	\clubsuit 6	
		You
\spadesuit Q 9 7 4		\spadesuit 10 5 3
\heartsuit J 9 8		\heartsuit K 5 3
\diamondsuit 10 7	3NT	\diamondsuit A 5 4
\clubsuit J 9 7 4		\clubsuit 8 5 3 2

You note that declarer has no entries to dummy outside the diamond suit which he obviously wants to establish.

You decide not to win the $\diamondsuit A$ immediately, but how do you know whether to hold up once or twice?

You need the help of your partner!

If he can tell you how many diamonds he has, you will know how many declarer has.

Partner's first card is the $\diamondsuit 10$. That must be from a doubleton! If he has two, declarer must have three.

You need to duck diamonds twice!

You obviously cannot play count signals when you are playing to win a trick.

COUNT SIGNALS 3.

When your partner leads a low card, and declarer plays the ace from dummy, you may think that it doesn't matter which small card you play, but it does.

If you have an even number of cards in a suit you are expected to show that distribution to your partner by *petering*.

If you '*peter*' with four, suppress the lowest card.
e.g. with J763, play the 7 and, when the suit is led again, complete the hi-lo with the 6.

The reason you keep the smallest card is to assist partner in *getting a count* on the suit.

Playing the 6 and then the 3 may lead partner to think that you held two rather than four.

This obviously means that partner must watch your play of the cards very carefully.

Always play your lowest card first from three or five.
With J32 or J9632 you would play the 2 first, to show an *odd* number of cards in the suit.

Suppose you are defending a contract of 4♠ by south.
Partner leads the ♣A and then the ♣K.
You hold ♣83.

If you peter by playing the ♣8 first and then the ♣3, partner will continue the suit and you will be able to ruff.

♠ 7 2	4♠ by south	♠ 4 3
♥ 9 7 3 2		♥ Q J 6 4
♦ 8 7 3		♦ A 10 9 5 2
♣ A K 9 7		♣ 8 3

On this hand, playing the ♣2 (a count signal) will discourage partner from continuing the suit, because he knows that you cannot ruff the third round.

♠ 7 2	4♠ by south	♠ 4 3
♥ 9 7 3 2		♥ Q J 6
♦ 8 7 3		♦ A 10 9 5 2
♣ A K 9 7		♣ 8 3 2

You are east defending against 4♠ by south.

Partner leads the ♦Q.
Declarer wins ♦A and draws trumps in three rounds.
Declarer now leads ♥4, Partner plays the ♥2.
and you win the trick with the ♥K*.

Do you continue with the ♥A or play another diamond?

Partner played the ♥2 which indicates one or three.

If it is three, declarer started with one, and he will ruff your ace.
Unfortunately for your side, that will 'establish' declarer's jack.
BUT - Partner's original lead, if you remember, promised the so you should return ♦2.
(Partner would probably have led the heart if he had a singleton)

	♦Q LEAD	♠ Q 9 6 5
		♥ Q J 6 3
		♦ 10 5 3
		♣ A 2
♠ 8 4 2	4♠ by south	♠ 7
♥ 10 8 2		♥ A K 9 7 5
♦ Q J 4		♦ K 9 8 2
♣ K 7 6 5		♣ J 10 3
		♠ A K J 10 3
		♥ 4
		♦ A 7 6
		♣ Q 9 8 4

*** In DEFENCE you should try to win the trick with the lower/lowest of touching cards.**

With AK975, win with ♥K not ♥A.

With J1093, try to win with 9, not J.

QUIZ ON LEADS AGAINST SUIT CONTRACTS

As west what would you lead against the following contracts?

Most of the time you should look for a safe lead that does not give declarer an easy trick!!

West hand

♠ 8 6 3
♥ 9 2
♦ 10 9 5
♣ J 10 8 4 3

N	S
4♠	1♠ P

♠ K 10 8 6 3
♥ 9 7 2
♦ Q 5 2
♣ K 5

N	S
1♠ 3♥	2♥ 4♥

♠ 6 3
♥ 7 5 2
♦ Q J 10 8 7
♣ A 6 5

N	S
1♠ 2♣	1NT 2♥

♠ K Q 6 4
♥ 4 2
♦ Q J 5 3
♣ 8 6 5

N	S
3♣ 4♥	2NT 3♥ (3♣ is Stayman).

♠ Q 6 2
♥ 8 6 4
♦ K J 9 5 2
♣ 10 5

N	E	S	W
1♣ 3♥	1♠ P	2♥ P	P P

♠ Q 7 4
♥ K 7 2
♦ K 2
♣ 10 9 8 6 5

N	S
1NT 4♠	3♠

Although a trump lead would be safe, ♥9, looking for a ruff, is an attacking option that may work because you have no points. (Partner therefore *has* points!) ♣J is a safe alternative.

♥7 Minors look dangerous for a blind lead away from your honours. You have good cards in their side suit. A trump lead looks best.

♦Q Nothing safer than top of a sequence. South has 6-9 pts. and has not given suit preference to one of his partner's suits. S/he will have six hearts!

♥4. They have 4-4 fit in hearts. A trump lead is unlikely to damage your side or ♣6 MUD. ♠K lead when ace is almost certainly with south is unwise.

♠2 Lead partner's suit. You have no entry to your own suit. Low from three/four to an honour.

♣10 It is far too dangerous to lead away from your honours on this hand and the safe 'top of a sequence' lead is best.

COVER ANSWERS

*For partnership harmony, be very certain about not leading a suit bid by partner!
Be ready with an immediate - "Sorry partner" if an attacking lead doesn't work.*

END OF UNIT 4 QUIZ - DEFENCE

WHAT DO YOU LEAD AGAINST 1NT - 3NT ?

♠ 54	♠ K9542	♠ AK	♠ 1097	♠ 1097
♥ QJ1042	♥ QJ104	♥ 974	♥ 852	♥ 852
♦ K84	♦ 96	♦ Q84	♦ 8	♦ 8
♣ AJ7	♣ 53	♣ 109853	♣ AK9863	♣ AKQ863
1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....

WHAT DO YOU LEAD AGAINST 1S - 4S ?

♠ 54	♠ K4	♠ 832	♠ 1097	♠ K64
♥ QJ104	♥ Q1094	♥ J974	♥ 10852	♥ A72
♦ K843	♦ 986	♦ 4	♦ 82	♦ 72
♣ AJ7	♣ K732	♣ A9853	♣ A98	♣ AQ863
6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....

3RD TO PLAY AGAINST 1NT - (*Dummy plays LOW*)

Partner (West) leads 3 of each suit.	Dummy ♠ 542 ♥ Q42 ♦ K74 ♣ KJ72 <div style="background-color: #ccc; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: 5px 0;"></div>	Which card do you play from ♠ KJ6 ♥ AJ5 ♦ 1098 ♣ Q1096	♠ 11. ♥ 12. ♦ 13. ♣ 14.
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2ND TO PLAY AGAINST 1NT - (*You play BEFORE dummy!*)

Which card do you play from ♠ KJ6 ♥ AJ5 ♦ 1094 ♣ A109	Dummy ♠ A74 ♥ Q62 ♦ K85 ♣ KJ7 <div style="background-color: #ccc; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> Declarer leads 3 of each suit	♠ 15. ♥ 16. ♦ 17 ♣ 18	Which card do you play from ♠ KJ6 ♥ AJ5 ♦ 1094 ♣ K109	Dummy ♠ A54 ♥ 963 ♦ K85 ♣ AJ7 <div style="background-color: #ccc; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> Declarer leads Q of each suit	♠ 19. ♥ 20. ♦ 21. ♣ 22.
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23.

You Which card do you play from ♦ KQ4 ? CONTRACT 4♥	Dummy ♠ 54 ♥ KQ54 ♦ AJ83 ♣ 109 <div style="background-color: #ccc; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> At trick 2, Declarer (South) leads ♦7
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24.

Dummy ♠ 854 ♥ 6 ♦ KQJ84 ♣ 1097 <div style="background-color: #ccc; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> At trick 2, Declarer leads ♦10 Partner plays ♦2	You Which card do you play from ♦ A73 ? CONTRACT 3NT
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25.

At trick 3, Partner (West) leads ♦3	Dummy ♠ AK ♥ K75 ♦ 964 ♣ 1097 <div style="background-color: #ccc; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> You Which card do you play from ♦ QJ105? CONTRACT 3NT
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END OF UNIT 4 QUIZ - ANSWERS**LEAD AGAINST 3NT**

1. ♥Q Best lead in the book is TOP OF A SEQUENCE
2. ♥Q TOP OF A SEQUENCE ♠4 is a poor 2nd choice. It's risky and you have few entries!
3. ♣10 TOP OF A SEQUENCE. A 10 is considered to be an honour card during play.
4. ♣8 4th highest. Give one trick away and hope that partner gets in and can return the suit.
5. ♣A With a bit of luck the ace, king and queen will bring out all of the enemy clubs.

LEAD AGAINST 4S

6. ♥Q Best lead in the book is TOP OF A SEQUENCE
7. ♦8 Middle Up Down (MUD) from three rags is not likely to give a trick away. (safe)
8. ♦4 A singleton lead, hoping for a ruff.
9. ♦8 A doubleton lead when you have few points is acceptable. Hoping for ruffs.
10. ♠4 A doubleton lead cannot work as your partner cannot have any points to give you a ruff.

3RD TO PLAY AGAINST 1NT

11. ♠K With no honour to guard in dummy, play your highest card. Partner has an honour.
12. ♥J Keep your ace to guard ♥Q. The jack may even win! If so play your ace and then ♥5.
13. ♦8 Try to win with the lower or lowest of touching cards.
14. ♣9 With ♣K & ♣J on table your ♣Q, ♣10 & ♣9 are equal.

2ND TO PLAY AGAINST 1NT

15. ♠6 No need to play an honour. Declarer is going to play the ace anyway. Isn't he?
16. ♥5 If declarer has the ♥K you will give him two tricks if you play the ace.
17. ♦4 Would declarer really play ♦8??
18. ♣9 Your ♣Q is trapped but don't make it any easier for declarer.

COVER AN HONOUR WITH AN HONOUR

19. ♠K Cover an honour with an honour.
20. ♥5 Strange lead but don't play your ace dropping partner's bare king!
21. ♦4 2nd hand plays low.
22. ♣K This will establish your ♣9 as a trick after the next club is played.

SPLIT HONOURS

23. ♦Q You must split your honours or declarer may win with ♦J cash ♦A and ruff your ♦K.

DUCKING

24. ♦3 DUCK! Declarer cannot get to dummy in any other suit. Get count signal from partner.

LOWEST OF TOUCHING HONOURS

25. ♦10 Try to win with the lowest of touching high cards.