

DEFENSE

LEAD TRUMP

Bridge Lab

with the Monroes

DEFENSE GOAL – DEFEAT THE CONTRACT!

The opening lead is a big advantage in the race to see which side can develop and take its winning tricks first. There are two methods available to the defense.

1. Defenders WIN Tricks
2. Defenders Prevent Declarer from WINNING Tricks

The most important decision when choosing an opening lead is whether to choose passive or active defense.

PASSIVE DEFENSE	Make a <i>passive</i> lead when there does not appear to be any urgency to win your tricks and breaking a side suit may give up a trick
ACTIVE LEAD	Make an <i>active</i> lead when declarer may be able to discard losers and make your winners go away.

LEAD TRUMP

Leading trump is a *passive* lead. Only lead a trump when the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

1. **If the Auction Suggests Dummy is Short in a Suit.** A trump lead may prevent ruffs in Dummy.
2. **If the Lead of any Other Suit is Likely to give up a trick.** Count points around the table to see if partner will be of any help.
3. **Protect Defense High Card Tricks.** If the opponents are overbidding or sacrificing, trumping losers in Dummy wins tricks for Declarer.
4. **When Dummy Has a Short Side Suit** lead trump.
5. **If Partner Passes a Low-Level Takeout Double,** the double is converted into a penalty double implying partner has length and strength in the trump suit.
6. **It is Seldom Right to Lead a Singleton Trump.** A trump lead may finesse partner out of a natural trump trick. **Exception.** See #3 & 4 above.

DON'T LEAD TRUMP

1. **With an attractive alternative** such as a solid honor sequence.
2. **When the opponents bid strongly and confidently** to their contract.
3. **If the opponents have a fit in two suits** – a “double fit” – they have a lot of potential tricks. Take advantage of the opening lead and attack.
4. **With length in the trump suit,** deliberately make Declarer ruff as often as possible in the hand with the trump suit length. This shortens Declarer’s trump and increases chances that Declarer will lose control of the hand.
5. **When the opponents are in a *misfit*.** Don’t even think about it!

Bridge With The Monroes

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When to Lead Their Suit

Board 1
East Deals

Second Suit

♠ A Q J 10 3 ♥ A 5 3 ♦ Q 10 4 ♣ 10 9		♠ 8 5 ♥ 7 6 ♦ K 9 8 7 6 ♣ K J 8 3	
♠ K 9 7 6 2 ♥ Q J 8 2 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ Q			
8 13 7 12			
West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♠
Pass ¹	1 N	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥ ²	All pass	

1. No Good Bid
2. 4-♥s, 11-12 Support Points

Contract: 3 ♥ South, 9 Tricks
Lead: ♥ A, Reduce Dummy Ruffs
Losers: 5-♠, 2-♥, 2-♦ = 7.

Play: West leads two ♥s to keep Dummy from ruffing ♠s. Upon winning a ♠, West plays another ♥.

Board 2
South Deals

Partner Is Broke

♠ 7 2 ♥ K 8 5 ♦ K J 6 3 2 ♣ A Q 7		♠ 10 6 3 ♥ J 10 4 2 ♦ 10 8 4 ♣ 10 8 2	
♠ A K 8 4 ♥ Q 7 6 ♦ Q 7 5 ♣ K J 5			
11 13 1 15			
West	North	East	South
			1 N
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	4 ♠ ¹	All pass	

1. 4-♠s, 10-15 Points

Contract: 4 ♠ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♠ 7, Passive
Losers: 2-♥, 2-♦, 3-♣ = 7.

Play: West leads the ♠ 7 as East must have very few values and leading any other suit gives Declarer a trick. Avoid an end play on the opening lead.

Board 3
West Deals

Opponents Sacrifice

♠ A K 10 5 ♥ J 10 4 3 ♦ A J 10 ♣ 9 5		♠ Q J 8 7 4 ♥ A K 9 6 2 ♦ K 3 ♣ 3	
♠ 6 ♥ Q 8 7 5 ♦ 6 ♣ A K Q 8 7 6 2			
3 13 13 11			
West	North	East	South
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	4 ♣
Pass	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 ♠	5 ♣	Dbl	All pass

Contract: 5 ♣ South, 11 Tricks
Lead: ♠s!
Losers: 1-♠, 4-♥, 1-♦ = 6.

Play: When their sacrifice bid is doubled, lead their suit! Else, South will ruff three ♥s in Dummy and be set only one trick, rather than three tricks.

Board 4
East Deals

Wake Up! Dummy Can Ruff

♠ 6 ♥ K J 10 6 ♦ A K 9 8 3 ♣ Q 9 3		♠ A 8 ♥ 9 7 2 ♦ J 10 7 2 ♣ K 10 7 2	
♠ K Q 10 9 7 5 4 ♥ Q 4 3 ♦ Q 5 4 ♣ —			
10 13 8 9			
West	North	East	South
		Pass	3 ♠
Dbl	4 ♠	All pass	

Contract: 4 ♠ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♦ A, Shows King, East Plays ♦ 7
Losers: 1-♠, 2-♥, 3-♦ = 6.

Play: West wins ♦ A and sees the need to lead ♠s, reducing Dummy's ruffing. West leads ♠ 6, East wins ♠ A and leads ♠ 8. South ruffs only one ♦ in Dummy.