

Defense V: Leads vs Suit Contracts

Let's take a look at common situations where another suit besides trump has been bid.

Partner's Suit

If partner overcalled or opened, her suit commands priority unless you have one of the top three choices. Guidelines when leading partner's suit:

1. If you have not supported partner's suit, make a standard lead, e.g. xxxx, xxxx, xx.
2. If you have supported partner's suit, lead high from holdings without an A, K or Q; lead low when holding at least three card support and an K or Q. Do not underlead the Ace if you have it.
3. With any doubleton lead the higher card.¹

Opponent's Outside Suit

Avoid leading a non-trump suit bid if it is Declarer's second suit or Responder's 2/1 suit, e.g. if Responder bid 2♣ over 1♥, prefer an unbid suit.

Trump

If Responder took a preference or partner has not bid or you don't have one of the top three choices, chose a safe trump lead. Qx(x) or Jx(x) are not safe.

Differences From Notrump Leads

- With KQTx(x) or KQx(x), lead the King
- Lead the lowest from xxx(x)
- Do not underlead Aces

¹ Except AK, where you lead the K.

Quiz 16

Assume RHO is the Dealer and becomes Declarer, after the bidding shown. Your bid is the second one on each line; your partner's bid is underlined. Circle your lead. (AP = All Pass)

	Bidding	Your Hand		Bidding	Your Hand
1.	1♣ - P - 1♥ - <u>1♠</u> 3♣ - P - 5♣ - AP	♠ Q87 ♥ QJ96 ♦ 9762 ♣ 83	2.	1♣ - 1♥ - P - <u>2♦</u> P - P - 3♣ - <u>3♥</u> 4♣ - AP	♠ Q54 ♥ KT743 ♦ T2 ♣ K73
3.	1♠ - P - 1NT - <u>2♣</u> 4♠ - AP	♠ J94 ♥ 976 ♦ JT96 ♣ A96	4.	P - P - 1♣ - <u>1♥</u> 1♠ - 2♥ - 4♠ - AP	♠ K8 ♥ 873 ♦ T732 ♣ A974
5.	1♠ - P - 1NT - <u>P</u> 2♥ - P - 2NT - <u>P</u> 3♥ - P - 3♠ - <u>P</u> 4♠ - AP	♠ 942 ♥ QJ96 ♦ KQT6 ♣ 96	6.	1♥ - P - 2♣ - <u>P</u> 3♥ - P - 4♥ - AP	♠ K842 ♥ 8 ♦ T732 ♣ KQ97