

Defense 101.1

PLAY OF THE HAND

If there are sure tricks to defeat contract, take them.

Second hand low, but take the setting trick!

Third hand high, but only as high as necessary to take trick!

Generally, cover an honor with an honor, if a winner can possibly be promoted!

Return partner's suit, it may not be right, but it is never wrong!

Suit to lead in a suit contract

Partner's suit

An unbid suit

A singleton or doubleton

A trump

Leads in a suit contract

- Fourth best from longest suit
- Ace from Ace-King
- Top of a sequence
- Top of an interior sequence (Note: Don't lead suits headed by an ace in suit contracts, eg AJ109)
- *Top of Doubleton (K-5, 5-3)*
- *Top of touching honors (K-Q-5-3)*
- Lead from three small cards; lead **HIGH**. (Note: This is an **almost** last resort lead!)
- *Ace (A-J-4-3-2) last resort!*

NONOs against suit contracts

Do not lead a suit headed by unsupported ace; if A543; no 3!

Do not lead Ace! This is just as bad!

Do not lead suits bid by dummy, unless you have powerful holding

Do not lead Jacks unless you have 10 and 9; definitely not from doubleton or singleton

Suit to lead in a No Trump contract

Partner's suit

Longest suit

With a choice; lead the stronger

Leads in a No Trump contract

- Fourth best from longest suit
- Lead of the **ace** from AKJ10; partner should play the Q if he/she has it to unblock!!!
- Lead the **K** from AKxx, KQxx, AKJx
- Top of a sequence or fourth best – TOP - KQ93; fourth best KQ83! (NOTE – this is where **art** comes in!!!)
- Lead **top** from three or more small cards – You don't like suit!

NONOs against NO trump

Do **not** lead suit bid by either opponents; lead unbid suit if possible

Do **not** lead singletons

SIGNALS

- **Attitude** – Discard high, if you like partner's lead, eg 7+ ; discard low eg 2-6; if you do not like card (Note – What do you do with 1098 if you don't like suit or AK2 and you do like suit??).
- **Count** – High card shows an even number of cards; small card shows an odd number; (**Note** – If your first card was forced eg Q82; give count on next round of suit to tell partner how many you have remaining!
- **Suit Preference** – High card suggests the higher of the un-led suits.

NOTE: REMEMBER THERE ARE NO ABSOLUTE RULES IN BRIDGE!!