

# Leading Trump

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Kootenay Jewel Bridge Club

<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaDefense/LeadingTrump.pdf>

Sticking to standard leads is meant to help your partner and is not done in the trump suit. You do not want to help declarer.

You have chosen to lead trump and your trump holding is:

A7      A7      J102      QJx      983

Do not lead trump when:

In doubt or when:


3	Stiff trump
Q43	If you could likely lose a trump trick.
983	If you have a desire to ruff.
9873	Forcing defense is usually better

Do not lead trump when you cannot prevent short hand ruffs.

An echo-high then low in trump shows three trump and an ability to ruff and you will not be leading it but when declarer plays trump, you will play the 8 then the 3 from 983.

When in doubt lead trump. This statement is very wrong. When you lead trump, you know the reason. You could be protecting an honour in every side suit (Law of Restricted Choice) or making a safe lead against a slam or one of the following examples.

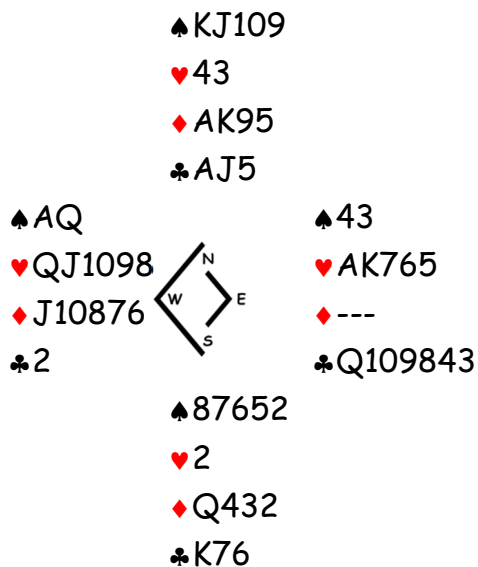
**Example 1:** Declarer has bid two suits and partner has chosen one of them  
 Especially when you have honours that could be ruffed out.

♠ 8					
♥ AK					
♦ KJ954					
♣ QJ1098					
♠ AJ92		♠ 653			
♥ QJ7654		♥ 32			
♦ 2		♦ AQ1087			
♣ 32		♣ 654			
♠ KQ1074		N	E	S	W
♥ 1098		1♦	P	1♠	P
♦ 63		P	P	P	
♣ AK7	2♣				

Note: It would be wrong, although tempting, for South to rebid Spades.

**Example 2: You have the balance of power or the opponents need ruffs to make their contract**

North Dealer North South Vulnerable



N	E	S	W	
1NT	2♣	2♠	P	South if bust, even with 5 spades,
P	3♥	P	4♥	would pass.
All Pass				


If South leads a trump and North is allowed to win the club and lead his second trump, West will get 1♠, 6 cross-ruffs and 2♥'s for down 1.

If North and South only get to lead trump once, West will get 1♠, 8 cross-ruffs and 1♥ making his contract.

If North and South never lead a trump even when they get in with a ♣, West will get 1♠ and ten cross-ruffs making his contract plus one.

**Example 3: The Opponents have pulled the contract from No Trump to a Suit (Leading Trump against 5 of a minor is rarely wrong)**

North Dealer North South Vulnerable

♠ KJ10		
♥ 94		
♦ AK96		
♣ AJ54		
♠ AQ9		♠ 432
♥ QJ10		♥ AK83
♦ J2		♦ 1087
♣ 8732		♣ Q1096
	♠ 8765	
	♥ 7652	
	♦ Q543	
	♣ K	

N	E	S	W
1NT	P	2♣	P
2♦	All Pass		

The following auctions also scream for a trump lead:

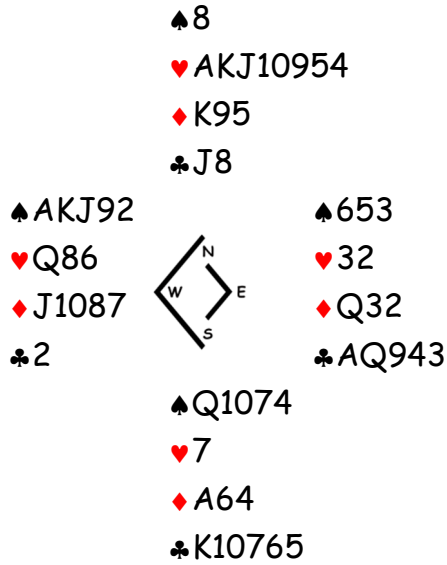
N	E	S	W
1♦	P	1♠	P
1NT	P	2♦	All Pass

N	E	S	W
1♦	P	1♠	P
2♣	P	2♥	P     FSF
3♣	P	3♦	P
4♣	P	5♦	All Pass

**Example 4:** Board 21 (Second Half of Nov 29, 2014 Christmas Party)

On the bidding, Do Not Lead Trump-Spade lead (just looking at East's hand and the bidding) is much better. Too bad we cannot balance or overcall in spades!

North Dealer      North South Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
1♥	P	1♠	P
2♥	All Pass		

Traveller	N-S	E-W
3NN+1	630	
4♥N=	620	(2x)
2♥N+2	170	(2x)
3♥N+1	170	(2x)
3♠W-2	100	
2♠W-1	50	

## **Example 5:**

Partner passes a takeout double for penalty

## **Example 6:**

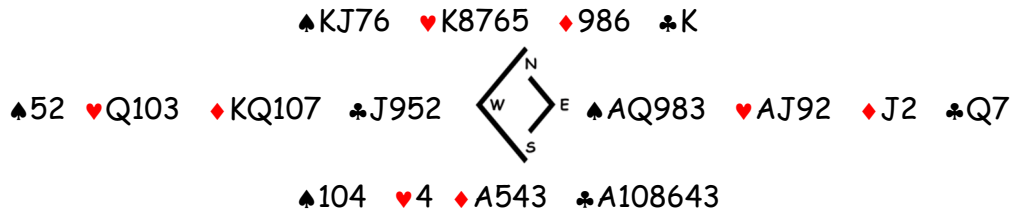
The opponents are playing 5 of a minor not 3NT.

# Example 7: Difficult Lead: Stiff is correct, Trump is Not

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Trump lead means you want to cut down short hand ruffs by dummy and you have no ruffs yourself.

North Dealer      None Vulnerable



N	E	S	W
P	1♠	P	1NT
P	2♥	P	2♠
All Pass			

Traveller	N-S	E-W
2NW-1	50	
2♥W-1	50	
2♥E=		110
1NW+2		150
2♠E+2	170	(we were -170)

### Analysis:

It is seldom right to lead a side suit bid by your RHO- This is an exception-a stiff lead!

Spade is absolute the worst lead. You are not protecting heart values that could be ruffed. Note I could have ducked the ♥King, but my partner led spades twice protecting her hearts from being ruffed, but did not have hearts.

Lead of either Ace is bad so the stiff heart is the best lead.

When I get in I will cash my club King after I had a chance to see a lot of cards played.

When you see dummy and dummy can ruff, lead trump (if it does not cost sure trump tricks).  
When you see dummy and dummy cannot ruff, do not lead trump.