

Deal 1

South Deals
None Vul

♠ K J 9 4 3
♥ 6 5 3
♦ 8 2
♣ 10 6 2

13
4 2
21

West

Pass

Pass

6 NT by South

Lead: ♥ 6

♠ 8 7 2
♥ K 8 7
♦ K Q J
♣ A 8 5 4



♠ A Q 6
♥ A Q 9
♦ A 10 7
♣ K Q 7 3

North

6 NT

East

Pass

South

2 NT

Pass

The bidding has been as shown. The contract is 6 NT and it is your lead.

When you have made your choice

You held this identical hand in Deal 3. The declarer was playing 3 NT and the best lead was the ♠ 4, fourth down.

It's different when the contract is 6 NT. Against 6 NT you should make a passive lead, which means don't underlead any honors. Against 6 NT you have little chance of establishing a suit to win four or five tricks. Instead, you just want to try to not give declarer an undeserved trick.

So any passive lead would be OK, you pick the ♥ just because they are less likely to have an unbid 4-card Major in either hand.

Declarer has 11 winners sitting there; if you had led a low ♠ you would have handed him his 12 trick on a platter.

Deal 2

South Deals
None Vul

♠ K 8 5 4
♥ 8 6 5 2
♦ K 6 2
♣ 10 2

♠ A 2
♥ A 9 7
♦ 10 5 3
♣ A K Q 7 6



♠ Q 9 7 6 3
♥ 10 4 3
♦ 4
♣ 9 8 4 3

17
6 2
15

♠ J 10
♥ K Q J
♦ A Q J 9 8 7
♣ J 5

West	North	East	South
			1 ♦
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			
6 ♦ by South			
Lead: ♠ 4			

smooth sailing.

The bidding has been as shown. The contract is 6 ♦ and it is your lead.

When you have made your choice

Against a notrump slam it is best to make a passive lead so you don't give declarer an undeserved winner.

Against a suit slam the situation is very different. Against strong dummy bidding like this you are pretty sure that if you don't establish a winner early declarer will find something in dummy to discard losers on. In this hand it is dummy's ♣ suit.

Your most promising suit is ♠s. Obviously partner has a very weak hand, but if he has the ♠Q you can set up your ♠K before your King of trumps is dislodged.

Without a ♠ lead declarer will have

Deal 3

South Deals

None Vul

♠ Q J 10 8
 ♥ Q 10 5 4 2
 ♦ 7 3
 ♣ A 3

10
 9 6
 15

♠ 9 7 5
 ♥ J 7
 ♦ K Q 8
 ♣ K J 9 8 2



♠ A 4 3
 ♥ A 9 8
 ♦ A J 10 6
 ♣ Q 10 4

♠ K 6 2
 ♥ K 6 3
 ♦ 9 5 4 2
 ♣ 7 6 5

West	North	East	South
			1 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
3 NT by South			
Lead: ♥ 4			

The bidding has been as shown. The contract is 3 NT and it is your lead.

When you have made your choice

This is a close call. The top of your ♠ honor sequence is very tempting, but even when you find partner with the ♠ K you can still only establish three ♠ winners to go with your ♣ A. Unfortunately, that's not enough to defeat the contract.

Leading a ♥ from your 5-card suit is riskier, but it has the potential of setting up an additional winner. In this hand, as you see, the ♥ lead gets you 4 ♥ winners to go with your ♣ A.

Deal 4

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 8 4
♥ 9 8 2
♦ A 10 5 3
♣ A J 6 2

11
9 7
13

West

Pass
Pass
Pass

4 ♥ by South

Lead: ♥ 9

♠ K J 7 5
♥ A K 6 5
♦ 8 7 4 2
♣ 5



♠ A 9 3
♥ Q J 7 4 3
♦ K
♣ K 8 7 4

North

1 ♠
4 ♥

East

Pass
Pass

South

1 ♥
2 ♣
Pass

The bidding has been as shown. The contract is 4 ♥ and it is your lead.

When you have made your choice

A careful look at this hand shows just how bad it can turn out.

And leading from a doubleton in a suit the opponents have bid is almost as bad.

So by process of elimination you lead a trump, probably the ♥ 9.

And when South plays ♣s, (preparing to ruff in dummy), you will win and play another trump. Even if South guesses the ♠s correctly he will not be able to make the contract.

Deal 5

North Deals

None Vul

♠ 7 6

♥ Q J 10 7 3

♦ 10 5 3

♣ 8 6 2

13
3 10
14

♠ 8 5 2

♥ A 6 5

♦ K J

♣ K Q 10 9 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 10 4

♥ K 9 8

♦ A Q 8 4

♣ J 7 3

♠ K Q J 9 3

♥ 4 2

♦ 9 7 6 2

♣ A 5

West	North	East	South
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	1 ♣	1 ♠	2 NT
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Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
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Pass

3 NT by South

Lead: ♠ 7

The bidding has been as shown. The contract is 3 NT and it is your lead.

When you have made your choice

If partner had not overcalled, the ♥ Q would be the perfect lead against 3 NT. But partner DID overcall, perhaps to give you a hint on what to lead if South became declarer.

As you see, a ♠ lead will defeat the contract this time while the ♥ Q would let declarer make 11 tricks.

Consider this: even if partner has a high ♥ to help you establish the suit it is not very likely that you would be able to get the lead with your entryless hand.

There is another, more subtle, reason for leading partner's suit. If the lead turns out wrong, and the ♥ Q lead would have beaten the contract, partner will not blame you in the least. But if you lead the ♥ Q and it turns out that a ♠ lead would have let you set the contract, well, that would not be too good for partnership harmony.

Deal 6

South Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 10 8 4
♥ A Q 10 7
♦ K Q 9 8
♣ 5

4
13 10
13

West

♠ 6 5 2
♥ 9 5 3 2
♦ A 6 4
♣ 9 4 2



♠ A J 9 3
♥ K J
♦ 10 5 3
♣ A 7 6 3

North

♠ K 7
♥ 8 6 4
♦ J 7 2
♣ K Q J 10 8

East

South

Dbl
1 ♣ × × by South
Lead: ♣ 5

Pass

Pass

1 ♣
Pass

The bidding has been as shown. The contract is 1 ♣ doubled and it is your lead.

When you have made your choice

There is only one reason partner would pass your takeout double - he has a great ♣ suit and he expects to inflict a large penalty.

What he wants to do is pull South's trumps so your high card winners don't get ruffed by South. The way you can help him do that is to start with a trump lead.

With the trump lead South might not make more than three tricks.