

## Defending No Trumps

Most players start from leads from their longest suits - here with the opponents in 3NT the obvious lead is a spade on each of our example hands.

a) <u>K543</u>	b) <u>QJ109</u>	c) <u>9843</u>	d) <u>AJ843</u>
A43	A543	A54	Q43
987	43	874	987
Q43	K83	KJ2	J8

It was straightforward to start with a lead of our long suit -trickier is to decide whether to carry on leading the suit when we next get the chance ,or whether to switch . Lets see how the defence might go with each of these hands.

a)	762
	KQJ
	AQ54
K543	1052
A43	
987	
Q43	{ trick 1} we lead the 3 spades dummy plays the 2 partner the 8 declarer the Jack

At trick 2 we will say declarer leads a Heart and we win with the Ace- now the question is should we lead spades again or try a new suit..

The way to decide is to work out what spades declarer holds. { sometimes this has to be a guess but on this hand we know declarer still has the A + Q of spades }. As you know declarer has AQ spades it is pretty clear that if you lead a spade now , it will allow the declarer to make a trick with their Q and that if you *don't* lead a spade then the declarer will not be able to make their Queen. {{N.B. If *partner* gets in they can lead a spade to great effect but we must not}}. We will have to switch ( to something ). The 9 diamonds would be a fair shot now.The point is that although the initial spade lead was reasonable,the facts as they unfolded, revealed that there could be no further gain in leading spades a second time from our hand. *It would not be safe to lead a spade from our hand.*

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b)	762
	KQJ
	AQ54
QJ109	1052
A543	
43	
K8	{ trick 1} we lead the Q spades dummy plays the 2 partner the 4 declarer the King

Again we get on lead at trick 2 with the Ace Hrts -should we continue spades or switch ? First we decide what declarer holds--- clearly declarer had the A + K spades and still has the Ace spades.Can there be any gain in leading spades ? The answer is yes , when we have removed the Ace spades then our remaining spades will be winners. Will we lose out in any way in leading a spade ? ie will we lose a trick that can be avoided?/ will we have helped declarer to a trick they had difficulty in making ? Not at all -declarer will always make their Ace spades anyway and as it is in our interests to make them take their Ace now , we should lead another spade.