

Journalist Opening Leads Summary

This chart summarizes the conventional methods of Journalist Leads, including special cases. The principles may be violated for deceptive purposes, or to control partner's play.

<i>Against Notrump</i>	<i>Card Led, or situation</i>	<i>Against Suits</i>
Demands unblock of K, Q, or J, or count (except in "gambling" 3 NT situations or when strong length is impossible, or in certain other special cases)	Ace	Denies K (except from AK doubleton)
AK or KQ when unblock is not desired	King	A or at most two
QJ, AQJ, perhaps AQ10, sometimes KQ10 with the 9 or at least 5-card length; demands J (except when strong length is impossible)	Queen	K or at most two
J10 but no higher honor	Jack	Q or at most two

A, K or Q and an interior sequence thus: AJ10, KJ10, A109, K109, K109, perhaps AQ10	Ten	J (possibly KJ10) or at most two
109 but no higher honor	Nine	10 (possibly K109 or Q109) or at most two; or 3-, 4- or 6-card suit headed by KJ9
Discourages continuation (Choice: Highest of equals; from 2 or 3 cards, highest equal; or second-highest, or highest safe, such card from longer suits)	Relatively high, 2-8	Except in the trump suit, lowest from an odd number or third-best from an even number
Encourages continuation (Choice: Usually lowest, but may lead second-lowest from 4 or more with doubtful attitude)	Relatively low, 2-8	Except in the trump suit, lowest from an odd number or third-best from an even number
Higher card; avoid 10 from scattered strength; avoid 9	From a doubleton	Higher card (except in the trump suit); avoid Q, J, 10, 9
Highest of equal honors; 9 suggests 9-8	Vs. Slams	As usual

Highest of equal honors from non-interior sequences (K from AK or KQ; A denies K). J, 10 or 9 zero or two higher

East's suit*

Highest of equal honors from non-interior sequences (K from AK or KQ; A denies K). 10 or 9 zero or two higher

To ring alarm clock

Unsupported honor; "wrong" honor from a sequence; underlead of an A; fifth-best from seven or eight, or from guaranteed six-card length; deviation from known count

In trumps

Highest of equal honors; low from even; middle (or highest equal) from odd

*The suit led is East's suit if East first showed length in it for the East - West partnership (includes responses to three-suit, but not two-suit, takeout actions), or directed a lead in it (but if East may ruff, A from AK and spot cards are suit-preference signals).

As usual	Raised suit	In West's suit,* when 2-through-8 would be normal, the highest such card. In East's suit,* when 2-through-9 would be normal, and from 109xx, the highest such card. (9 shows even number; ten shows odd number).
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