



Blind Leads are for Deaf Players

When Terence Reese made his non-PC remark, *Blind leads are for deaf players*, he meant that the bidding often tells you what to lead.

- ♠ J654
- ♥ 742
- ♦ J63
- ♣ J73

As West you pick up this hand and must find a blind lead after the auction:

North	South
	1 NT (12-14)
2 ♣	2 ♥
3 NT	

Now wait, is it really a blind lead? *Listen* to the bidding. South has shown four Hearts and North has shown four Spades, otherwise he wouldn't have bothered with Stayman. This means you can rule out leading a Major. Is there anything to choose between the Minors? Again, *listen* to the bidding. Partner did not double Stayman, which he might have done if he wanted a Club lead. So, having ruled out Hearts, Spades, and Club, you try the three of Diamonds. The full deal:

	North	
	♠ AK98	
	♥ A105	
	♦ 97	
	♣ Q862	
West		East
♠ J654		♠ 73
♥ 742		♥ QJ6
♦ J63		♦ KQ854
♣ J73		♣ A54

South
 ♠ Q102
 ♥ K983
 ♦ A102
 ♣ K109

On a Diamond lead declarer has no chance. The point is that if you swap partner's Minor suits he would have doubled Stayman (assuming you play this as lead directing), but he did not want to make a risky 2♦ overcall.

Playing pairs, you as West, pick up:

North
 ♠ 632
 ♥ A643
 ♦ 86
 ♣ QJ109

North	South
	1 ♦
1 ♠	2 ♣
2 ♥ (alert)	2 ♠
3 ♦	3 ♥ (alert)
5 ♦	

The opponents have reached a 5♦ and you seem to have a nice safe lead - the Queen of Clubs. Wait - *listen* to the bidding! They have investigated no-trumps (2♥ and 3♥), but chosen to play in 5♦. Surely, this is because they lack a Heart stopper.

North
 ♠ AKJ10
 ♥ 1098
 ♦ KQ42
 ♣ K4

West
 ♠ 632
 ♥ A643
 ♦ 86
 ♣ QJ109

East
 ♠ 9854
 ♥ KJ75
 ♦ 53
 ♣ 832

South
 ♠ Q7
 ♥ Q2
 ♦ AJ1097
 ♣ A765

You lead the Heart Ace and continue the suit when partner encourages. You hold the contract to 11 tricks when a Club lead would have allowed all 13.

♠ 632
 ♥ KQ104
 ♦ KQ104
 ♣ 76

North South

1 ♠
 2 ♠ 3 ♥
 4 ♠

In a team game you are West once more. It looks natural to decide between the red suits - K-Q-10-x is an attractive lead - but first *listen* to the bidding.

South has made a game try asking for help in Hearts 3(♥) and North has accepted. You suspect from your Heart holding that North has accepted due to having ruffing value in Hearts. You therefore lead a trump aiming to cut down ruffs in dummy. The full deal:

North	
♠ 1075	
♥ 7	
♦ A876	
♣ K9854	
West	East
♠ 632	♠ 94
♥ KQ104	♥ A985
♦ KQ104	♦ 95
♣ 74	♣ QJ1032
South	
♠ AKQJ8	
♥ J632	
♦ J32	
♣ A	

On a non-trump lead declarer will have no problem ruffing two Hearts in dummy to take 10 tricks (five Spades, two Clubs, one Diamond, and two ruffs).

On a trump lead (and later continuation), declarer can ruff only one Heart in dummy and makes at most nine tricks.

So, when you are on lead, remember *blind leads are for deaf players!*

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