

THE LIGHTNER SLAM DOUBLE

NORTH

A6543
J6
A32
KQ2

S 10
H 987
D QJ1098
C J974

S KQJ97
H A52
D 75
C 1065

SOUTH

82
KQ1043
K64
A43

The Lightner double is named after Theodore Lightner who invented it.

The double of a **slam** contract, OR the double of a 3NT contract, if made by the partner of the player on lead, instructs his partner as to what to lead. The double actually asks for **an unusual lead**.

If the doubler had bid a suit against a slam, it would be **usual** for his partner to lead that suit. After the double occurs, then the double says: "Do NOT lead my suit." That is what makes this a call for an unusual lead.

If the doubler had bid a suit against 3NT however, the double calls for the lead of that suit. OR if the opening leader has bid a suit, the double by partner says "Lead your suit." BUT against a slam, it says: "Do Not lead your suit or my suit." Since EW had not bid a suit, then East is asking for the lead of dummy's first bid suit.

Confused yet? When in doubt, the double calls for the lead of dummy's first bid suit (NOT the trump suit).

Let's take a look at an example of how this may come up in real life:

S	W	N	E
1H	P	1S	P
1NT	P	3NT	Double
P	P	P	

West would always plan to lead the top of his sequence: Diamond Queen but East's double of 3NT commanded partner to make an unusual lead. When in doubt, partner is asked to lead dummy's first bid suit. West leads the S 10. This is ducked in dummy and East MUST be sure to overtake that S 10, in case it is a singleton. Indeed, East KNOWS it is a singleton as South would not have rebid 1NT with a singleton Spade...yes, even though North bid the suit. This rebid of 1 NT guarantees 2 or 3 in partner's suit. East continues leading Spades until the Spade Ace is played and later gets in with the Heart Ace, this scoring 4 Spade tricks plus the Ace of Hearts.

Without the Lightner Double, Declarer would make 3NT since West would lead the Diamond Queen.

RESPONDER

Responder with 4 card suits bids them UP the ladder.

e.g.

AKxx
Axxx
Kxxx
x

1C by partner, respond 1D, your cheapest four card suit on the bidding ladder. Now if opener bids 1H, you bid 4H. Ditto with if partner bids 1S next, you bid 4S.

If however you have a very weak hand (6-9 points) then bypass the minor and bid the major.

e.g.

Axxx
Xx
Kxxxx
Xx

1C by opener, respond 1S, even bypassing the 5 card minor. Because you are 6-9 and usually only get one bid.

With 5-5 however, Responder always bids his highest-ranking suit first

Axxxx
AKxxx
Xx
Kx

Partner opens 1C. You bid 1S. Partner now bids 2C, you bid 2H. This is forcing, as it is a new suit. Partner knows that you have five Spades and at least four Hearts.

BECAUSE if you had 4 of each, you would bid them UP THE LADDER. When it is your turn to bid again, you bid you Hearts again and now partner knows that you have 5 of each (or possibly 6 Spades and 5 Hearts but that happens so rarely).

Note that if you are overcalling with 5-5 (or 6-6) or making a transfer, or opening, you always name your higher ranking suit first.

So we say... **UP WITH FOUR, DOWN WITH MORE!!!**

Your Playing Challenge

NORTH

42
AKQ1072
32
1083

S AKQJ107
H J84
D J7
C 42

S 8
H 63
D A854
C AKQJ74

SOUTH

9653
95
KQ1096
96

North leads the Heart Ace, King and then Queen, South playing high then low on trick one and two.

On the lead of the Heart Queen by North at Trick # 3, what should Declarer play from dummy?

If you ruffed and got overruffed, that makes you normal. Not an expert, but normal.

The Club suit in dummy is to die for but the problem comes at Trick # 4, when South, who overruffed, leads back the Diamond K, putting you in dummy.

The catch is: How on earth do you now get to your hand to draw trump and still "enjoy" the Club suit after pulling trump.

Well, the answer is that you cannot. So, you have to stop and make a plan at Trick # 1. When N leads the H Queen at Trick # 3, you simply cannot ruff as you need that trump as the magic key to get you to your hand to pull trump. You have a Diamond loser also and if you cannot discard it on the long Clubs, all is lost and you will be down one.

If you don't believe me: Lay out the cards at home until you see this.

But it is counter-intuitive. A very tough hand. We are always in a hurry to ruff.

TELEPATHY by MICHAEL BERKOWITZ

Telepathy is hard. I remember trying to pass messages to my friends in class telepathically, but never having success.

I told my sister about my efforts, and she was oddly encouraging. “Why don’t I think of a number and you’ll tell me what number I’m thinking of,” she said. I thought a while and said, “Seventy-two”. Her jaw dropped, “How did you do that?!”

After that, I used to get very mad at my friends for not thinking properly during school. Whose fault is it when partner can’t read your mind?

While there are some experts who love to be on lead, the vast majority hate it. Larry Cohen says, of the opening lead, "It's not bridge." He wishes the dummy would come down before the opening lead is made. Still, making leads is a part of life. There’s no amount of lead theory that can match the importance of having a partner who knows that you can’t hear them thinking “lead a spade, lead a spade, lead a spade”.

There are two main ways you can help partner with opening leads: make lead directing doubles and overcalls to show what suit you want led. When can you make lead-directing doubles? Well, the higher the level, the less you need. For example, on the auction 1NT--Pass—2C, you should have good clubs and club length to double—something like

C AQJ109 (We wish it could always be that good);

C KQ109x is probably more realistic.

You do have to consider what else could happen though. Imagine holding

S 32

H 872

D 53

C KJ10872

The auction goes 1NT--Pass—2C. Your turn. You should absolutely double! Why? Your partner is going to be on lead against something and if they lead away from an honor in another suit, it will be a catastrophe. The opponents aren’t likely to play in 2C doubled (or redoubled) and if they can make that, then they can almost certainly make a slam.

As your opponent’s bid higher, you need less in that suit to make a lead-directing bid. On the auction:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1S 4NT	Pass Pass	2NT* 5H	Pass ??

*Jacoby 2NT

If you (sitting East) have the H KQ3, you should double! You don’t care about what the rest of the deal is. Maybe partner has an ace or maybe not, but you still want partner leading that suit. Because it is safe.

Overcalling is another area where you can help your partner out. My father once said, "If you make a bad lead when I didn't have a chance to overcall on the one-level, then that's unlucky. If you make a bad lead when I could've overcalled on the one-level, that's my fault." Particularly when partner starts the auction by passing, you should look to help partner with a lead-directing call. Nobody vulnerable, give yourself

S 5
H KQ1098
D J63
C 8632

The auction is Pass by Partner - 1C to you. You should get a 1H call in here. Partner's likely to be on lead against spades and you want to stop partner from doing something silly like leading from D Q742.

One last, more advanced idea: when partner preempts and the opponents make a takeout double, you can bid a new suit as a lead-directing call. You should only do this with support for partner's suit (and with partnership agreement). For instance, you hold:

S J74
H 63
D AK843
C 962

Partner opens 2S and East doubles. You should bid 3D on the way to 3S since the opponents are likely to get to 4H anyways and this is your chance to show partner what you'd like led.

TEST YOUR TERMINOLOGY by Larry Cohen www.larryco.com

When learning bridge, it can seem like there are millions of new terms that can be tough to follow. As you get better and better, the terms get more and more obscure. Knowing these terms won't make you a better player, but it will help you follow bridge writing or discussion.

1 What is a "pitch"?

- a) A discard; when a player cannot follow suit and doesn't use a trump card.
- b) An expression for the level of the contract.
- c) An attempt to mislead your opponents
- d) When partner throws their cards at you in disgust.

2 What is it when defenders give a sluff and a ruff?

- a) Defenders have allowed the contract to make an overtrick.
- b) Defenders have set up one of the suits in dummy.
- c) Defenders have played a suit that both Declarer and Dummy are out of, allowing Declarer to discard from one hand and ruff with the other.
- d) Defenders have gotten upset and resorted to name calling.

3 What is "stripping the hand"?

- a) Another term for "drawing trumps".
- b) Coming down to just winners so Declarer can claim.
- c) Running suits to later force opponents to play a suit Declarer would like.
- d) Unbuttoning one additional button along the neckline to distract the opponents.

4 What is "double dummy"?

- a) A dummy containing more values than anticipated.
- b) An analysis based on seeing all four hands.
- c) The result that should be attained on a given deal.
- d) When everyone plays as badly as possible.

ANSWERS:

1 a) # 2 c) # 3 c) # 4 b)