

**When making a short suit lead in no trumps, prefer an unbid major to an unbid minor.**

Situations where you might prefer a short suit lead in no trumps:

- 1 Your opponents have shown length in your long suit
- 2 Your long suit is hopelessly weak and your hand has no entries
- 3 Your long suit is an unattractive 4 card suit

	West	North	East	South
♠ 8 4 3			pass	1 ♥
♥ A J 6 4 2	pass	2 ♣	pass	2NT
♦ 9 5 2	pass	3NT	pass	pass
♣ A 2	pass			

What should West lead?

Without the heart bid by South, a low heart would appeal. It is unwise to lead into the opening bidder's suit unless you have a 4 card or longer sequence, such as Q J 10 9 x. With hearts and clubs excluded, it is a guess between diamonds and spades, but a spade lead stands a better chance. As opponents are likely to bid any major suit they hold, the absence of a spade bid suggests that partner might have spade length. Opponents are less concerned about concealing a minor so that the absence of a diamond bid does not preclude their having length there.

	West	North	East	South
♠ A J 4 2		pass	pass	1NT
♥ J 10 3	pass	pass	pass	
♦ J 10 3				
♣ J 4 2				

It is not attractive to lead from a 4 card suit with broken honours, such as A Q x x or A J x x, particularly against a 1NT contract, or when declarer opens 2NT passed out, or after 1NT – 2NT, passed out.

Such leads are more likely to cost than to gain. A lead from a decent 3 card holding often works out better. Start with the ♥ J (choose the major rather than the minor)