

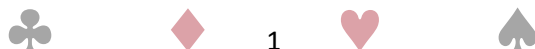
A Comprehensive Guide to Defending

For the Exciting Game of Bridge

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Third Edition ©2019

Last Revised October 10, 2021





Preface

The defenders and the declarer are at cross purposes and do not cooperate with each other one iota. They are, in fact, enemies. A defender would never dream of helping the declarer in one of his tasks and vice versa. Therefore, the enemy of the declarer is a defender, and this is a book on defense for the exciting game of bridge.

The bidding, shown in this book, is either Two Over One or Standard American. When the system is not specified, either system fits. A 1NT opening is 15 to 17 HCPs. The bidding has a relevance to the defense of a hand, and therefore is included. The leads and the discards are standard for the purposes of the examples in this book.

Defense is the hardest part of the game, and a player may complain if he defends most of the hands of a session. Those games should be relished because proper defense is the most rewarding. Some declarers play the dummy very well, but that is usually not a factor. It is the opening lead and the defensive footprint that matter the most.

I recommend that all advancing players master this book on defense. This will make their games of bridge more rewarding and their popularity at partnership desks greater.





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Example 5.16: No Outside Entries

N-S vul.

♠KQ65 ♥1062 ♦AKQ106 ♣4
 ♠974 ♥J3 ♦43 ♣AK8762  ♠AJ32 ♥Q754 ♦J97 ♣J10
 ♠108 ♥AK98 ♦852 ♣Q953

W	N	E	S
	1♦	P	1♥
3♣	3♠	P	3NT
all pass			

This hand occurred on BBO during a Columbia River Basin game on BBO during the Covid-19 pandemic.

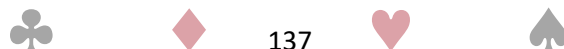
The obviously incorrect leads by West are:

- ♥Jack Do not lead declarer's suit & give away an unsupported honour
- ♦4 Do not lead dummy's five-card suit. He reversed.
- ♣A or ♣K Fourth best club is better with no outside entries.
- ♠4 A low spade (from something) is not led with a possible entry in the suit.

West does not have a strong enough suit to lead the ♣Ace. Why ask partner to unblock when declarer has promised one or two stoppers? Why play the ♣King asking for attitude when the declarer has the suit and partner may have a stiff club?

The possible leads are:

- ♠9 Leading his dead suit when it is possibly his RHO's dead suit.
- ♣7 The third club is small. It may be best for East to lead the suit.





East will win the ♠King with the ♠Ace. West notes the declarer cannot run the suit to his hand. East puts the ♣Jack on the table. South covers, and West wins. He exits a small club which is the right play even if East has the ♣Jx or the ♣J singleton. West does not want to give the declarer a ninth trick.

5.7.2 Holding the King and the Queen

KQxxx at IMPs or without a side entry at matchpoints against Notrump.

KQxxx at matchpoints or against a trump contract.

It is quite significant that I wrote KQxxx not KQxx. Leading from KQxx at Notrump may be fine, but it may compromise the honours and never set up a single length trick.

KQ10xx

KQ1098

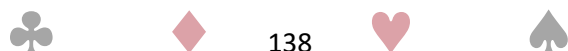
Some lead the Queen, against Notrump, asking partner to drop the Jack or without it, give count. It promises that dropping the Jack does not lose a trick.

KQ1098

5.7.3 The Bath Coup

The declarer has the AJx and ducks the opening lead of the King. If the opening leader does not switch, the declarer gets an undeserved Jack.

To prevent the Bath coup from occurring, the partner must give an attitude signal when the King is led. If he holds the Ace or the Jack, he signals high, otherwise he signals low in standard signals.





Trail, BC, Pencil on Paper, 24.5cm x 17.5cm, 2016

Warren Watson is a former Aerospace Engineer and is currently an artist, with a diploma in Fine Arts from Okanagan University College in Kelowna, BC, and an avid bridge player. He is an ACBL Diamond Life Master, an ACBL accredited bridge teacher, a writer of 347 columns in the Trail Times, a published author, an ACBL director, an accredited ACBL tournament assistant and the Kootenay Jewel Bridge Club manager (10 years). He currently resides in Trail, BC, and in winter, likes to ski Grey Mountain of Red Mountain Resort.



Self Portrait, Pencil on Paper
25cm x 20cm, 2015

