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General Guidelines for Defense

DO's

- It is always a good idea to take the setting trick!
- Always try to see what declarers plan is to make the contract, and then see how you can frustrate that.
- Unless you have a strong reason not to do so, lead the suit partner bid.
- Unless it is clear a switch is called for, when you gain the lead return the suit that partner made on the opening lead.
- When dummy has an honor card and you have a superior honor card, keep your honor card to play on dummies card (unless you think declarer might have a singleton).
- Play 2nd hand low, 3rd Hand high (see below)
- Cover an honor with an honor (see below)
- When dummy has a long side suit that declarer can probably set up, cash side suit winners.
- When dummy is balanced, avoid breaking new suits for declarer and be more passive.
- Particularly when sitting behind dummy, when discarding try to keep equal length with the dummy to prevent them making a low card good.

DON'Ts

- Don't under lead Aces (against suit contracts)
- Don't lead unsupported Aces. (There are exceptions to every rule. This one is right about 99% of the time. Pretty good odds.)
- It is generally a bad idea to lead declarers' second suit, or a suit in which dummy has 5 or more cards.
- Be careful about setting up minor honors in your suit in dummy (we'll discuss this later)

Reasons for 2nd hand low, 3rd hand high

	Dummy	
	KJxx	
You		Partner
Qxx		??

Declarer leads a small card.

Play low to give declarer a guess. If you play the queen he can't miss. If you play low in tempo he may misguess the suit.

Reasons for Cover an Honor with an Honor

	Dummy		
	Qxxx		
Partner			You
10xx		Kxx	
	Declarer		
	AJx		

Declarer leads queen from dummy. If you cover the Q with your K, Partner's ten wins the third trick in the suit. If you duck, declarer takes all four tricks in the suit.