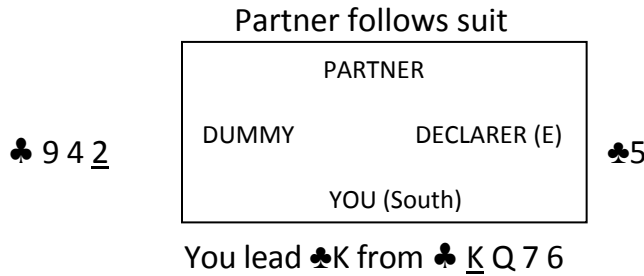


PRACTICE WITH ATTITUDE SIGNALS

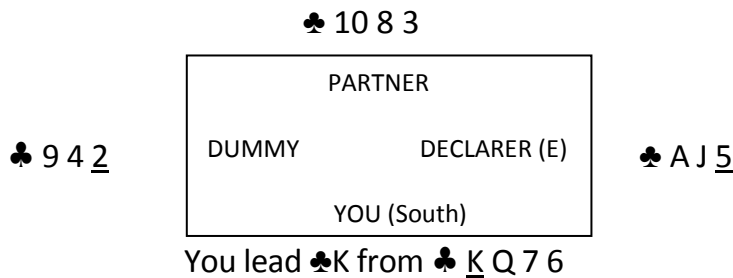
EXAMPLE 1: After a single raise of her 1♠ opening, East bids 4♠. As South, you lead the ♣K which will quickly promote a trick for the defense even when declarer has the ace.



Suppose your ♣K wins the first trick. You are probably thinking partner might have the ♣A because declarer didn't play it. But declarers can be tricky.

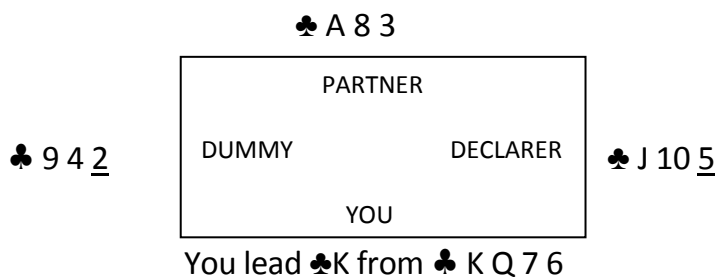
Following are three possible layouts of the clubs in this example. For each layout, decide whether it is right for you to continue leading the suit. Then decide how partner should signal on your lead.

Layout 1:



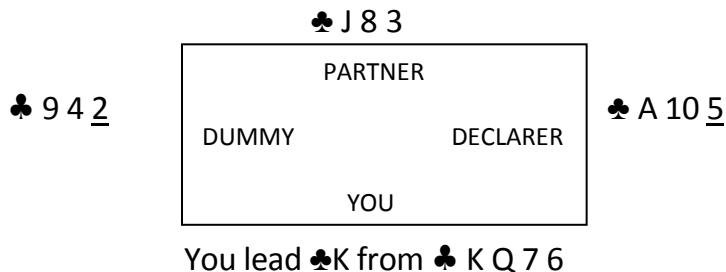
If you lead another club at trick two, declarer will have the chance to win both the ♣A and the ♣J. If you switch to some other suit and partner later gets in to lead a club, the lead will come *through* declarer's strength. The ♣J will be trapped and unable to win a trick. The defenders often have to maneuver to get the proper defender on lead to attack a suit successfully. Declarer didn't take the ace the first time in an attempt to trick you into leading another club. With partner's help, you should never fall for that trick. You've led an honor that partner cannot beat. Partner's job is to give an attitude signal. In 4♠, a suit contract, partner can only count on your having the ♣K Q so the ♣10 is not an equal honor and partner should have discouraged by playing the ♣3 at trick 1. Signals require cooperation from both partners. Without seeing partner's signal you have no idea whether it's right to lead a second club.

Layout 2:



If you continue leading clubs, you will take the first three tricks and will need only one more trick to defeat 4♠. Partner's encouraging ♣8 signal helps you find this defense. If you don't take your club tricks early, declarer might find a way to discard club losers so you never get those tricks.

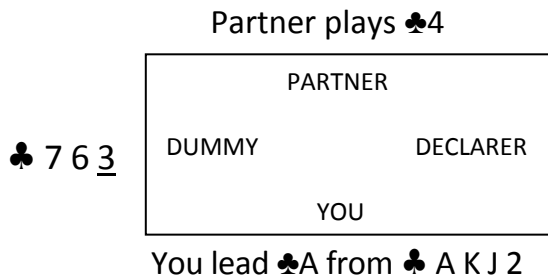
Layout 3:



Again, partner can play the ♣8 to encourage because the ♣J is an equal honor that adds to your king-queen sequence. Declarer might have wanted you to switch to prevent you from getting all your clubs.

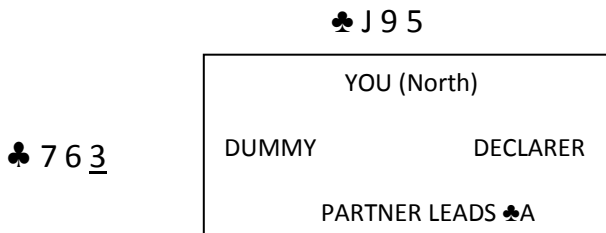
Notice that both you and partner played important roles in defending. Partner had to read (analyze) your lead properly to know how to signal. You had to make a good lead and then read partner's signal to know whether or not to continue with a second club. Your partnership actually had a conversation across the table using only the cards and your knowledge.

EXAMPLE 2: Again you are defending after 1♠ is raised to 2♠ and opener bids 4♠.



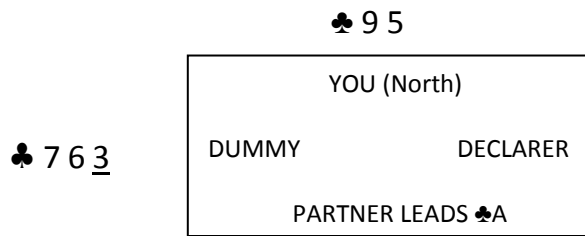
The ♣4 signal is a low, discouraging card. It should warn you not to cash the ♣K, which would make declarer's ♣Q good. Declarer has the ♣Q 10 9 and partner started with ♣ 8 5 4. You should lead another suit at trick 2 and keep the ♣K J as a trap over declarer's ♣Q.

EXAMPLE 3:



This time, put yourself across the table in North's position. Partner leads the ♣A against 4♠. What attitude signal do you give? Your ♣J is an honor but not necessarily an *equal honor* to the cards promised by partner's lead. The ♣A lead shows the ♣K but doesn't show the ♣Q. If partner has the ♣Q, she will continue leading clubs anyway. Play the ♣5, your lowest club to discourage. If turns out that declarer has ♣Q 8 4 and encouraging would let declarer make the ♣Q, a trick declarer is not entitled to.

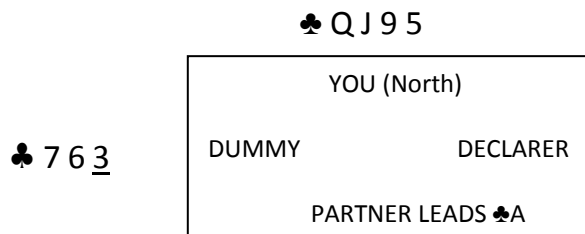
EXAMPLE 4:



Again you are North and partner leads the ♣A against 4♠. How might you signal and why? Provided you have low trump cards for ruffing, play the ♣9 to encourage partner to cash the ♣K and then give you a ruff. Partner can't tell why you are encouraging. You might be showing either the ♣Q or a doubleton or even have some other reason to encourage. An encouraging signal on partner's play of an ace tells partner to continue from the top, playing the king next. As it turns out, declarer had ♣Q J 4 and you ruff declarer's club winner.

Note: ***The only time you encourage with a doubleton is when partner leads an ace.*** If partner leads a lower honor, she needs to know if it's safe to continue so discourage when you hold a doubleton. In the above example, you would play the ♣5 if partner leads the ♣K or ♣Q.

EXAMPLE 5:



Against 4♠, partner leads the ♣A. How should you signal as North? Expect partner to have the ♣A K. You are strong enough to encourage with the ♣Q.

You want to take whatever club tricks you have coming. The ♣Q is clearly encouraging. *A queen is a special signal.* Following with the queen always shows either the jack or a singleton queen. This special signal tells the opening leader how to get to his partner's hand if necessary. The defenders often need one specific partner to lead a suit in order to maximize their tricks in that suit. Your queen signal tells partner that it is safe to underlead the ♣K to put you on lead when partner needs you to lead a new suit through declarer's strength. *The queen signal on an ace lead shows an entry to opening leader's partner's hand.* As it turns out, declarer has the ♣10 8. If you encourage with the ♣9, partner will cash the ♣K but loses the chance to reach your hand to get a switch that could be necessary to defeat 4♠.