

ASK THE EXPERTS

1 When counting up your points at the beginning of a hand – how do you treat a singleton king, queen or Jack? Do you take some notice of them or none at all?



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Singleton Ks are generally counted **initially** as 1 hcp less (ditto Qx/Jx).

As the bidding progresses, players should re-evaluate their hands in light of more information.

e.g., dealer has Qx, xx, AKJx, xxxxx = worth 9 initially, no great shape or easy rebid if you open 1C, so Pass.

Partner opens 1♠ (5), you bid 1NT, partner bids 2♠ (6+, 10-15 HCP)

In pairs, I would **invite** with 3♠ ("never push too hard for game in pairs"),

but **in teams** given my ♠Qx is now **full value**, plus **quick tricks in ♦** and maybe ruffing value in ♥, I would **bid 4♠**.

2. You are about to defend a NT contract by the opposition and during the bidding your partner had bid a suit. The NT came after that bid obviously indicating cover.

You are on lead – Do you still lead your partner's suit?



Unless you have a **VERY** good reason not to (side suit KQJxx plus side entry and shortage with partner's suit), it's **usually better to build partnership trust** and lead partner's suit.

Leads xxx **if not supported in the bidding**

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Advanced exception: if opposition have bid slowly (maybe only 24-25 HCP for 3NT)

and not shown a long side suit to run (two flat hands),

and you have, say Axx in partner's suit (maybe over opps K),

then **Axx** may give declarer the needed trick for the contract.