
MASTER
CLASS
Opening lead

Opening lead

- Only the first card played to the first trick is called the opening lead.
- The first card played to each later trick is called a lead.

OPENING LEAD



LEAD TO A LATER TRICK

A good opening lead…

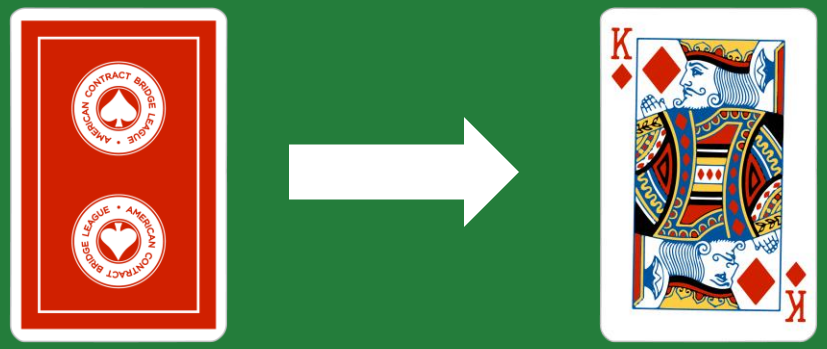
- **Purpose**
  - win the first battle
- **Information**
  - tell partner what your holding looks like



THE FIRST STRIKE

Making the opening lead

- The player on lead places the chosen card face down on the table.
- Only after partner confirms does the player turn the card face up.
- This is called a face-down opening lead.



Important

- Always make the opening lead face down.
- This prevents the wrong defender from leading.

Opening lead against no-trump

- Defender’s priority against no-trump
  - establish length tricks
  - lead your longest suit
- Which card?
  - top of a three-card sequence
    - ♥K
- Once ♥A has been driven out: a chance of four heart tricks

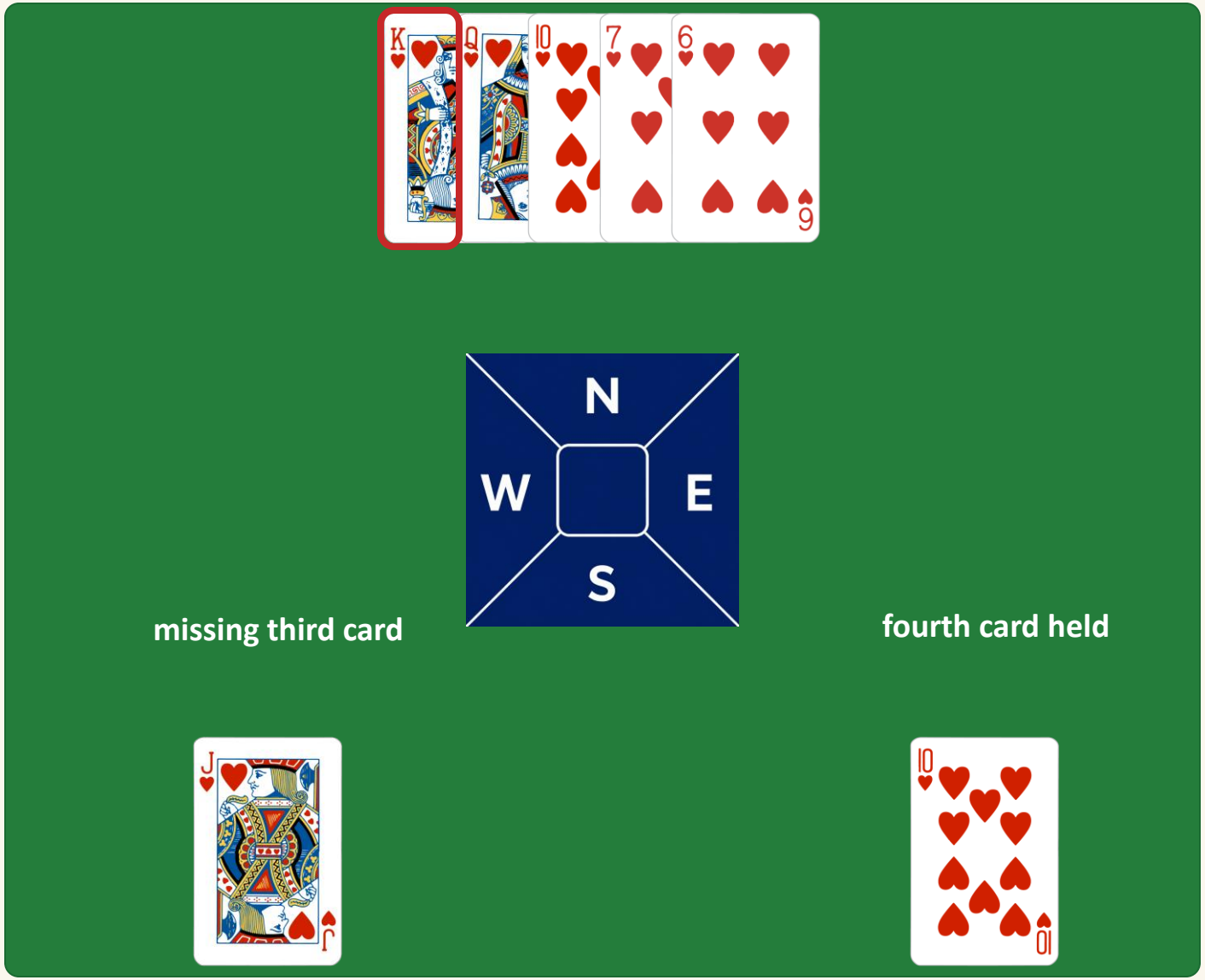




An honour lead against no-trump promises the top card of a three-card sequence or broken sequence.

Broken sequence

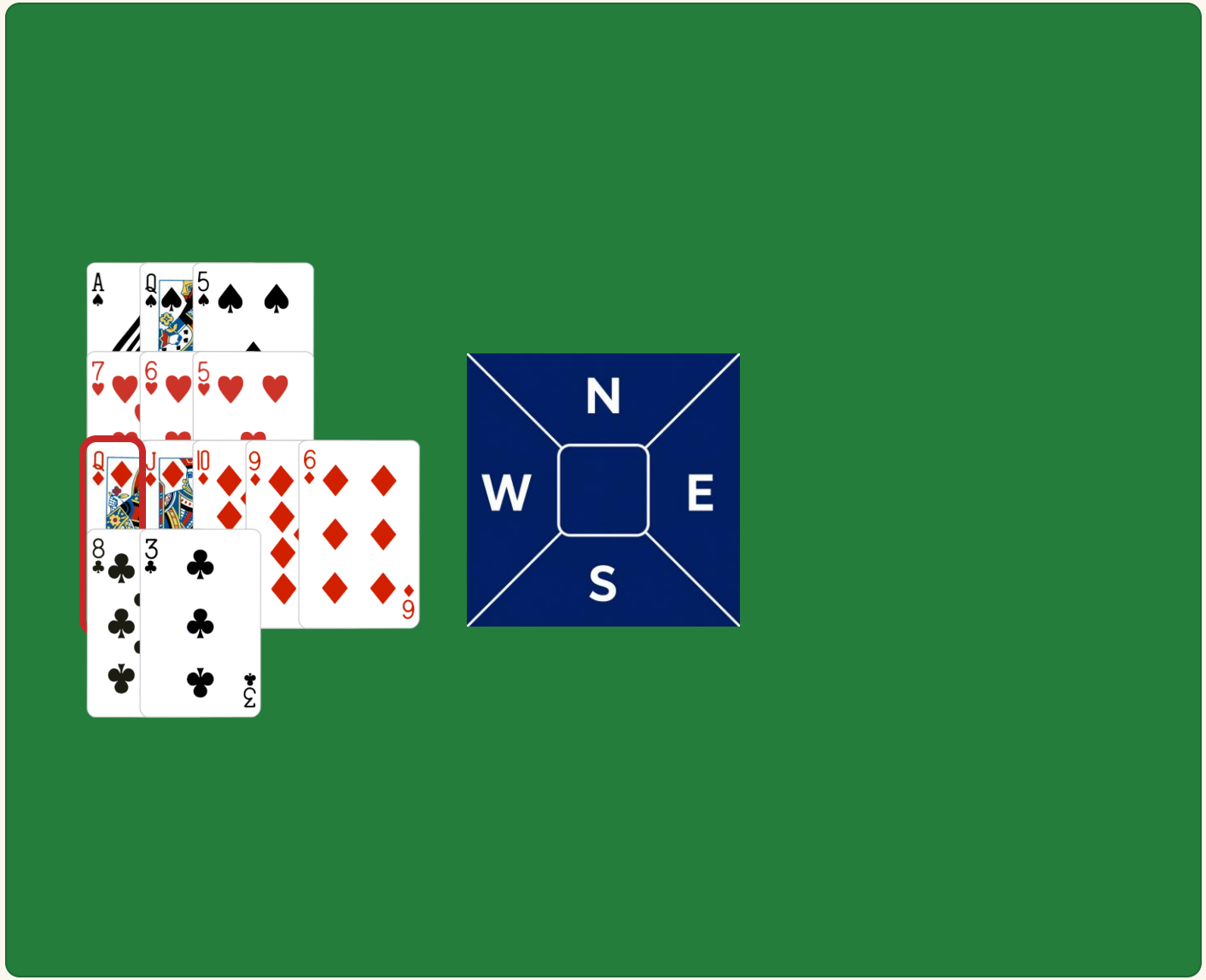
- Highest broken sequence?
  - the third card of the sequence is missing
  - but you do hold the fourth card



Which opening lead against no-trump? (1)

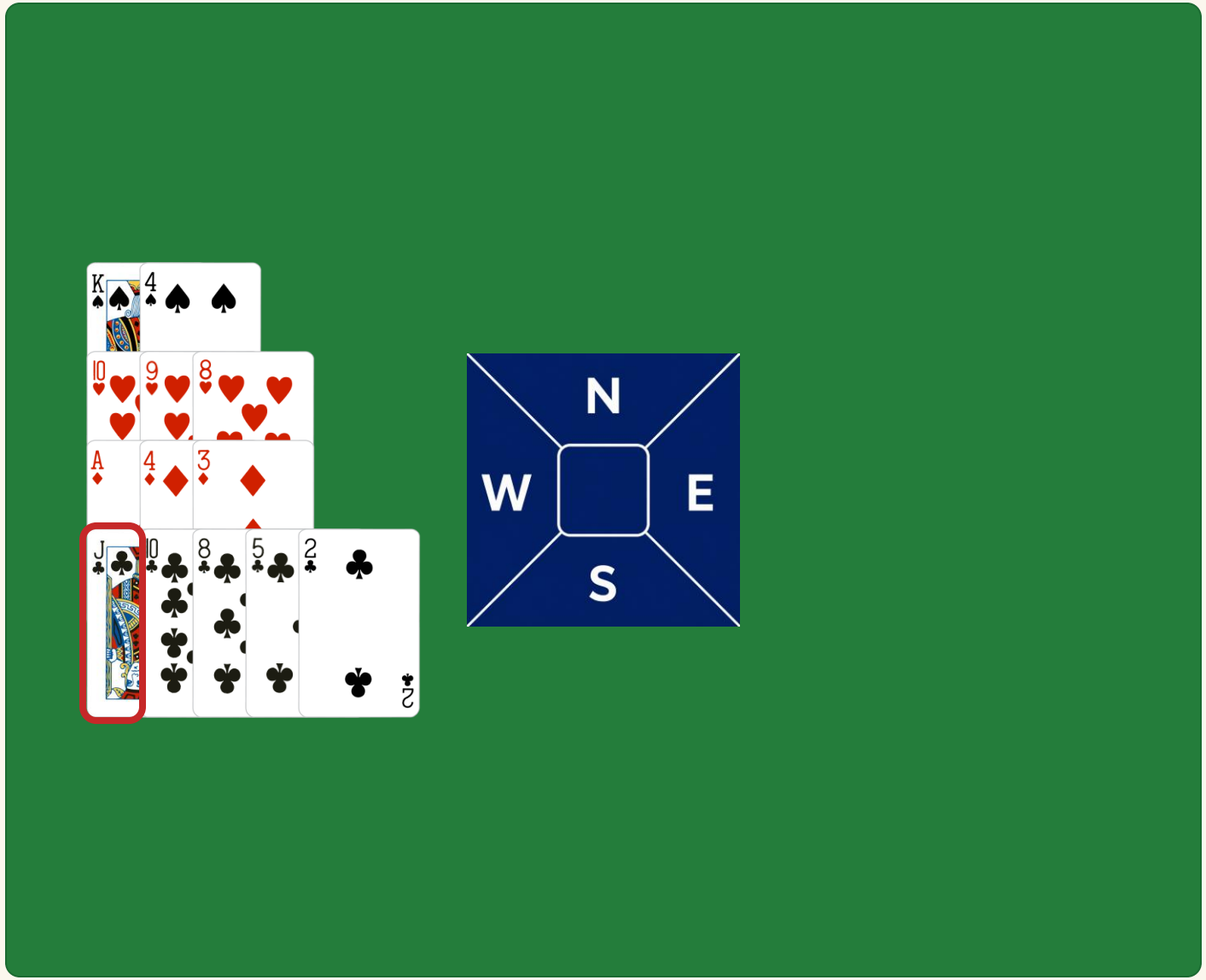
- West is on lead against a no-trump contract.
- What is your longest suit?
  - diamonds
- Which card do you lead?
  - ♦Q
- What do you promise?
  - top of a sequence or broken sequence
- When you regain the lead:
  - continue diamonds
    - then three diamonds are established

Work with partner to establish the diamond suit.



Which opening lead against no-trump? (2)

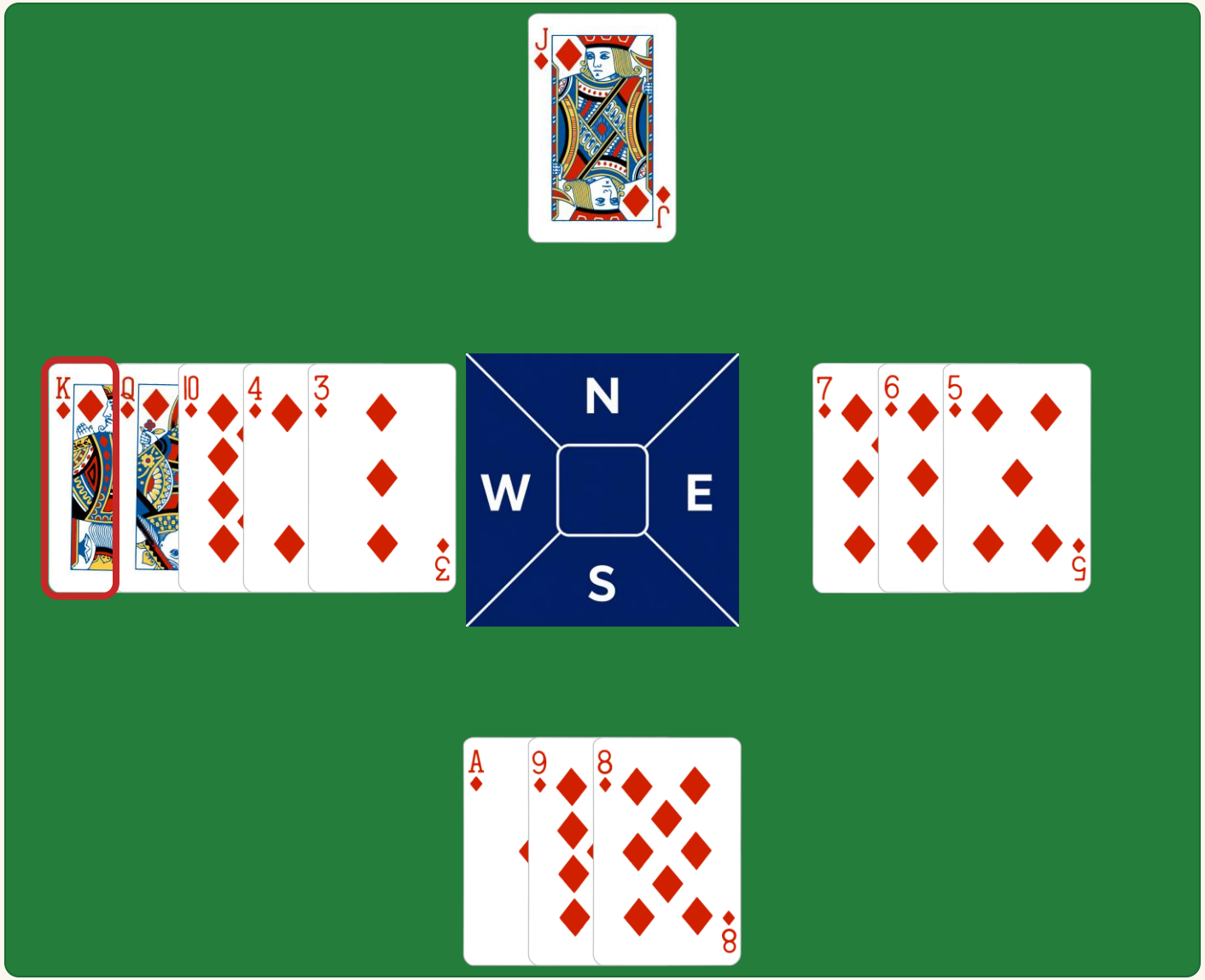
- West is on lead against a no-trump contract.
- What is your longest suit?
  - clubs
- Which card do you lead?
  - ♣J



You promise the top card of J–10–9… or a broken sequence such as J–10–8…

Locate the missing honours (1)

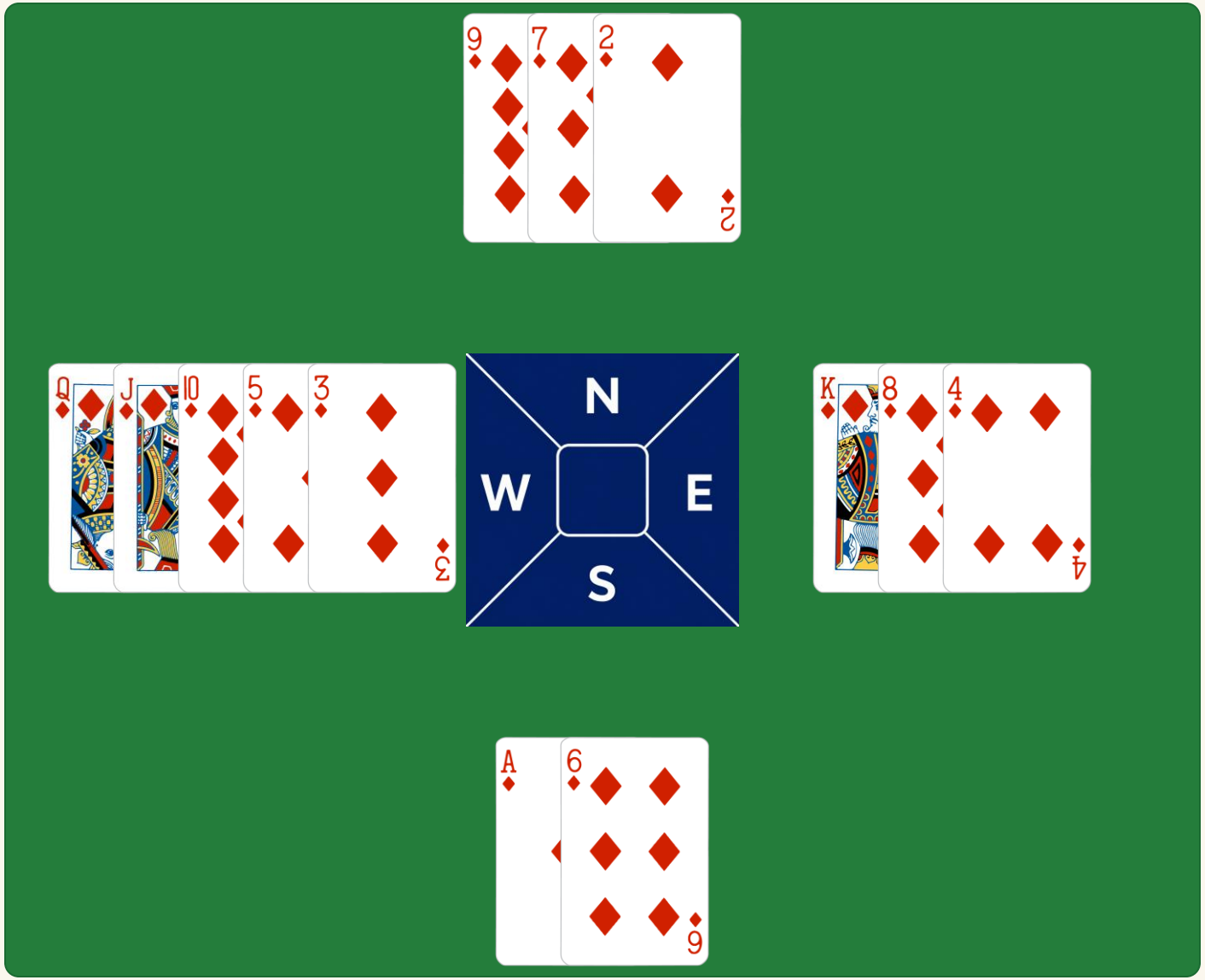
- You are East; South is declarer in no-trump.
- Partner West leads ♦K.
- Where are ♦A, ♦Q and ♦10?
  - West holds ♦Q and ♦10
  - Declarer holds ♦A



Locate the missing honours (2)

- You are East; South is declarer in no-trump.
- Partner West leads ♦Q.
- Who holds ♦A?
  - Declarer

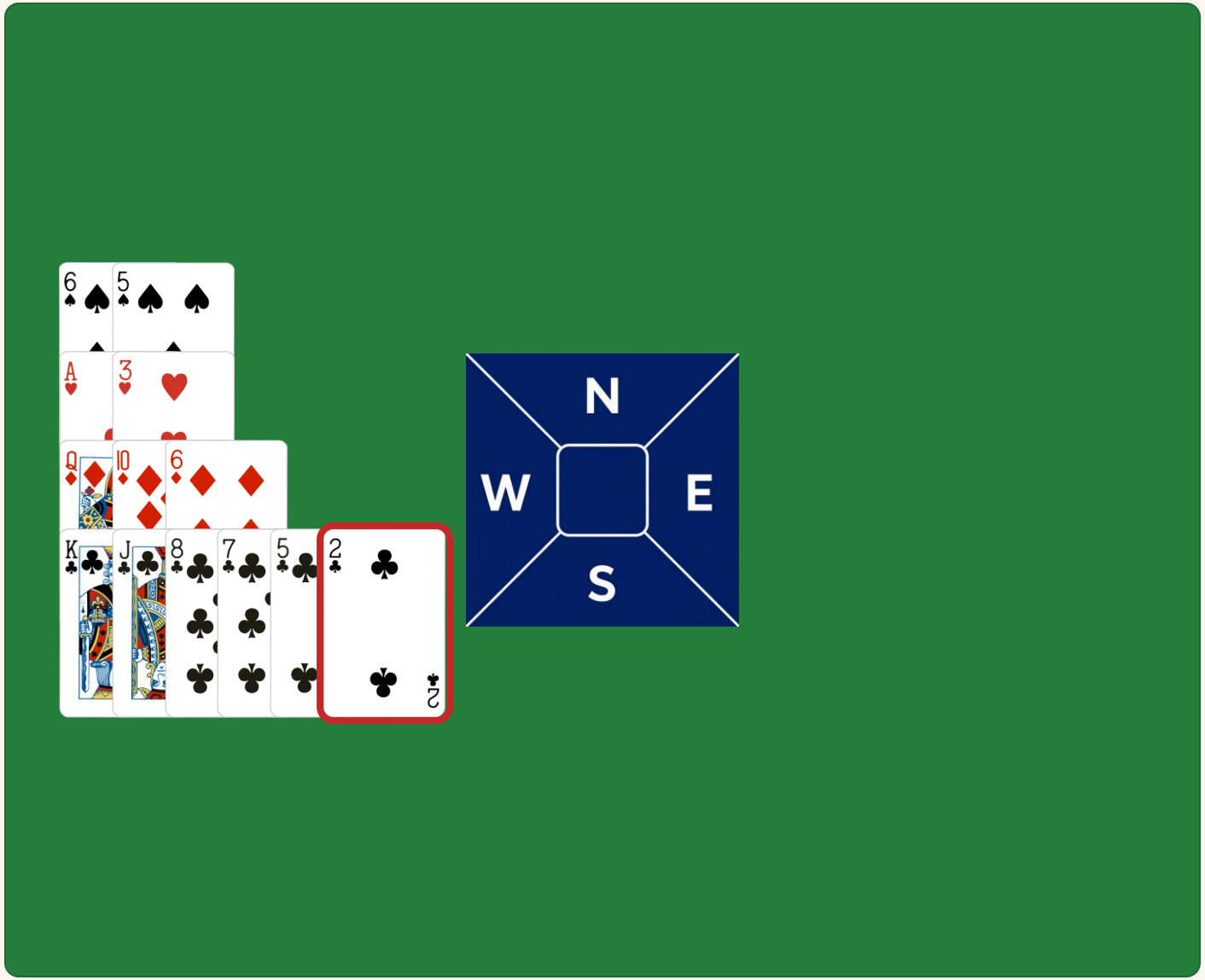
The lead lets you reconstruct the missing honours.



Which opening lead against no-trump? (3)

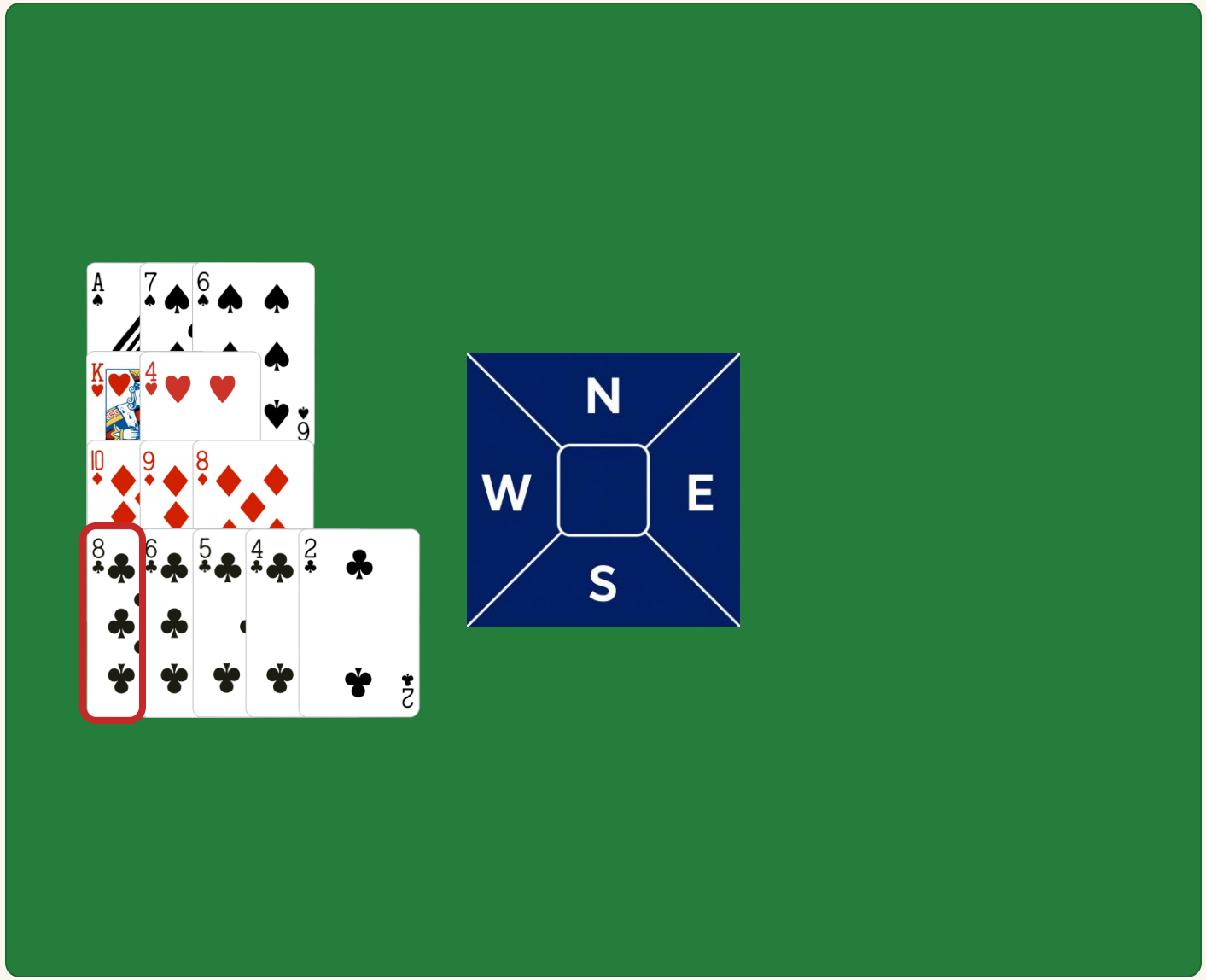
- West is on lead against a no-trump contract.
- What is your longest suit?
  - clubs
- Which card do you lead?
  - ♣2
- What do you promise?
  - one or two honours

A low card against no-trump promises length and one or two honours.



Which opening lead against no-trump? (5)

- West is on lead against a no-trump contract.
- What is your longest suit?
  - clubs
- Which card do you lead?
  - ♣8
- What do you promise?
  - no honour in the suit

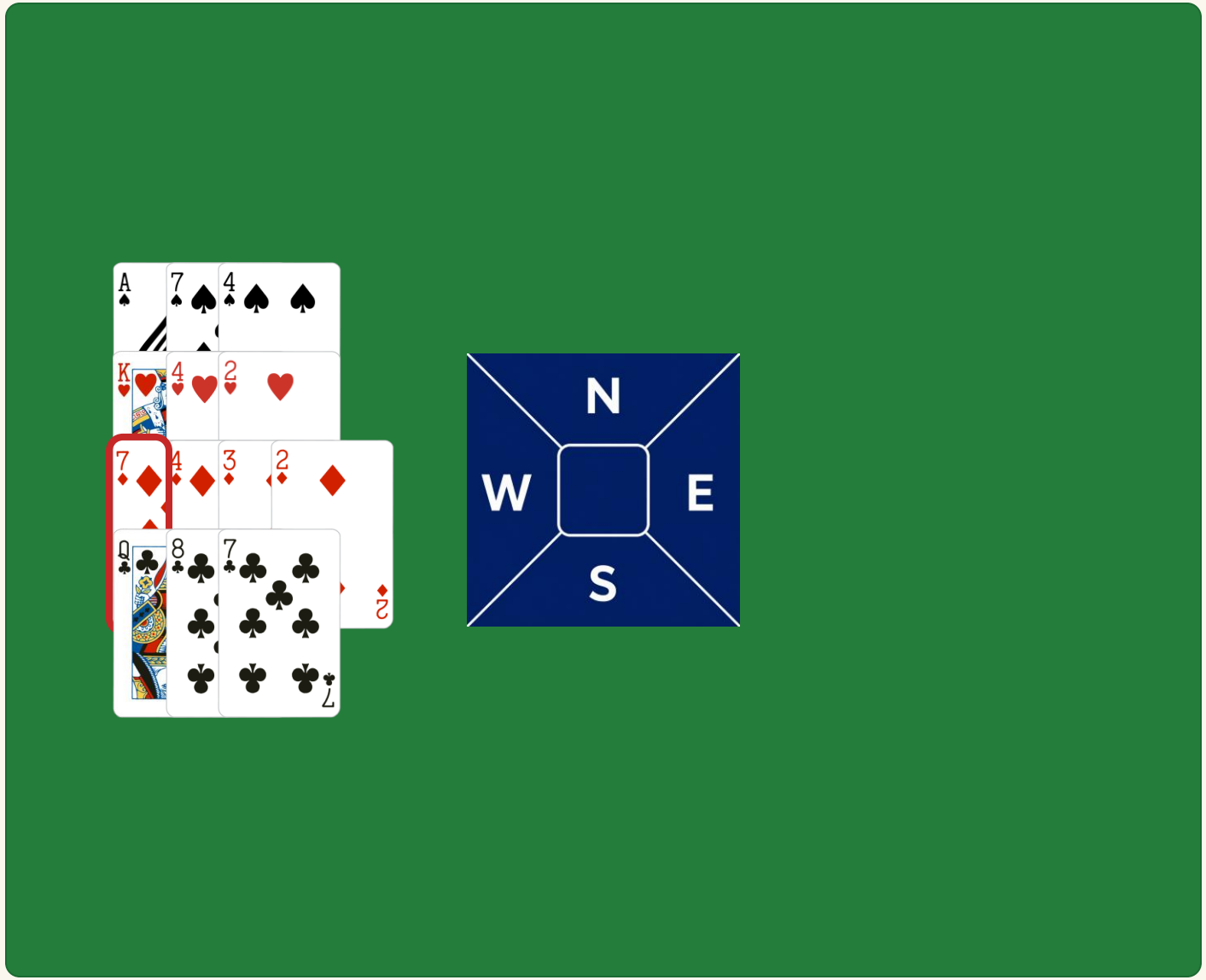


Lead the highest spot card (“top of nothing”): it denies an honour and promises length.

Which opening lead against no-trump? (6)

- West is on lead against a no-trump contract.
- What is your longest suit?
  - diamonds
- Which card do you lead?
  - ♦7
- What do you promise?
  - no honour in the suit

Lead the highest spot card: it denies an honour and promises length.



Opening leads against no-trump

TOP 3 AGAINST NO-TRUMP

1. Lead the top card of a three-card sequence or broken sequence.

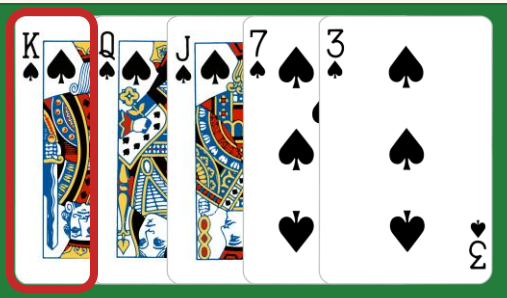
2. Lead low from a long suit containing one or two honours.

3. Lead the highest spot card from a long suit without an honour.

After the auction, partner's bid suit is usually the first suit to consider.

- You want to lead a spade.
  - Which card?

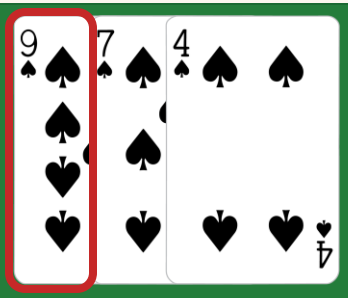
You promise the top of a sequence or broken sequence.





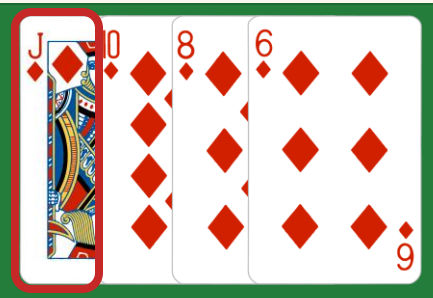
- You want to lead a spade.
  - Which card?

The highest spot card denies an honour.





- You want to lead a diamond.
  - Which card?

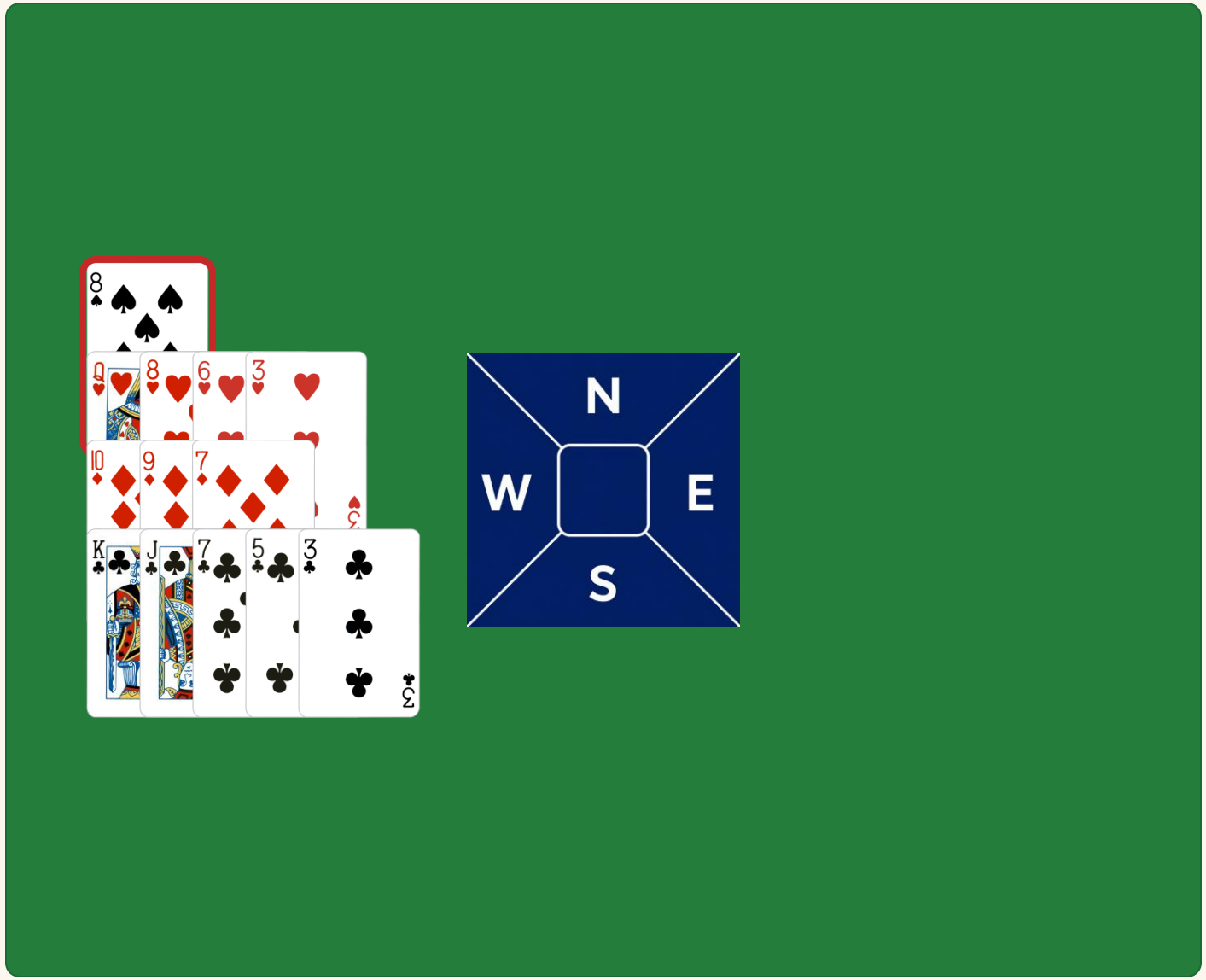




Lead the top of a sequence or broken sequence.

Opening lead against a trump contract

- If West were playing no-trump:
  - ♣3
- But West is playing in diamonds.
- Is ♣3 attractive?
  - No: the third club can be ruffed
- Attractive opening lead?
  - ♠8
    - a chance to score a ruff



Against a trump contract, a singleton lead can create a ruff.

Diamonds are trumps: which opening lead?

- West is declarer in a diamond contract.
- Which card do you lead?
  - ♠K

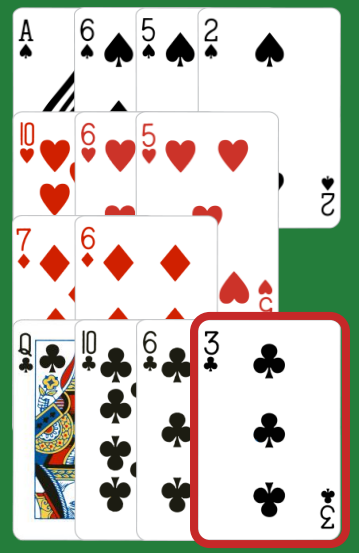




Against no-trump you would lead ♠4 or ♥2: low from one or two honours.

Diamonds are trumps: which opening lead? (4)

- West is declarer in a diamond contract.
- Which card do you lead?
  – ♣3

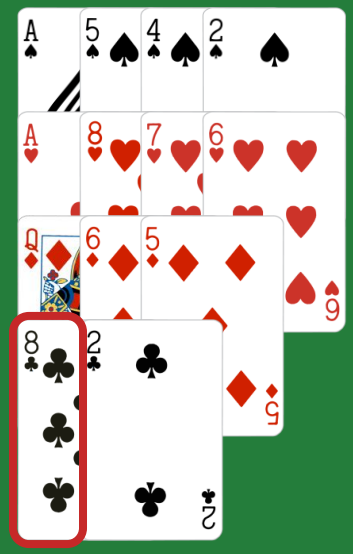




In a trump contract, it is usually unwise to lead away from an ace.

Diamonds are trumps: which opening lead? (6)

- West is declarer in a diamond contract.
- Which card do you lead?
  – ♣8





- The highest spot card denies an honour and may show length.
- It can also be a doubleton or singleton.
  Can partner draw the right conclusion?

Opening leads against a trump contract

TOP 3 AGAINST A TRUMP CONTRACT

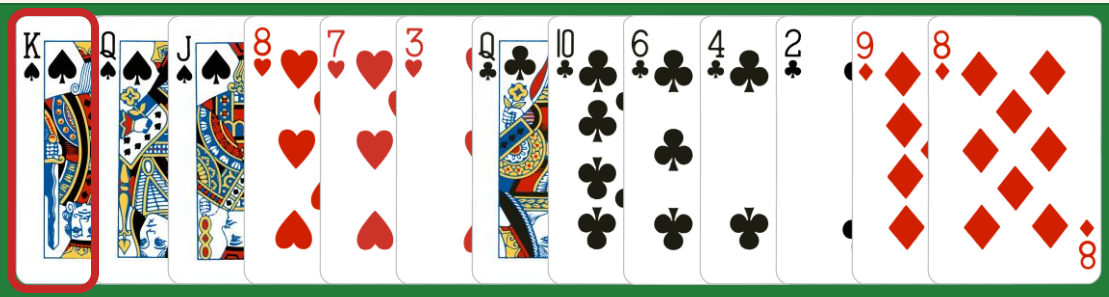
1. Lead the top of a sequence of at least two honours.

2. Lead low from three or more cards headed by K, Q, J or K–J.

3. Lead the highest spot card to deny an honour; the suit may be long, a doubleton or even a singleton.

After the auction, partner's bid suit is usually the first suit to consider.

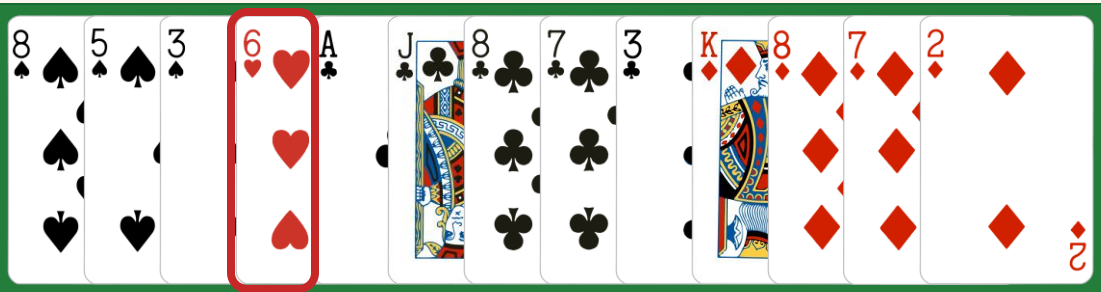
- West is declarer in a diamond contract.
- Which card do you lead?
  – ♠K





You promise the top card of a two-card honour sequence.

- West is declarer in a diamond contract.
- Which card do you lead?
  – ♥6

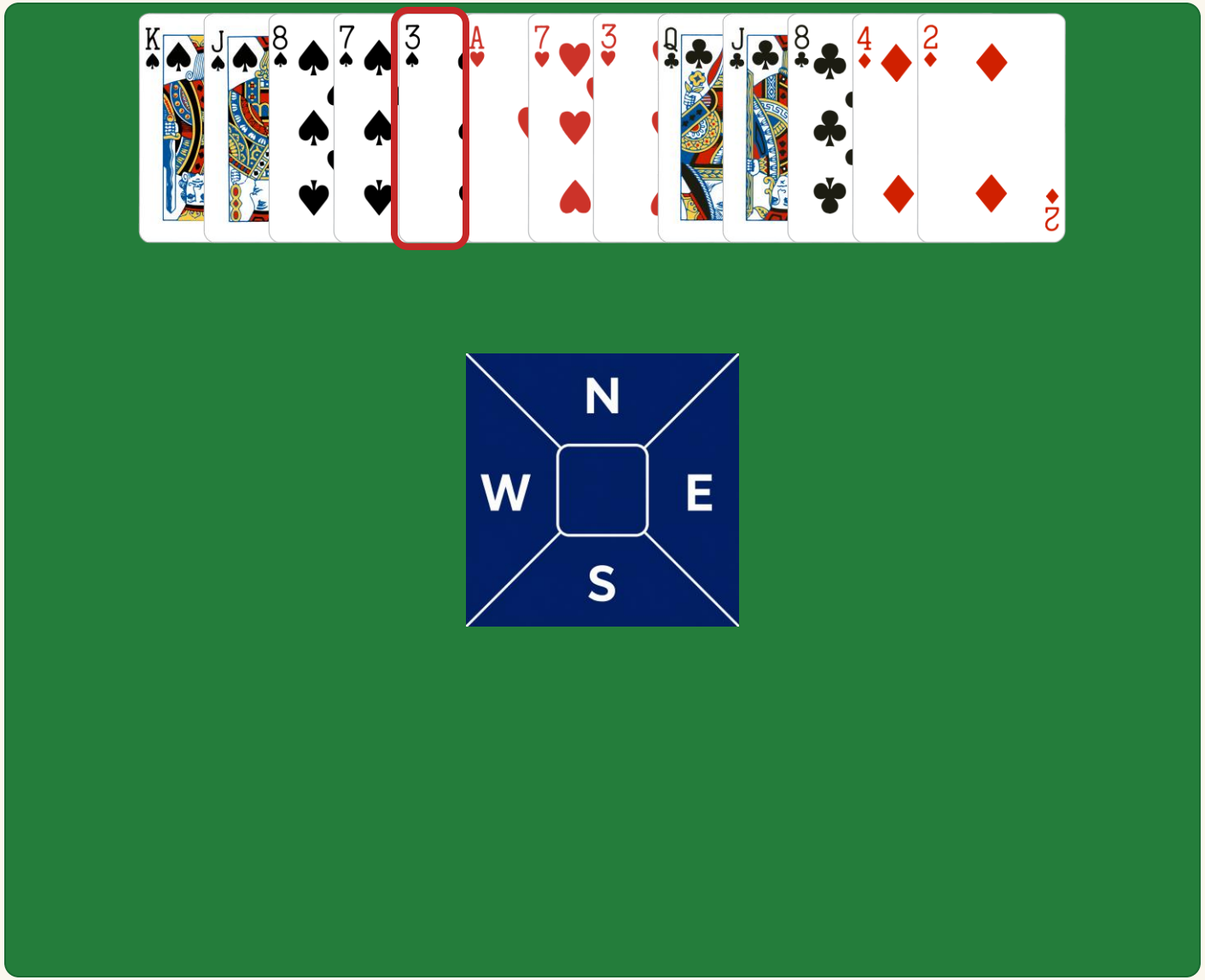




A singleton lead creates a chance to score a ruff.
Can partner read the singleton?

- West is on lead against a no-trump contract.
- Which card do you lead?
  – ♠3

A low card promises one or two honours, no three-card sequence, and length (4+).



Opening leads tips

My tips for you

1. “Listen” to the bidding.

2. Try to find partners 5 card suit.

3. Active or passive?


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