

2nd Edition

Revised and updated for the first time in 30 years



FALSECARDS

A MIKE LAWRENCE

BRIDGE CLASSIC



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This book is dedicated to my many friends in the bridge world.

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INTRODUCTION

FALSECARDS IN GENERAL

Before getting into specific hands and circumstances, I would like to offer a bit of advice relating to falsecards.

A FALSECARD IS INTENDED TO FOOL DECLARER, NOT TO FOOL YOUR PARTNER.

In general, defense is the hardest part of bridge. It is difficult enough when you know what is going on. It's nearly impossible when you have to guess. If you insist on sending out a bewildering array of signals, you will nail an occasional declarer or two. But you will also nail your partner.

Bridge is a partnership game. One or two or three successes will not compensate for a confused, embarrassed, or upset partner.

Ever had an experience like this one?

♠ A 9 8	♠ K J 3 2
♥ Q 8 2	♥ K J 4 3
♦ J 6 3	♦ Q 5
♣ A K J 5	♣ Q 8 2

<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">N</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">W</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table>	N	E	W	S
N	E			
W	S			

North	South
	1♦
1♥	1♠
3♠ ¹	4♠
all pass	

1. Invitational.

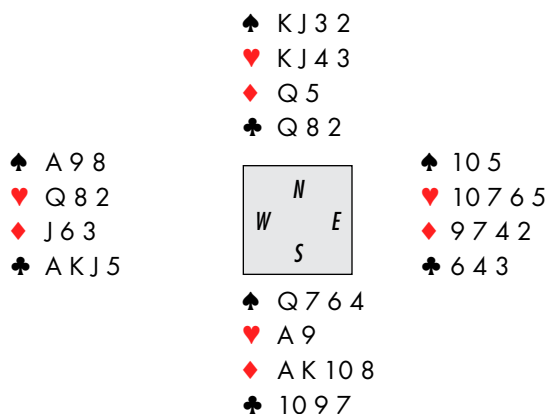
You lead the ♣K and partner plays the three. There's no way you are going to beat this on high cards, but there may be a way to promote a trump trick. Three things must happen:

1. Clubs must be 4-3-3-3.
2. Partner must have the ♠10.
3. Declarer must lead a spade from dummy to his queen.

If all this happens, you will win the first round of spades, and lead the thirteenth club. This will promote a trump trick. All this happening is against the odds, but something is better than nothing.

Putting it into practice, you continue with the ♣A and another club. Clubs turn out to be 4-3-3-3. Declarer wins and leads the ♠2 to his queen and your ace.

The good news is that partner has the ♠10. The bad news is that he has just played it. When you lead the ♣J (partner might have the ♠7), declarer guesses the position and makes the rest.



What went wrong? On declarer's chosen line of play, 4♠ was going down. Why did partner ruin your plans?

The answer is that partner was falsecarding. He thought declarer might have the ♠A. Partner played the ten, hoping to discourage declarer from finessing in spades if the situation were as below.



This was the layout partner was hoping for. Partner was trying to do a good thing. It just happened that on this occasion, it cost a game contract.

You may form your own conclusion.

PART ONE

FALSECARDS BY THE
DEFENDERS

CHAPTER 1 FALSECARDS BY THE OPENING LEADER

There are a number of valid reasons for choosing to lead an unusual card. These reasons include:

1. You might lead third or fifth best in order to mislead declarer as to your length in the suit. (This assumes you normally lead fourth best.)
2. You might lead the ‘wrong’ card from a sequence in order to mislead declarer as to where the high cards are, i.e., lead the jack from QJx.
3. You might underlead an ace against a suit contract.

Note that you do not make an unusual lead simply because you feel like it. You do it because there is a specific, defined reason for it. Falsecards are dangerous because they mislead partner as well as declarer. If you falsecard ten times and get five good results, four normal results, and embarrass partner once, you can be sure partner will remember the tenth time. He won’t like it, and worse, it may cause him to doubt your carding in the future.

LEADING FIFTH BEST OR THIRD BEST

Both vulnerable

♠ Q 8 2 ♥ 9 2 ♦ A 8 6 ♣ A Q 8 6 2

West (you)	North	East	South
	1♠	pass	2♦
pass	2♠	pass	3NT
all pass			

With a perfectly good club holding, it is right to lead one. Normally, you would lead the six, and unless you can find reason to do otherwise, you should do so. In this instance, you can anticipate that the spade suit will run. If declarer chooses to play on spades, you know that he will succeed.

But! If declarer doesn't fear the club suit, he may decide to knock out your

♦A. The entire hand might look like this:

	♠ A K J 9 5 4										
	♥ A 5										
	♦ 4 3										
	♣ 10 5 3										
♠ Q 8 2	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 7 6 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 9 2		♥ Q 10 8 7 6 4									
♦ A 8 6		♦ 10 5									
♣ A Q 8 6 2		♣ J 4									
	♠ 10										
	♥ K J 3										
	♦ K Q J 9 7 2										
	♣ K 9 7										

If declarer thinks clubs are 5-2, he can't afford to lead diamonds. He will try for spades, and those will work. If declarer thinks clubs are 4-3, he will play on diamonds, expecting to lose three clubs and one diamond.

If you lead the ♣2 on this hand, declarer will expect clubs to be non-dangerous and will try the diamonds.

Conversely:

Both vulnerable

♠ 8 7 3 ♥ 9 4 2 ♦ A 8 6 ♣ A Q 6 2

West (you)	North	East	South
	1♠	pass	2♦
pass	2♠	pass	3NT
all pass			

You could, in theory, lead the ♣6. If declarer can be talked into believing you have five of them, he may try the spade finesse rather than knock out the ♦A.

ANALYSIS OF LEADING THIRD OR FIFTH BEST

These falsecards are unlikely to occur. The situation has to be just right and you run the risk that partner will do the wrong thing.

The necessary conditions are:

1. You must have nearly all the critical cards held by the defenders so that partner will not be taking an active part in the defense.

2. You must be able to clearly predict how the play of the hand will go and what effect your falsecard will have.

Leading fifth best may occur once a year, leading third best even less.

UNDERLEADING AN ACE VS. A SUIT CONTRACT

Considering the number of times this lead is attempted, one might believe it was more the rule than the exception. Some of the time it works. And some of the time it doesn't. There are two problems with underleading aces:

1. There is frequently a better alternative, including leading the ace instead of underleading it.
2. Even when it's right, it may not work if your partner misunderstands what you are doing.

For instance:

Neither vulnerable

		♠ Q 6 2											
		♥ J 8 3											
		♦ Q 5											
		♣ Q 10 6 4 2											
♠ 8		<table style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S			♠ A 5 3
	N												
W		E											
	S												
♥ A 5 2				♥ K 10 9 6 4									
♦ J 8 7 6 2				♦ A 9 4									
♣ J 9 8 5				♣ 7 3									
		♠ K J 10 9 7 4											
		♥ Q 7											
		♦ K 10 3											
		♣ A K											

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	1♠
2♥	2♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

This auction wasn't too accurate, but it could happen. And if the defense goofs, 4♠ can make.

How can the defense goof? Easy. If West leads the ♥2, East has to guess whether the lead is from Axx, in which case he has to play the king, or whether the lead is from Qxx, in which case the nine is correct. In this case, the king would be necessary.

Or:

North-South vulnerable

<p>♠ 9 7 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ J 8 7 5 ♣ A 8 6 4</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="margin: 0;">N</p> <p style="margin: 0;">W E</p> <p style="margin: 0;">S</p> </div>	<p>♠ 3 ♥ A 6 2 ♦ A Q 9 6 3 ♣ K 10 5 2</p>	<p>♠ A 6 4 2 ♥ K 10 8 4 ♦ 10 2 ♣ Q 9 7</p>
		<p>♠ K Q J 10 8 5 ♥ J 7 3 ♦ K 4 ♣ J 3</p>	

West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	1♠
pass	2♣	pass	4♠
all pass			

If West leads a heart, the contract goes down routinely. If West leads a cagey little club, the contract will succeed if East plays the ♣9 instead of the queen.

East should play the queen, you say? Perhaps. But if the hand is as follows, the queen will be a disaster:

<p>♠ K 5 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ J 8 7 5 ♣ J 8 6 4</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="margin: 0;">N</p> <p style="margin: 0;">W E</p> <p style="margin: 0;">S</p> </div>	<p>♠ 3 ♥ A 6 2 ♦ A Q 9 6 3 ♣ K 10 5 2</p>	<p>♠ A 6 4 2 ♥ K 10 8 4 ♦ 10 2 ♣ Q 9 7</p>
		<p>♠ Q J 10 9 8 7 ♥ J 7 3 ♦ K 4 ♣ A 3</p>	

Underleading aces can be quite dynamic, but it's also dangerous. The times when underleading an ace rates to be correct are just *not* that common.

The three common circumstances are:

1. Dummy, on your left, has bid notrump and:
 - a) Declarer has shown a weak hand
 - b) Declarer hasn't shown an unbalanced hand
 - c) You don't have a strong hand yourself
 - d) You are probably leading an unbid suit
 - e) *You don't have a better lead*

This auction suggests it would be okay to underlead an ace:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♣	pass	1♠	pass
1NT	pass	2♠	all pass

This auction is not as clear-cut:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♣	pass	1♠	pass
1NT	pass	2♥	all pass

With RHO showing two suits, you should think twice about underleading the ♦A.

♠ A 4 2 ♥ Q 5 ♦ J 9 3 ♣ Q 10 7 4 2

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♣	pass	1♥	pass
1NT	pas	2♥	all pass

The ♠2 is okay because of the auction and also because nothing else stands out. You should rarely feel that underleading an ace is a wonderful thing to do.

♠ J 7 2 ♥ A 4 2 ♦ J 10 9 3 ♣ K 5 4

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♣	pass	1♠	pass
1NT	pass	2♠	all pass

The ♦J stands out. It's very rare that you would underlead an ace when you have a solid alternative.

2. The second common situation where you can underlead an ace is on one of these sequences when:

- a) You have opened the bidding
- b) LHO has doubled or overcalled 1NT
- c) Your partner has bid a new suit

West (you)	North	East	South
1♣	dbl	1♥	1♠
all pass			

You might underlead the ♥A.

West (you)	North	East	South
1♣	1NT	2♦	2♥
all pass			

You might underlead the ♦A.

On these sequences, LHO has implied some length and strength in the suit your partner has bid.

♠ A 3 ♥ Q J 6 2 ♦ K 8 5 4 2 ♣ K 5

West (you)	North	East	South
1♦	dbl	1♠	2♥
all pass			

The ♠3 could work here. Note that nothing else stands out. Underleading an ace is a last resort.

Similarly:

♠ A J 4 ♥ K 10 8 6 3 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 10 3

West (you)	North	East	South
1♥	1NT	2♦	3♣
all pass			

The ♦3 is pretty clear-cut here. An entirely possible layout is this one:

<p>♠ A J 4 ♥ K 10 8 6 3 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 10 3</p>	<p>♠ K 7 2 ♥ A J 5 4 ♦ Q J 4 ♣ A J 5</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; width: 100%;"> S </div> </div> <p>♠ Q 9 6 3 ♥ Q 9 2 ♦ 2 ♣ K 9 8 6 2</p>	<p>♠ 10 8 5 ♥ 7 ♦ K 10 9 8 7 6 ♣ Q 7 4</p>
--	---	--

Compare how the defense goes if you start with any lead other than a small diamond to partner's king.

ANALYSIS OF UNDERLEADING ACES IN EITHER OF THE ABOVE SITUATIONS

When properly done, underleading an ace can be extremely effective. In terms of frequency, I would say the occasion arises one time in a hundred sessions. Hardly overwhelming.

One more point. If you clearly identify the proper time for this play and if partner does also, then you won't have to worry that either:

- a) Partner underled at the wrong time, *or*
- b) Partner will do the wrong thing when you underlead.

Note that this entire discussion has centered around the opening lead only. Later in the hand, different considerations apply.

3. The third 'common' situation where you might underlead an ace is not really intended to fool declarer. Rather, you do it because it is imperative to get partner on lead immediately.

Neither vulnerable

♠ A 10 8 6 5 2 ♥ 7 5 3 ♦ K 7 6 2 ♣ —

West (you)	North	East	South
pass	1♣	pass	1♥
1♠	4♥	4♠	4NT
5♠	pass*	pass	6♥
all pass			

1. 1 or 3 keycards.

Lead the ♠2. There is an excellent chance your partner has the ♠K. If so, he will work out that you underled the ♠A for a reason. He should figure it out.

♠ A 10 8 6 5 2	♥ 7 5 3	♦ K 7 6 2	♣ —	♠ J 3	♥ A Q 10 4	♦ A Q 3	♣ A Q 9 3	♠ K Q 7 4	♥ —	♦ 10 9 8 5 4	♣ 8 7 5 4	
				♠ 9								
				♥ K J 9 8 6 2								
				♦ J								
				♣ K J 10 6 2								

N
W E
S

North-South vulnerable

♠ 4 2 ♥ A Q 7 3 ♦ A Q 6 2 ♣ 8 5 4

West (you)	North	East	South
	1♣	2♥	2♠
4♥	pass	pass	4NT
pass	5♦	pass	5♠
all pass			

Try the ♥3 or ♥7. Declarer should have the ♦K for his bidding. If partner has the ♥K, a diamond return will defeat 5♠.

♠ 4 2	♠ J				
♥ A Q 7 3	♥ 10 5				
♦ A Q 6 2	♦ J 9 5 3				
♣ 8 5 4	♣ A K Q J 10 2				
	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ 10				
	♥ K J 9 8 4 2				
	♦ 10 8 4				
	♣ 9 7 3				
	♠ A K Q 9 8 7 6 5 3				
	♥ 6				
	♦ K 7				
	♣ 6				

Interestingly, West might make the same lead against 4♠. This could work if East can win the first trick and has a doubleton diamond to lead back. This defense might get you one heart trick and two diamond tricks plus a diamond ruff.

ANALYSIS OF UNDERLEADING AN ACE WHEN YOU REQUIRE SOMETHING OF PARTNER

This circumstance is rare, but when it comes up, it has a high likelihood of success, especially if you have some information from the bidding to help you.

Remember these guidelines:

1. You need partner to make a specific return *and*
2. The setting tricks won't wait.

Usually when you try this maneuver, partner has raised your suit, but in a pinch you might try it in an unbid suit.

The rarest of all cases for underleading an ace is when the opponents have had a strong auction which *specifically pinpointed* a weakness. Usually, for this criterion to apply, the opponents will have climbed to the five-level.

Auctions like these are typical:

LHO	RHO
1♣	2♥
3♥	4♣
4♦	4♥
5♥	pass

The 5♥ bid asks about spades and the pass denies spade control.

LHO	RHO
1♣	1♥
3♥	4♦
4♥	5♣
5♥	pass

This sequence isn't quite as specific but it sounds very much like they have losers in spades.

This next auction is not, repeat, *is not* in the same family as the above.

LHO	RHO
1♣	1♦
1♥	3♥
4♥	pass

The opponents have had a straightforward value auction. Nothing has been said or denied about spades. If a spade lead is correct, and it likely is, it's more or less an accident.

♠ AJ 3 ♥ 8 6 4 ♦ QJ 9 7 5 ♣ 10 2

LHO	RHO
	1♥
2♣	3♥
4♦	4♥
5♥	pass

The 5♥ bid asked about spades and the pass showed no spade control. Not at all unreasonable to lead the ♠3.

	♠ 8 6 4	
	♥ Q 7	
	♦ A 6 4	
	♣ A Q J 8 3	
♠ AJ 3		♠ K 10 7 5
♥ 8 6 4		♥ 3 2
♦ QJ 9 7 5		♦ 10 8 2
♣ 10 2		♣ 9 7 6 4
	♠ Q 9 2	
	♥ A K J 10 9 5	
	♦ K 3	
	♣ K 5	

	N	
W		E
	S	

Thirteen tricks without a spade lead. Eleven tricks with the ♠A lead. And down one with the ♠3 lead. Against a strong sequence, you may not feel like underleading an ace. But given the actual auction, it is not just reasonable, it is almost called for. Note that if the opening leader had longer spades, it would still be right to underlead the ace.

A 8 6 2	9 5 4 □ Q 7 3	K J 10
---------	---------------------	--------

If partner has the KJ10, you can get three tricks whether the queen is in the dummy or in declarer's hand.

A 8 6 5 2	J 10 3 □ Q 9 7	K 4
-----------	----------------------	-----

You might even give a ruff, which was not available if you led the ace. Note that when the auction *tells* you to lead a suit, you should even underlead the AQxx(x).

LEADING AN ABNORMAL CARD FROM A SEQUENCE

Neither vulnerable

♠ 8 6 2 ♥ K Q J 10 8 6 2 ♦ — ♣ J 7 3

West (you)	North	East	South
3♥	dbl	4♥	4♠
pass	4NT	pass	5♦
pass	6♠	all pass	

What you want to happen is to have partner win something and give you a diamond ruff. With partner raising hearts, this looks like the suit to lead. The trick is to lead a heart such that if partner wins it, he will return a diamond. The first thing to avoid, therefore, is leading the ♥K. Partner just might let you win the trick.

Which heart you should lead is unclear. I would choose the ♥10. Partner will win the ace if he has it. With luck, he will work out that I have done something unusual and will come to the right conclusion.

Incidentally, if my hand were:

♠ 8 6 2 ♥ K Q J 10 8 6 2 ♦ J 7 3 ♣ —

I would lead the ♥2. This is unlikely to cost a trick and should certainly alert partner that something unusual is going on.

Note that you are not trying to fool anyone with this lead. The thing to consider is that when you need partner to do something unusual, you have to make a lead which will wake him up¹. Not too difficult once you think of it. Obviously, since success will lead to a defeated contract, these unusual leads are quite worthwhile.

One point to make here. If you make one of these funny leads expecting that partner will do something for you, you'd better be sure you have a good reason for it. If your partner does something silly because you got cute with your lead, you will end up with a confused and insecure partner. In which case, nothing you do will be believed.

A pair of very unusual and dangerous falsecards by the opening leader are shown by the following two actual examples:

Both vulnerable

♠ Q 10 5 4 ♥ Q J 8 ♦ 3 ♣ A J 10 8 5

West (you)	North	East	South
			1NT
pass	2♦ ¹	pass	2♠
pass	3♠ ²	pass	4♠
all pass			

1. Game-forcing Stayman.
2. Slam try.

This hand has lots of defensive potential and even though the opponents looked for slam, you can hope to beat 4♠. What should you lead?

Spades are out, and you don't really want to lead a stiff diamond. Why try for a ruff with a natural trump trick?

Clubs are dangerous. You may have two tricks if you wait for them.

Hearts look far and away to be the best lead. The problem is that partner doesn't rate to have a heart honor. He may have one, but it's not likely. Best is to lead the ♥J.

The actual hand turned out to be:

1. Marshall Miles coined the term 'alarm clock leads.'

	♠ J 9 3 2 ♥ A K 6 2 ♦ K 9 7 5 ♣ 6				
♠ Q 10 5 4 ♥ Q J 8 ♦ 3 ♣ A J 10 8 5	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 7 ♥ 7 5 4 ♦ J 10 8 6 2 ♣ Q 9 4 2
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ A K 8 6 ♥ 10 9 3 ♦ A Q 4 ♣ K 7 3				

Declarer won the ♥A and led a club to the king, and ace. West continued the ♥8 and declarer felt he couldn't afford to finesse. Down one.

East-West vulnerable

♠ A Q 9 2 ♥ 10 8 3 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ 10 8 3

West (you)	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	1♥
pass	2NT	pass	3♥
pass	4♥	all pass	

On this sequence, there is a fair danger that dummy has a diamond suit. It may (no guarantee) be necessary to get your defensive tricks established quickly.

From your hand, spades look to be your best possibility. Dummy rates to have the king, so you won't be giving declarer a trick he could never have gotten otherwise.

Which spade should you lead? I suggest the queen. Here's the layout:

	♠ K 7 3 ♥ Q 7 4 ♦ A K J 7 ♣ A Q 5				
♠ A Q 9 2 ♥ 10 8 3 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ 10 8 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ J 8 5 ♥ J ♦ 9 8 6 5 ♣ J 9 6 4 2
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ 10 6 4 ♥ A K 9 6 5 2 ♦ 10 3 ♣ K 7				

The effect of the ♠Q in this case was spectacular. The queen won Trick 1. West led a second spade and declarer ducked to East's jack. Back to the ace. Now the final insult. West led the thirteenth spade and East ruffed it with the ♥J. West's ♥10 became the setting trick.

This lead worked out incredibly well. It need not have. It was, however, a reasonable effort.

Note that West chose this lead for a number of reasons.

1. The ♠K was marked in dummy, *and*
2. No other suit looked promising.

The above lead is more likely to be found in books on deception than at the table. More plausible is the lead of the queen from, say, AQJ8 or AQJ10.

♠ K 7 3
 ♥ Q 7 4
 ♦ A K J 7
 ♣ A Q 5

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 10 6 4
 ♥ A K 9 6 5 2
 ♦ 10 3
 ♣ K 7

If you were declaring 4♥ against the ♠Q lead, would you cover, or would you duck, hoping for a doubleton or singleton ♠A on your right?

If West led from ♠QJ952, you have to duck the first round. If West led from ♠AQJ52, you'd better cover. It's fair to say that declarer has a difficult guess. In practice, most declarers will duck in dummy, and that will be the proper play most of the time.

OTHER UNUSUAL LEADS

A curiosity in the world of opening leads is this hand.

Both vulnerable

♠ A Q 10 8 ♥ Q 6 4 2 ♦ Q 9 3 ♣ 7 2

West (you)	North	East	South
pass	1♣	pass	1♥
pass	2♥	pass	2♠
pass	3♥	pass	4♥
all pass			

Any time you have a solid holding in declarer's second suit, you should consider leading a trump. Even with four trumps to the queen, it should be safe. It may gain by cutting down ruffs and since declarer won't expect you to have led from Qxxx of trumps, he probably won't guess the suit.

In fact, declarer is so unlikely to guess the trumps that you might try the lead solely to fool declarer.

North-South vulnerable

♠ Q 6 4 2 ♥ Q 8 3 ♦ J 9 5 ♣ 10 6 4

West (you)	North	East	South
pass	1♣	pass	1♦
pass	1♥	pass	1♠
pass	3♠	pass	4NT
pass	5♥	pass	6♣
all pass			

It would not be a bad idea to lead a trump (not the queen!). Declarer has a 4-4 fit and with a trump lead will probably play your partner for the ♠Q. Here is a possible layout:

	♠ A 10 8 5										
	♥ A J 5 2										
	♦ Q										
	♣ K Q J 3										
♠ Q 6 4 2	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ Q 8 3		♥ 10 9 7 6									
♦ J 9 5		♦ 8 7 6 3									
♣ 10 6 4		♣ A 9 7 5									
	♠ K J 9 7										
	♥ K 4										
	♦ A K 10 4 2										
	♣ 8 2										

If you make a neutral lead, and on this hand I don't know what that would be, declarer will try to guess spades. This he will do fifty percent of the time. With a spade lead, he will probably guess wrong far more than half the time.

You might try this at Trick 2 as well.

East-West vulnerable

♠ Q 6 4 2	♠ K J 8 7
♥ A K 7 3	♥ Q J 8 4 2
♦ J 8 2	♦ A Q 5
♣ 4 3	♣ J

	N	
W		E
	S	

West (you)	North	East	South
			1♣
pass	1♥	pass	1♠
pass	4♠	pass	4NT
pass	5♦	pass	6♠
all pass			

You cash the ♥K. Your partner plays the six, declarer the five. How do you continue?

♠ Q 6 4 2	♠ K J 8 7	
♥ A K 7 3	♥ Q J 8 4 2	
♦ J 8 2	♦ A Q 5	
♣ 4 3	♣ J	

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 10 9 5	♠ 3
♥ 5	♥ 10 9 6
♦ K 6 4	♦ 10 9 7 3
♣ A K Q 10 8	♣ 9 7 6 5 2

If you switch to a spade, declarer will misguess more often than not. He instinctively will assume you do not have the queen of trumps and likely will play your partner for it.

INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED

“THE MOST EFFECTIVE FALSECARDS ARE NOT THE BIG, BRAZEN ONES. THEY ARE THE SUBTLE ONES WHERE YOU PLAY A TWO INSTEAD OF A FOUR. OR A SIX INSTEAD OF A THREE.” — MIKE LAWRENCE

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