

LAW 41 - COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

- **Face-down Opening Lead**

After a bid, double or redouble has been followed by three passes in rotation, the defender on presumed declarer's left makes the opening lead face down⁹. The face-down lead may be withdrawn only upon instruction of the Director after an irregularity (see Laws 47E and 54); the withdrawn card must be returned to the defender's hand.

- **Review of Auction and Questions**

Before the opening lead is faced, the leader's partner and the presumed declarer (but not the presumed dummy) each may require a review of the auction, or request explanation of an opponent's call (see Law 20F2 and 20F3). Declarer¹⁰ or either defender may, at his first turn to play a card, require a review of the auction; this right expires when he plays a card. The defenders (subject to Law 16) and the declarer retain the right to request explanations throughout the play period, each at his own¹¹ turn to play.

- **Opening Lead Faced**

Following this Clarification Period, the opening lead is faced, the play period begins irrevocably, and dummy's hand is spread (but see Law 54A for a faced opening lead out of turn). After it is too late to have previous calls restated (see B), declarer or either defender, at his own¹¹ turn to play, is entitled to be informed as to what the contract is and whether, but not by whom, it was doubled or redoubled.

- **Dummy's Hand**

After the opening lead is faced, dummy spreads his hand in front of him on the table, face up, sorted into suits, the cards in order of rank with lowest ranking cards towards declarer, and in separate columns pointing lengthwise towards declarer. Trumps are placed to dummy's right. Declarer plays both his hand and that of dummy.

- ⁹Regulating Authorities may specify that opening leads be made face up.

¹⁰Declarer's first turn to play is from dummy unless accepting an opening lead out of turn. ¹¹Declarer may enquire at his turn to play from dummy or from his own hand.