Opening leads - Basics - Summary Sheet

Don't just lead out your Aces.

Every time you lead an Ace the opponents can throw away a small card and if they have the King it becomes a boss card.

Try to set up tricks

A lead from an honours sequence is usually good.
If you lead the King from the KQ it might lose to the Ace but the Queen then becomes a boss card.

Always lead the top of a sequence

If you have KQ lead the King.
If you lead the Queen partner will not know that you have the King and might waste his Ace on ..

Leads from 3-card or longer honours sequences are particularly good.

This includes broken sequences and interior sequences.
So lead K from KQJx;
Lead K from KQTx (broken sequence);
Lead J from KJTx. (interior sequence).

A lead from a long suit is always good against a no trump contract

Lacking an honours sequence you will lead a lower card – don't lead an unsupported honour.

A lead of a small (typically 2,3,4) suggests an honour (A,K, or Q) in the suit
so lead the from K862.
Lacking an honour lead an intermediate card, so lead the 6 or the 8 from 862.

Leaders partner

Read your partner's lead.
If he led the King he has probably got the Queen;
If he led the 3 he has probably got an honour;
If he led a 6,7,8 he probably has no high cards in the suit.

Let him know if you like the lead with a simple attitude signal.
If he leads a King and you have J62 in the suit let him know you like the suit. He probably has the Queen and your Jack becomes a valuable card. Play the 6 – not the 2.
If he leads a King and you have 762 in the suit then discourage with the 2.

Return partner's lead.

If at some later point in the play you get on lead and there is no compelling reason to do anything else then return partner's suit – it might for example help him to set up a long suit.