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lead, v.¹

Pronunciation: Brit. /li:d/, U.S. /lid/

Forms: OE *lædan*, ME *laden*, ME *læden*, *læiden*, ME *leden*, *leaden*, (ME *leoden*, *Orm. ledenn*), ME *ledde*, ME–15 *led(e)*, ME, 16 *leede*, ME–16 (chiefly Sc.) *leide*, *leyde*, 15–16 *leade*; 15– *lead. pres. ind.* (contracted forms): 2nd sing. OE *lætst*, ME *last*; 3rd sing. OE *læt*, ME *lat*, ME *let*, ME *leth. pa. tense* OE *lædde*, ME *leaded*, ME–15 *ledd(e)*, ME *lædde*, ME *leede*, (ME *leadde*, *leddede*), ME–15 *ladde*, ME–17 *lad*, ME–15 *ledd*, (ME *leded*, Sc. *laid*), ME– *led. pa. pple.* OE *læded*, *læd*, ME–15 *ledde*, ME *ladd(e)*, *lede*, ME–16 *lad(e)*, 16 *lead(e)*, ME– *led*. Also ME with prefix *i-*, *y-*.

Frequency (in current use):

Etymology: A Common Germanic weak verb (wanting in Gothic): Old English *lædan* = Old Frisian *lêda*, Old Saxon *lêdjan* (Middle Dutch *leden*, *leiden*, Dutch *leiden*), Old High German (Middle High German, German) *leiten*, Old Norse *leiða* (Swedish *leda*, Danish *lede*) < Old Germanic **laidjan*, < **laidâ* road, journey (see *LOAD n.*, *LODE n.*), related to Old English *līðan*, Old Norse *līða* to go, travel.

The word has always served as the usual rendering of Latin *ducere*, and this has in some degree influenced the development of meaning.

I. To conduct.

1. trans. To cause to go along with oneself.

†**a.** To bring or take (a person or animal) to a place. Also with *away*, *down*, etc. *Obs.* (Phrases like *to lead captive* are now understood in sense 2.)

c825 *Vesp. Psalter* lxvii[i]. 19 Astigende in heanisse gehefte lædde heftned.

c1000 *ÆLFRIC Genesis* vi. 19 Of eallum nytenum..twegen gemacan þu lætst in to þam arce mid þe.

c1000 *ÆLFRIC Genesis* xlii. 20 Læde eowerne gingstan broðor to me.

a1175 *Cott. Hom.* 221 God ʒeledde to him niatenu..and adam ham alle namen ʒesceop.

c1275 (†?a1200) *LA3AMON Brut* (Calig.) (1978) l. 13375 [He] ladde uorð Petreiuu læð þeh hit weore him.

1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (Rolls) 8803 Oþer kniʒtes þer were inome,..& ilad in to engelond.

a1325 (†c1250) *Gen. & Exod.* (1968) l. 2193 He dede hem binden and leden dun And speren faste in his prisun.

a1325 (†c1250) *Gen. & Exod.* (1968) l. 858 Wifwes and childre..He ledden a-wei wið herte prud.

†a1387 J. TREVISA tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (St. John's Cambr.) (1871) III. 97 Þat þe kyng schulde be lad away prisoner in to Babilon.

c1400 *Mandeville's Trav.* (1839) x. 113 The Jews ladden him upon an highe Roche.

c1480 (†a1400) *SS. Simon & Jude* 408 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) I. 220 Þe forsad byschapis of þat stede al hale þe puple with þam lede.

a1500 (†a1460) *Towneley Plays* (1994) I. xiv. 160 Boldly thou thaym bynde And with the leyde.

1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 604/2 Shall I leade him away with me?

- 1533 J. GAU tr. C. Pedersen *Richt Vay* 70 God sal leid thaimē vp to the heuine with hime quhilk ar deid in christ.
- 1578 J. LYLY *Euphues* f. 71^v Ieremy before the people were led away apointeth their exile to continew threescore and ten yeares.
- 1705 T. HEARNE *Ductor Historicus* (ed. 2) I. III. 463 The Pannonians..he successfully subdued, leading away the Younger sort into other Countries.
- quasi-passive in gerund.
- c1515 LD. BERNERS tr. *Bk. Duke Huon of Burdeux* (1882–7) cxliv. 539 The other prysoners, whom we see yonder ledyng to the dethe warde.
- 1757 R. GRIFFITH & E. GRIFFITH *Lett. Henry & Frances* II. cxcii. 38 Suppose a Criminal, leading forth to Execution.

b. To carry or convey, usually in a cart or other vehicle. Now *north*.

dial.: To cart (coal, corn, stones, turf, etc.). **to lead in** (grain): to house.

- c900 tr. Bede *Eccl. Hist.* (1890) i. i. 30 Of Breotone nædran on scipum lædde wæron.
- c900 tr. Bede *Eccl. Hist.* III. v. [vii.] 168 Hædde biscop heht his lichoman..lædan to Wintaceastre.
- a1225 *Leg. Kath.* 2251 We, a3eines þin heast, þæt licome awei ledden.
- c1275 (▶a1200) LA3AMON *Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 1772 To læden þis garisume to leuene mine fadere.
- 1362 LANGLAND *Piers Plowman* A. IV. 130 Lawe schal ben a laborer and leden [1377 lede] a-feld dounge.
- c1386 CHAUCER *Monk's Tale* 158 The vessel of the temple he with hym ladde.
- a1400 (▶a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 5129 Siluer and gold þai wit þam ledd.
- c1400 *Mandeville's Trav.* (1839) xxiii. 248 Thei leiden hire Houses with hem upon chariottes.
- ?c1450 *Life St. Cuthbert* (1891) l. 5300 Þare armour hame þai led.
- a1475 *Bk. Curtasye* (Sloane 1986) l. 813 in *Babees Bk.* (2002) l. 326 Þe vssher ledes þat on hed ryzt.
- a1475 *Liber Cocorum* (Sloane) (1862) 33 Whenne þou hast covered hit [sc. venesone] so, Lede hit home.
- 1487 (▶a1380) J. BARBOUR *Bruce* (St. John's Cambr.) x. 195 Vith this bunnok spokin had thai To leid [1489 Adv. lede] thair hay.
- 1488 (▶c1478) HARY *Actis & Deidis Schir William Wallace* (Adv.) (1968–9) x. l. 916 A drawcht off wod to leid.
- 1528 in J. Raine *Testamenta Eboracensia* (1884) V. 260 To Smythson, for ledinge corne at Acclame, vjs. viijd.
- 1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 604/2 He was ledde thorowe the towne upon a hardell and so to the galowes.
- 1572 (▶a1500) *Taill of Rauf Coilzear* (1882) 597 Leidand Coillis he 3eid To Paris the way.
- 1594 *Acct.-bk. W. Wray* in *Antiquary* (1896) 32 55 For leding ij lodes of haye, xij^d.
- 1603 G. OWEN *Descr. Penbrokshire* (1891) 93 And being thus dried throwlie they [turfs] are led home and layed then vp.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *All's Well that ends Well* (1623) IV. iii. 270 Faith sir, ha's led the drumme before the English Tragedians.

- 1683 in J. Barmby *Churchwardens' Accts. Pittington* (1888) 341 For two load of lime and leading it, 5s.
- 1721 A. RAMSAY *Elegy Patie Birnie* v Tho' peats and turfs and a's to lead.
- 1799 J. ROBERTSON *Gen. View Agric. Perth* 195 In no case to reap when they ought to be leading in (housing) their grain.
- 1839 W. B. STONEHOUSE *Hist. Isle of Axholme* 43 One shilling a load is the price generally paid for leading a cart-load of warp.
- 1841 *Jrnl. Royal Agric. Soc.* 2 II. 191 He undertakes to convey (or lead, as the term is) all the materials for a new building.
- 1887 H. CAINE *Deemster* II. xvi. 14 Davy was sent for the pair of oxen to where they were leading manure.
- 1891 J. C. ATKINSON *Forty Years Moorland Parish* 64 The people of the farm in question..had been leading, that is, carting hay in a 'catchy' time.

†c. Of a natural agent, e.g. the wind: To carry. *Obs.*

- 1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (Rolls) 2023 He ariuede at souþ hamptone as þe wind hom adde ylad.
- a1300 *Cursor Mundi* 1805 Þe wind him ledd a-pon þe flodd.
- 1633 BP. J. HALL *Plaine Explic. Hard Texts* I. 606 Causing the clouds, to lead in store of raine.

d. To bring forward, adduce (testimony); to bring (an action). Now only in *Sc. Law*.

- a1400 (►a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 16278 Quat mister es o wijtnessing again him for to lede?
- 1503 in J. Stuart *Extracts Council Reg. Aberdeen* (1844) I. 430 The richtis, ressonis and allegacionis of batht the said parties,..led, herde, sene and understandin.
- a1525 (►c1448) R. HOLLAND *Bk. Howlat* l. 224 in W. A. Craigie *Asloan MS* (1925) II. 101 The crovss capone..Was officiale but less yat ye law leidis.
- 1564 *Warrant* in D. H. Fleming *Mary Q. of Scots* (1897) 494 Forsamekill as thair wes ane proces of forfaltoure led aganis Mathew sumtyme Erle Leuenax [etc.].
- 1637 S. RUTHERFORD *Lett.* (1863) I. 379 A process leading ags^t. my guiltiness.
- 1831 W. HAMILTON in *Edinb. Rev.* Mar. 203 No evidence has yet been led to show.
- 1884 *Law Rep.: Appeal Cases* 9 251 His wife..obtained..a judicial declaration that he had..forfeited his right to lead the proof allowed him and she then led a proof in absence.
- 1887 *Scotsman* 19 Mar. Proof was led to-day in this action of separation and aliment.

2.

a. To accompany and show the way to; to conduct, guide, *esp.* to direct or guide by going on in advance; to cause to follow in one's path. Often with advs., *astray, away, forth, in, on, out, up*, etc.

In early examples apparently merely a contextual use of sense 1.

- a900 *Martyrol.* 26 in *Old Eng. Texts* 178 Mine englas ðec lædað in ða hiofonlican Hierusalem.
- 971 *Blickl. Hom.* 27 He hine lædde upon swiþe hea dune.
- c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 119 Monie þewas..ledað to deþe on ende þa þe heom duseliche folziað.
- ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 14468 Caym..ledde himm [Abæl] ut upp o þe feld.
- c1275 (þ?a1200) LA3AMON *Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 551 Brutus nom Ignogen & into scipe lædde [c1300 *Otho ladde*].
- a1300 *Cursor Mundi* 24620 Vnto þe tun þan i me ledd.
- a1325 (þc1250) *Gen. & Exod.* (1968) l. 3607 Go, led ðis folc.
- a1375 *William of Palerne* (1867) l. 2618 Þe werwolf hem ladde ouer mures & muntaynes.
- 1382 WYCLIF *Psalms* lxxvii[i]. 14 He ladde hem thennes in the cloude of the day.
- c1480 (þa1400) *St. Thais* 47 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) II. 216 Þane til a chawmir scho hym lede mare priue.
- 1509 S. HAWES *Pastime of Pleasure* (1845) xxxviii. 196 The gentle porteres..on my way then me lede.
- 1570 in J. Cranstoun *Satirical Poems Reformation* (1891) I. xvi. 51 Bot he will leid him in the myre Thocht he hecht to defend him.
- 1572 (þa1500) *Taill of Rauf Coilþear* (1882) 265 To ane preuie Chalmer beliuie thay him led.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Measure for Measure* (1623) III. i. 312 How now noble Pompey? What, at the wheels of Cæsar? Art thou led in triumph?
- 1667 MILTON *Paradise Lost* XII. 309 Therefore shall not Moses..his people into Canaan lead .
- 1711 J. ADDISON *Spectator* No. 321. ¶9 Satan is afterwards led away to Gabriel.
- 1742 E. YOUNG *Complaint: Night the First* 5 O lead my Mind,..Lead it thro' various scenes of Life.
- 1847 H. ROGERS *Ess.* (1860) III. 402 The criminal must be led back by the same road by which he has been led astray.
- 1877 C. M. YONGE *Cameos* cxxxiv, in *Monthly Packet* Mar. 207 He was led into the chamber of presence.

b. Of motives, conditions, circumstances: To guide, direct to a place.

- a1400 (þa1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 20386 Sais me quat has you hider ledde.
- 1821 J. CLARE *Village Minstrel* II. 44 It was a happy hour That led me up to Barnack hill.
- 1861 *Temple Bar* 1 467 Chance led him to Basil.
- 1892 *Eng. Illustr. Mag.* 9 867 Instinct early led him into the political arena.

c. Of a clue, light, sound, etc.: To serve (a person) as an indication of the way; to mark the course for. Also absol. *to lead in* (*Naut.*): to mark the course for entering port.

- 1697 DRYDEN tr. Virgil *Georgics* IV, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 129 By the tinkling Sound of Timbrels led, The King of Heav'n in Cretan Caves they fed.
- 1824 T. CAMPBELL *Theodric* 185 Led by that clue, he left not England's shore Till he had known her.
- 1834 J. H. NEWMAN in *Brit. Mag.* Feb. 153 Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom, Lead Thou

me on!

1860 *Mercantile Marine Mag.* 7 316 The two latter Lights *in line* lead in.

d. absol., chiefly in figurative contexts.

1580 SIR P. SIDNEY tr. *Psalmes David* I. i He blessed is who..[never] loosely treads The straying steps as wicked council leads.

c1614 W. MURE tr. Virgil *Dido & Æneas* I. in *Wks.* (1898) I. 89 Quhair ever thou dost leid We follow the.

a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Henry VI, Pt. 3* (1623) III. i. 98 We charge you..To go with vs vnto the Officers. *King*. In Gods name lead.

a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Othello* (1622) I. i. 183 Pray leade me on.

1624 F. QUARLES *Iob Militant* xvi. 30 My lips shall tread That ground..as Truth shall leade.

1836 J. H. NEWMAN et al. *Lyra Apost.* 111 Into God's Word..Thou leadest on and on.

1863 C. C. CLARKE *Shakespeare-characters* xvi. 390 [They] who desire to lead, must at all events make a show of following.

e. to lead the way: †(a) with personal obj., to guide, show the way to (*obs.*); (b) in later use (influenced by sense 13), to go in advance of others, take the lead in an expedition or course of action.

?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 3465 & te3re steorne wass wiþþ hemm To ledenn hemm þe we33e.

c1480 (†a1400) *St. Paul* 203 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) I. 35 Þe quhilkis ledand hym þe way, praide hym [etc.].

a1593 MARLOWE *Edward II* (1594) sig. E Lead on the way.

1599 H. PORTER *Angry Women Abington* (Percy Soc.) 90 Lead thou the way, and let me hold by thee.

1623 SHAKESPEARE & J. FLETCHER *Henry VIII* v. iv. 72 Lead the way Lords.

1697 DRYDEN tr. Virgil *Georgics* III, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 100 The first to lead the Way, to tempt the Flood.

1709 M. PRIOR *Ode to Col. Villiers* in *Poems* (1905) 122 And in their various Turns the Sons must tread Those gloomy Journeys, which their Sires have led.

1770 O. GOLDSMITH *Deserted Village* 170 He..allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

1832 H. MARTINEAU *Ireland* ii. 22 Dora..led the way..in an opposite direction.

1847 F. MARRYAT *Children of New Forest* I. vii. 115 I can manage it, Humphrey, so lead the way.

1874 J. R. GREEN *Short Hist. Eng. People* ii. §6. 89 In the silent growth and elevation of the English people the boroughs led the way.

f. To aim in advance of.

1892 W. W. GREENER *Breech-loader* 267 Theoretically it is correct to lead a quartering pigeon from five to seven feet.

1968 D. HAMILTON *Menacers* xxii. 176 I led him by roughly two feet and pressed the trigger of the Luger.

g. Coll. phr. **lead me to** (something previously mentioned), expressing the ability to perform or a desire to comply, or merely expressing eager assent.

1929 W. E. MILLER *To you I tell It* 107 'How wood you like to urn a piece of jack?' 'Leed me to it,' says Figgars. 'What's the propozishion?'

1934 D. L. SAYERS *Nine Tailors* IV. 307 'Can you ride a motor-bike?' 'Lead me to it, guv'nor!'

1938 D. SMITH *Dear Octopus* II. iii. 90 Lead me to that whiskey.

h. **to lead with one's chin** (*Boxing slang*), to 'stick one's neck out', to leave oneself unprotected; *fig.*, to behave or speak incautiously.

1949 E. S. GARDNER in *Argosy* Apr. 110/3 Let him lead with his chin. We'll work undercover.

1954 F. C. AVIS *Boxing Ref. Dict.* Lead with chin, to have a very bad stance or guard.

1968 *Listener* 18 Jan. 78/2 I thought it was a good idea to say that I was prejudiced to begin with, to lead with my chin.

1973 A. MACVICAR *Painted Doll Affair* i. 19 Don't go leading with your chin, Bruce.

3. Of a commander: To march at the head of and direct the movement of. Also with *on*. †Also to conduct (warfare) = Latin *ducere bellum*.

a900 *Anglo-Saxon Chron.* an. 827 (Parker MS.) Se Ecgbryht lædde fierd to Dore wiþ Norþan hymbre.

a1375 *William of Palerne* (1867) l. 1609 Wiþ þe clenest cumpanye þat euer king ladde.

1488 (►c1478) HARY *Actis & Deidis Schir William Wallace* (Adv.) (1968–9) VII. l. 1171 Hew Kercyngayme the wantgard ledis he.

a1500 (►1422) J. YONGE tr. *Secreta Secret.* (Rawl.) (1898) 154 Where ben tho that ladd the grete hostes?

1508 *Golagros & Gawane* (Chepman & Myllar) sig. bvi The thrid heght schir bantellas the batal to leid.

1513 G. DOUGLAS tr. Virgil *Æneid* XI. iii. 28 Ne na weirfair with þour pepill leid I.

1596 J. DALRYMPLE tr. J. Leslie *Hist. Scotl.* (1888) I. 332 He leidis ane armie till Northumbirland.

a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* (1623) v. vi. 4 You (worthy Vnkle) Shall..Leade our first Battell.

1736 T. LEDIARD *Life Marlborough* II. 267 The Prince..led them on with great Gallantry.

1821 R. TURNER *Arts & Sci.* (ed. 18) 188 Many thousands of them [elephants] have at once been led to battle.

1847 F. MARRYAT *Children of New Forest* I. iv. 71 He longed..to lead his men on to victory.

absol.

- c1420 *Anturs of Arth.* (Douce) 397 Withe a launce one loft þat louely cone lede.
 1591 H. SAVILE tr. Tacitus *Life Agricola* in *Ende of Nero: Fower Bks. Hist.* 253 The army..cried to leade into Caledonia.
 1623 J. BINGHAM tr. Xenophon *Hist.* 10 Cyrus..told them, that his purpose was to lead against the great King.
 1791 W. COWPER tr. Homer *Iliad* in *Iliad & Odyssey* I. IV. 430 Go therefore thou, Lead on.

4.

a. To go before or alongside and guide by direct or indirect contact; to conduct (a person) by holding the hand or some part of the body or clothing, (an animal) by means of a cord, halter, bridle, etc. Const. *by* (the hand, etc.). Also with advs. *away, in, off, on, out, up and down*, etc. **to lead apes (in hell)**: see APE *n.* 6.

- 971 *Blickl. Hom.* 71 His þegnas..læddon him to þone eosol.
 c1000 *West Saxon Gospels: Matt.* (Corpus Cambr.) xv. 14 Se blinda gyf he blindne læt hig feallað begen on ænne pytt.
 c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 111 Þet mon..sarine frefrað oðer blindne let.
 c1330 (þ?a1300) *Sir Tristrem* (1886) l. 446 Tristrem hunters seiþe ride, Les of houndes þai ledde.
 c1420 *Anturs of Arth.* 447 His stede was sone stabillede, and lede to þe stalle.
 1470–85 MALORY *Morte d'Arthur* I. xlix The brachet was mine that the Knight lad away.
 c1480 (þa1400) *St. George* 274 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) II. 184 Ta þi belt, & hyme [sc. a dragon] lede, & about his hals knyt it sone.
 þ?a1513 W. DUNBAR *Poems* (1998) I. 137 That ane blynde man is led furth be ane vther.
 þ?a1513 W. DUNBAR *Poems* (1998) I. 39 His fa sum be the oxtar ledis.
 1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 604/2 Lede my horse, I praye you, up and downe.
 1590 SPENSER *Faerie Queene* I. I. sig. A3^v A milkewhite lambe she lad.
 1614 A. GORGES tr. Lucan *Pharsalia* I. 37 Then doth he take a faire large bull..And him vnto the Altar leades.
 1766 O. GOLDSMITH *Vicar of Wakefield* II. iv. 69 The captive soldier was led forth.
 1813 *Sketches of Character* (ed. 2) I. 29 [She] returned, leading in a lovely little girl.
 1830 TENNYSON *Ode to Memory* iii, in *Poems* 60 In sweet dreams..Thou leddest by the hand thine infant Hope.
 1862 *Temple Bar* 4 252 The chestnut..was led off to the stable.

b. to lead (a bride) to the altar, to church (†also simply: ? after Latin *ducere*): To marry.

- 1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 604/2 I lede a bride to churche, *je mayne*.
 1700 DRYDEN tr. Ovid *Twelfth Bk. Metamorphoses* in *Fables* 429 He had either led Thy Mother then; or was by Promise ty'd.
 1812 W. S. LANDOR *Count Julian* v. iii. 5 He leads her to the altar, to the throne.

1842 TENNYSON *Lord of Burleigh* in *Poems* (new ed.) II. 201 He..leads her to the village altar.

c. fig. (a) In opposition to *drive*: To guide by persuasion as contrasted with commands or threats. (b) **to lead by the nose** (for the allusion cf. quot. a1616): to cause to obey submissively. Also †**to lead by the sleeve**.

c1425 LYDGATE *Assembly of Gods* 1680 How false idolatry ledeth hem by the sleue.

1583 A. GOLDING tr. J. Calvin *Serm. on Deuteronomie* cxxi. 745 Men..suffer themselues to bee led by the noses like brute beasts.

1589 G. PUTTENHAM *Arte Eng. Poesie* III. xxiv. 246 Princes may be lead but not driuen.

a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Othello* (1622) I. iii. 393 The Moore..will as tenderly be led bit'h nose—as Asses are.

1631 in S. R. Gardiner *Rep. Cases Star Chamber & High Comm.* (1886) 20 You shall meete with ignorant Juryes, your duty is to open their eyes, you may not leade them by the nose.

1749 T. SMOLLETT tr. A. R. Le Sage *Gil Blas* III. VII. xii. 77 They [sc. the great] have favourite domestics, who lead them by the nose.

1856 C. KINGSLEY *Plays & Puritans* 211 A mob of fools and knaves, led by the nose in each generation by a few arch-fools and arch-knaves.

1862 *Temple Bar* 4 167 She might be led, but would not be driven.

d. intr. (quasi-pass.). To be led; to submit to being led.

1607 G. MARKHAM *Cavelarice* I. 75 Till hee be so tame..that he will leade vppe and downe quietlye.

1821 SCOTT *Pirate* II. xi. 277 My master may lead, but he winna drive.

1887 I. RANDALL *Lady's Ranche Life Montana* 148 In the morning the pupils [colts] have learnt their lesson, and will lead anywhere.

5. To guide with reference to action or opinion; to bring by persuasion or counsel *to* or *into* a condition; to conduct by argument or representation *to* a conclusion; to induce *to* do something. Said both of persons and motives, circumstances, evidence, etc.

a1225 *Leg. Kath.* 261 Þe feont..leadeð [men] to unbileau.

a1300 *Cursor Mundi* 26696 He said þar-till his wijf him ledde.

c1330 *Spec. Gy Warw.* 62 Þe world þurw his foule gile Haþ me lad to longe while.

c1380 WYCLIF *Sel. Wks.* III. 445 Herby bene man lad in to fendus temptacioun.

a1500 (►1422) J. YONGE tr. *Secreta Secret.* (Rawl.) (1898) 217 Al accordid, that kynde lad the chyldre that to done.

a1538 T. STARKEY *Dial. Pole & Lupset* (1989) 21 The wyl of man ever commynly folowyth that to the wych opynyon..ledyth hyt.

1588 LD. HUNSDON *Let.* 23 Jan. in *Border Papers* (1894) I. 307 Sondrie cawses..leades me greatlie to

- mistrust the Kinges good meaning towards her Majesty.
- a1605 A. MONTGOMERIE *Devotional Poems* in *Poems* (1910) iii. 26 To lyf that leddie sall the leidd.
- 1611 M. SMITH in *Bible* (King James) Transl. Pref. 1 Bruit-beasts led with sensualitie.
- 1651 T. HOBBS *Leviathan* II. xxx. 177 They ought not to be led with admiration of the vertue [etc.].
- 1711 J. ADDISON *Spectator* No. 40. ¶1 This Errour they have been led into by a ridiculous Doctrine in modern Criticism.
- 1736 BP. J. BUTLER *Analogy of Relig.* Introd. p. viii Our whole Nature leads us to ascribe all moral Perfection to God.
- 1859 J. RUSKIN *Two Paths* App. i. 254 Tintoret..may lead you wrong if you don't understand him.
- 1861 M. PATTISON in *Westm. Rev.* 19 411 Edward's foreign policy led him to draw closer the ties which connected our country with Germany.
- 1871 B. STEWART *Heat* (ed. 2) §239 In studying the radiation of gases we are led to some very peculiar laws.
- 1885 *Law Rep.: Chancery Div.* 29 479 There was nothing in the prospectus to lead him to such a conclusion.
- 1888 H. F. LESTER *Hartas Maturin* II. vi. 122 She knew the colonel was easily led.
- absol.*
- 1597 BACON *Of Coulers Good & Euill* (Arb.) 138 Besides their power to alter the nature of the subject in appearance, and so leade to error.

6.

a. Of a way, road, etc.: To serve as a passage for, conduct (a person) to or into a place. Hence *absol.* or *intr.*, to have a specified goal or direction. Cf. Latin *via ducit in urbem*. Often in fig. contexts.

- a1200 *Moral Ode* 337 Læte we..þe wei bene þe lat þe niȝeðe del to helle of manne.
- ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 12917 Forr þiss lamb iss þatt rihhte stih þatt ledeþþ upp till heffne.
- 1340 *Ayenbite* (1866) 165 Þet is þe way þet let in-to þe helle of god.
- 1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) Matt. vii. 14 How streit is the ȝate and narewe the weye that ledith to lyf.
- c1480 (Þa1400) *St. Mary of Egypt* 843 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) I. 320 Gyf he..wald kene me þe gat, þat mycht me led to þe flume Iordane.
- 1509 in S. Tymms *Wills & Inventories Bury St. Edmunds* (1850) 112 Y^e hygheway..ledyng toward Ipswych.
- 1526 W. BONDE *Pylgrimage of Perfection* I. sig. Dvii^v Yet both entendeth to go the iourney that ledeth to the hye Ierusalem.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Measure for Measure* (1623) IV. i. 32 A little doore, Which from the Vineyard to the Garden leades .
- 1621 M. WROTH *Countesse of Mountgomeries Urania* 452 The way of necessity leading me to follow my disdainer.
- 1710 R. STEELE *Tatler* No. 194. ¶2 There was a single Bridge that led into the Island.
- 1720 J. OZELL et al. tr. R. A. de Vertot *Hist. Revol. Rom. Republic* II. IX. 48 There were but two Ways that led equally to all the Dignities of the Republick.

- 1780 A. YOUNG *Tour Ireland* I. 288 The end of the lake at your feet is formed by the root of Mangerton, on whose side the road leads.
- 1791 A. RADCLIFFE *Romance of Forest* I. ii. 58 La Motte ascended the stairs that led to the tower.
- 1821 J. CLARE *Village Minstrel* I. 122 My rambles led me to a gipsy's camp.
- 1861 *Temple Bar* 2 547 Broad steps lead down into a garden.
- 1884 J. COLBORNE *With Hicks Pasha* 69 Then comes the eternal arid plain leading to the barren hills.
- 1889 C. SMITH *Repentance Paul Wentworth* I. ix. 187 Their road..led them through a little copse.

b. intr. To form a channel *into*, a connecting link *to* (something).

- 1833 *Act 3 & 4 William IV* c. 46 §95 One waste or foul water pipe..to communicate with any drain..leading into a common sewer.
- 1851 *Official Descriptive & Illustr. Catal. Great Exhib. II.* 361 Motion is..communicated to the rudder by means of two connecting rods leading to the tiller.

c. intr. to lead to: to have as a result or consequence.

- a1770 J. JORTIN *Serm.* (1771) IV. vi. 119 Pride seldom leads to truth in points of morality.
- 1845 S. AUSTIN tr. L. von Ranke *Hist. Reformation in Germany* (ed. 2) I. 277 The general disapprobation excited by the church on such weighty points, naturally led to a discussion of its other abuses.
- 1861 M. PATTISON in *Westm. Rev.* 19 412 Several seizures of English cargoes led to reprisals on our part; reprisals led to a naval war.
- 1864 J. BRYCE *Holy Rom. Empire* ii. 18 The victory of Tolbiac led to the submission of the Alemanni.
- 1885 *Manch. Examiner* 8 July 5/3 Mr. Beecher's former opinion that smoking leads to drinking.

7. to lead (a person) a dance: *transf.* and *fig.*, to put to the trouble of hurrying from place to place; hence, to compel to go through a course of irksome action. **to lead (a person) a chase:** lit. to give (a pursuer) trouble by one's speed or circuitous course; also *fig.* Also (by association with sense 12) **to lead a person a life.**

- a1545 *Deth Edwarde IV* in J. Skelton *Certayne Bks.* (c1563) 29 She [sc. Fortune] toke me by the hand and led me a daunce.
- 1599 H. PORTER *Angry Women Abington* III. ii I pray God, they may..both be led a dark dance in the night!
- 1607 T. HEYWOOD *Woman Kilde with Kindnesse* sig. A4 Thats the dance her Husband meanes to leade her.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *All's Well that ends Well* (1623) II. iii. 44 Why he's able to leade her a Carranto.
- 1711 J. ADDISON *Spectator* No. 89. ¶2 You know..my Passion for Mrs. Martha, and what a Dance she has led me.

- 1715 D. DEFOE *Family Instructor* I. i. iv. 91 I'll lead her such a Life she shall have little Comfort of me.
- 1850 A. JAMESON *Legends Monastic Orders* 70 They led St. Guthlac such a life, that [etc.].
- 1861 *Temple Bar* 4 53 He..often leads them a fine chace over hill and dale.
- 1883 G. M. FENN *Middy & Ensign* xvii. 107 The chaps would lead him such a life.
- 1892 *Cornhill Mag.* July 15 How can the captain so forget himself as to lead them a paper chase?
- 1892 *Sunday Mag.* Aug. 509/2 She had led him the life of a dog.

8. With an inanimate thing as object.

a. To conduct (water, *occasionally* steam) through a channel or pipe.

Cf. Latin *aquam ducere*. Also with *away, forth, off, out*.

- c1275 (†?a1200) LA3AMON *Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 7961 Þis wæter wes al ilæde [c1300 *Otho* was a-way idon].
- †a1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Douce 369(1)) (1850) Prov. v. 16 Ben lad out thi wellis withoute forth.
- 1842 *Jrnl. Royal Agric. Soc.* 3 II. 273 Deep beds of peat, from which the water has been led off by open drains.
- 1865 *Jrnl. Royal Agric. Soc.* 2nd Ser. 1 II. 276 Water may be led away from a hill~side and form a perennial stream of the greatest value.
- 1892 *Chambers's Jrnl.* 4 June 360/1 A dam and shoot were constructed..to lead the water away faster.
- 1893 *Chambers's Jrnl.* 28 Jan. 61/1 The steam..being led by a bamboo pipe to other vessels.

b. To guide the course or direction of (something flexible); †to train (a vine), †to trace (a line, a boundary); to draw or pass (a rope, etc.) *over* a pulley, *through* a hole, etc.

- c1050 in Thorpe *Dipl. Angl.* 376 Þa ilcan þe him ær landgemære læddon.
- 1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomew de Glanville *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (1495) xvii. clxxvii. 719 Vynes mow be lad wyth rayllynge aboute houses and townes.
- 1607 E. TOPSELL *Hist. Fovre-footed Beastes* 569 The nose is blackish, a line being softly led through the length, and onely through the top of the outside thereof.
- 1669 S. STURMY *Mariners Mag.* v. 3 Ten small sticks, which let him that leadeth the Chain, carry in his Hand before.
- 1834 J. S. MACAULAY *Treat. Field Fortification* 204 A charge is laid on the floor..and it is fired with a hose led outside.
- 1841 J. T. J. HEWLETT *Parish Clerk* I. 79 Bleed and blister, lead a mane, dock a tail.
- 1869 C. BOUTELL tr. J. P. Lacombe *Arms & Armour* viii. 142 System of pulleys, over which strong cords are led.
- 1876 W. H. PREECE & J. SIVEWRIGHT *Telegraphy* 37 The insulated wire..is led up through the copper sulphate.
- 1885 R. BRIDGES *Eros & Psyche* I. xxv. 11 Olive-bordered clouds o'er lilac led.
- 1892 *Longman's Mag.* Nov. 88 Ropes..led through blocks fixed to stakes.

c. *Naut. intr.* Of a rope: To admit of being 'led'.

c1860 H. STUART *Novices or Young Seaman's Catech.* (rev. ed.) 38 The reef tackle leads through the upper sheave of the sister block.

1867 W. H. SMYTH & E. BELCHER *Sailor's Word-bk.* *Fair-lead*, is applied to ropes as suffering the least friction in a block, when they are said to lead fair.

†**d.** To guide, steer (a boat); to guide, drive (a carriage; cf. French *conduire*); to guide (a pen). *Obs.*

1377 LANGLAND *Piers Plowman* B. II. 179 Cartesadel the comissarie owre carte shal he lede.

c1380 *Eng. Wycliffite Serm.* in *Sel. Wks.* I. 12 Lede þe boot into þe hey see.

c1384 CHAUCER *Hous of Fame* II. 434 Pheton, wolde lede Algate his fader carte, and gye.

1430 LYDGATE tr. Bochas *Fall of Princes* (1554) v. vii. 127 To holde the plough and lede it with his hond.

1484 CAXTON tr. *Subtyl Historyes & Fables Esope* II. xvi Of a carter whiche ladde a Charyot or carte whiche a Mule drewe forthe.

1552 H. LATIMER *Serm. St. Andrew's Day* (1584) 241 Our Saviour..saith to Peter, *Duc in altum*—Lead thy boate into the deepe.

1567 in J. Cranstoun *Satirical Poems Reformation* (1891) I. iii. 49 With Romaine hand he could weill leid ane pen.

e. In literalisms of translation; = Latin *ducere* and its compounds.

1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) Exod. xxvi. 37 Fyue pilers..before the whiche shal the tente be lad.

1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) Ezek. v. 1 Take to thee..rasour, shauynge heeris;..thou shalt lede it bi thin heed, and bi thi beard.

1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) Mark xiv. 47 Oon of men stondinge aboute, leding out a swerd, smot the seruaunt of the hijeste prest.

†**f.** To multiply (a number *into* another). *Obs.*

c1430 *Art Nombryng* (1922) 15 Lede the rote of o quadrat into the roote of the oþer quadrat, and þan wolle the meene shew.

c1430 *Art Nombryng* (1922) 17 A digit, the whiche lade in hymself cubikly [etc.].

†**g.**

a. To conduct (affairs); to manage, govern.

?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 17238 To ledenn. a. þe bodiȝ rihht All affterr godess lare.

c1320 *Cast. Love* 306 Wiþ-ouuten þeos foure wiþ worschipe Mai no Kyng lede gret lordschipe.

- ?a1366 *Romaunt Rose* 400 She had no-thing hir-self to lede..More than a child of two yeer olde.
- 1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomew de Glanville *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (1495) l. 2 This game rule and lede And bringe it to a good ende.
- a1400 (▶a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 4256 Pan was ioseph bath luued and dred, Wit wisdom al his werkes ledd.
- 1489 (▶a1380) J. BARBOUR *Bruce* (Adv.) l. 38 Alexander ye king..Yat Scotland haid to steyr and leid.
- 1508 *Golagros & Gawane* (Chepman & Myllar) sig. aii^v Ask leif at the lord yone landis suld leid.
- 1567 *Compend. Bk. Godly Songs* (1897) 41 Gif thai heir not the Law, quhilk suld thame leide Than sall thay not in ony wayis beleif.

absol.

- a1300 *Cursor Mundi* 28277 Maister o childer i was sum-square, I ledd nocht lele wit my lare.
- 1579 SPENSER *Shepheardes Cal.* July 185 For shepeheardes (sayd he) there doen leade, As Lordes done other where.

†**b. refl.** To conduct oneself, behave, act. *Obs.*

- ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 1246 3iff þu þe ledesst all wiþþ skill.
- a1325 (▶c1250) *Gen. & Exod.* (1968) l. 2301 Hu he sulden hem best leden.
- a1400 (▶a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 8470 Hu þat he agh him for to lede.
- c1480 (▶a1400) *St. Theodora* 833 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) II. 123 In vertuise..he..sa can hyme-selfe leyde þat..þai..mad hyme abbot.

†**10.** To deal with, treat (cf. *GUIDE v.* 5). In pa. pple.: Circumstanced, situated, in such and such a condition.

- a1225 *Leg. Kath.* 624 Hu me ham walde þreatin ant leaden unlabeled.
- c1275 (▶a1200) LA3AMON *Brut* (Calig.) (1978) l. 13832 Þer weoren Rom-leoden reoulliche. iledde.
- c1275 (▶a1200) LA3AMON *Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 4352 Heo weoren swiðe uuele ilæd [c1300 *Otho bi-lad*].
- 1362 LANGLAND *Piers Plowman A.* III. 154 Heo ledeth the lawe as hire luste.
- a1400 (▶a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Trin. Cambr.) l. 13787 For so in sekenes am I-lad [*Vesp.* i stadd] Þat I ne may to þat watir wyne.
- 1490 CAXTON tr. *Foure Sonnes of Aymon* (1885) iii. 81 Thise glotons that leden our folke so cursedly.
- a1500 (▶c1450) *Merlin* (1899) xx. 331 Whan he saugh the kyng Rion so euell I-ledde, it a-noyed hym sore.

II. To carry on.

†**11.** To engage or take part in, to perform (dances, songs), to utter (joyful or mournful) sounds. Cf. Latin *ducere carmen, choros*, German *die reihen führen*. *Obs.*

A different sense of *to lead a dance* appears under sense 13.

- OE *Andreas* (1932) 1477 Ac wæs eft swa ær þurh þa æðelan miht lof lædende, ond on his lice trum.
- a1300 *Cursor Mundi* 28147 Caroles, iolites, and plaies, Ic haue be-haldyn and ledde in ways.
- a1325 (†c1250) *Gen. & Exod.* (1968) l. 699 Of ðis kinge wil we leden song.
- c1325 *Coer de L.* 3739 The damyseles lede daunse.
- †a1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Douce 369(1)) (1850) Judith iii. 10 Ledende dauncis in trumpis and timbris.
- c1400 (†?c1390) *Sir Gawain & Green Knight* (1940) l. 1894 3et is þe lorde on þe launde, ledande his gomnes.
- 1490 CAXTON tr. *Four Sonnes of Aymon* (1885) xx. 446 I have seen Reynawd, Alard, guychard, & Rychard, ledyng grete ioye wyth grete company of knyghtes.
- 1493 *Festivall* (1515) 26 b Thou hast thyn armes spredde to lede karolles and daunces.

12.

a. To go through, pass (life, †a portion of time). Cf. Latin *ducere vitam*, Greek *ἀγειν βίον*, etc. Rarely, †To support life *by* (bread). †Also with *forth*.

- c900 tr. Bede *Eccl. Hist.* (1890) iv. xxviii. [xxvii.] 360 Se ær in medmyclum ealonde, þæt is Farne nemned, ancorlif lædde.
- a1000 *Boeth. Metr.* (Gr.) vii. 40 Forðon orsorg lif ealrig lædað woruldmæn wise buton wendinge.
- c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 89 God sette e þam israelisce folce hu heo sculden heore lif leaden.
- ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 9359 Þatt haffdenn ledd a33 þe33re lif. Affterr þe flæshess wille.
- ?a1366 *Romaunt Rose* 216 She..ladde hir lyf only by breed Kneden with eisel.
- 1393 LANGLAND *Piers Plowman* C. xvii. 18 That al here lyf leden in lowenesse and in pouerte.
- a1400 (†a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 13279 Wit þair fissing war þai fedd, And pouer liuelade þar-wit þai ledd.
- a1400 (†a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 4027 He ledd his liue wit-vten blam.
- c1425 *Seven Sag.* (P.) 232 To have another wyf, For to ledde with thy lif.
- 1523 LD. BERNERS tr. J. Froissart *Cronycles* I. xxiii. 32 Thus this lady ledde forth her lyfe ther mekely.
- 1569 J. ROGERS *Glasse Godly Love* 178 Very few leade lyves..according to the lawes of Christe.
- 1578 J. LYLY *Euphues* f. 83 He may at his leasure,..lead his Winter in Athens, his Summer in Naples, [etc.].
- 1612 H. PEACHAM *Minerua Britanna* l. 46 Heere sits Repentance, solitarie, sad,..As greewing for the life, that she hath lad.
- a1661 T. FULLER *Worthies* (1662) Chesh. 180 He led his old age in London.
- 1710 R. STEELE *Tatler* No. 166. ¶2 The Tastless Manner of Life, which a Set of idle Fellows lead in this Town.
- 1819 G. CRABBE *Tales of Hall* II. xii. 6 They led in comfort a domestic life.
- 1820 KEATS *Lamia* l, in *Lamia & Other Poems* 21 In Corinth..she..had led Days happy as [etc.].
- 1856 J. A. FROUDE *Hist. Eng.* (1858) I. i. 13 That no human being should be at liberty to lead at his own pleasure an unaccountable existence.

1873 R. BROWNING *Red Cotton Night-cap Country* III. 156 Do lead your own life and let ours alone!

†**b.** To pass through (pain, suffering); to bear, endure.

c1330 R. MANNYNG *Chron.* (1810) 15 Suffre not Sir Frethebald long to lede þis pyne.

a1400 (þa1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 15703 Þe strang soru þat he ledd can na man rede in run.

c1475 *Partenay* 3785 Non knew the sorow by thaim lade and bore.

a1500 (þ?a1400) *Sir Torrent of Portyngale* (1887) l. 1054 Yt ys wyll the worse to lede.

III. To precede, be foremost. (Cf. sense 2)

13.

a. To have the first place in; to march in the front line of; *lit.* and *fig.*
esp. in **to lead the dance** (see DANCE *n.* 6), **to lead the van**.

c1380 WYCLIF *Sel. Wks.* II. 360 Crist þat led þe daunce of love.

a1640 J. FLETCHER & P. MASSINGER *Customs of Countrey* II. i, in F. Beaumont & J. Fletcher *Comedies & Trag.* (1647) sig. Aa3^v/1 They heard your Lordship Was by the Ladies choise to lead the dance.

1697 DRYDEN tr. Virgil *Æneis* IX, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 465 Messapus leads the Van.

1697 DRYDEN tr. Virgil *Æneis* XI, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 565 Asylas leads the Chase.

1736 T. LEDIARD *Life Marlborough* I. 98 The Grenadiers led the Van.

1845 P. J. BAILEY *Festus* (ed. 2) 81 May our country ever lead The world, for she is worthiest.

1865 J. R. LOWELL *Wks.* (1890) V. 285 A commonwealth whose greatest sin it has been to lead the van in freedom of opinion.

1869 A. W. WARD tr. E. Curtius *Hist. Greece* II. III. iii. 478 In ancient times the *choregi* themselves led the chorus.

1884 *Graphic* 23 Aug. Your cousin Gordon and I. had led the van all the morning.

1893 *Harper's Mag.* Feb. 385/2 Of the causes..pneumonia led the list.

b. absol. To go first, to have the first place. Also with *off*.

1798 CAPT. MILLAR Aug. in Ld. Nelson *Disp. & Lett.* (1846) VII. p. cliv The Goliath was leading, the Zealous next.

1846 W. S. LANDOR *Imaginary Conversat.* in *Wks.* II. 228/1 The mounted slave..led off with his master's charger.

1892 *Sat. Rev.* 2 July 10/2 The boat..was leading by two hundred yards.

1900 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* June 789 The Admiral's frigate led.

fig.

1858 W. GREENER *Gunnery in 1858* 300 If we take thirty or thirty-five yards' distance as an average, the latter will not 'lead' in the race.

1891 *Pall Mall Gaz.* 20 Oct. 6/1 The small hats which are to lead for the coming season.

14. intr.**a. Music.** (See quot. 1880.)

1880 G. GROVE *Dict. Music* *Lead, to*, in fugues or imitative music, is to go off first with a point or subject, which is afterwards taken up by the other parts successively. Thus in the Amen Chorus in the Messiah the bass 'leads'.

b. Change-ringing. Of a bell: To have the 'lead' (see LEAD *n.*² 8a).

1671 *Tintinnalugia* 82 Every bell leads four times, and lies behind twice, except when [etc.].

15.

a. trans. To direct by one's example; to set (a fashion); to take the directing or principal part in (proceedings of any kind); to be chief of (a party, a movement); to have the official initiative in the proceedings of (a deliberative body).

1642 T. FULLER *Holy State* III. xxv. 228 They should rather lead a Fashion of thrift, than follow one of riot.

1697 J. HUMFREY *Righteousness God* I. 2 The Trent Doctrine (which is the perfect Papists) I must confess, is lead them by St. Austine.

1841 W. SPALDING *Italy & Ital. Islands* II. 266 The famous insurrection led by Masaniello.

1872 C. E. MAURICE *Life S. Langton* i. 22 The Abbot..helped to lead the movement.

1880 C. R. MARKHAM *Peruvian Bark* 335 The Government should retain the chinchona plantations, and continue to lead the cultivation.

1891 *Sat. Rev.* 31 Oct. 494/1 Disraeli still led the House of Commons.

1892 *Pall Mall Gaz.* 15 Sept. 7/1 He was able to lead the work himself.

1892 *Eng. Illustr. Mag.* 9 867 In conversation he seems rather to be led than to lead.

b. To take the directing part in (singing, a musical performance), to perform one's own part so as to guide the others; so **to lead a band**, **to lead an orchestra**. Similarly, **to lead the prayers** (of a congregation), **to lead (a congregation) in prayer**. Also *absol.*

1849 *Chambers's Information for People* (new ed.) II. 764/2 Sometimes a tenor voice will attempt to lead the trebles.

1859 G. A. LAWRENCE *Sword & Gown* v. 51 He is so very anxious to get Cecil to lead the singing in church.

1866 G. MACDONALD *Ann. Quiet Neighb.* (1878) xiii. 245 This fine old church in which I was honoured to lead the prayers of my people.

1880 G. SMITH *Cowper* iii. 41 Cowper himself was made to do violence to his intense shyness by

leading in prayer.

- 1883 G. M. FENN *Middy & Ensign* xxvi. 159 He..led the chorus, which was lustily trolled out by all present.
- 1891 *Graphic* 31 Oct. 518/3 He went to lead the orchestra at the concert.
- 1892 *Harper's Mag.* May 821/2 A woman..led the singing.

16. Of a barrister:

a. trans. To act as leading counsel in (a cause); to act as leader to (another barrister); to take precedence of.

- 1806 J. BERESFORD *Miseries Human Life* I. i. 12 Were I, however, employed to lead the cause on our side.
- 1883 J. H. SLATER *Guide Legal Prof.* 17 Queen's Counsel are usually termed 'Leaders', and they sit in front of the utter Barristers, whom they are said to 'lead' in any particular case in which both are engaged.
- 1884 *Law Times* 11 Oct. 384/1 It has been the practice of English Queen's Counsel to lead colonial Queen's Counsel in appeals before the Judicial Committee.

b. absol. or intr.

- 1861 TROLLOPE *Orley Farm* (1862) I. xxxiv. 268 Of course I must lead in defending her.

17. Cards.

a. intr. To play the first card in a round or trick. Also with *off*. Said also of the card. **to lead to or up to**: to play a card in order to bring out (cards held by another player). Also in *indirect pass*.

- 1677 G. MIEGE *New Dict. French & Eng.* II. sig. Dd4^v/1 To lead (in Cards), *jouër le premier*.
- 1728 E. CHAMBERS *Cycl.* at *Ombre* The three first, or principal Trumps, are call'd Matadores; which have this Privilege, that they are not obliged to attend an inferior Trump when it leads.
- 1742 E. HOYLE *Short Treat. Game Whist* 11 When you lead, begin with the best Suit in your Hand.
- 1863 'CAVENDISH' *Princ. Whist* (ed. 5) 75 You would often do better to..lead up to the weak suit of your right-hand adversary, or through the strong suit of your left-hand adversary.
- 1879 'CAVENDISH' *Card Ess.* 110 Lead originally from your strongest suit.
- 1879 'CAVENDISH' *Card Ess.* 165 He led off with his own strongest suit.
- 1892 *Field* 16 July 120/1 He was keeping his tenace to be led to.

b. trans. As first player, to play (a specified card); to play one of (a suit or a specified suit). Also with *out*.

- 1739 SWIFT *Verses on Death Dr. Swift: Nov.* 1731 12 I lead a Heart.

- 1742 E. HOYLE *Whist* (1763) 5 Let us suppose the right-hand Adversary leads a Suit.
- 1778 T. JONES *Hoyle's Games Improved* 90 Lead Punto.
- 1843 THACKERAY *Ravenswing* v, in *Fraser's Mag.* Aug. 189/1 You led the club.
- 1879 'CAVENDISH' *Card Ess.* 111 It is an excellent plan to lead out first one suit and then another.
- 1879 'CAVENDISH' *Card Ess.* 171 I led knave of diamonds..The club was then led through me.
- 1879 'CAVENDISH' *Card Ess.* 198 I led the king of trumps.
- 1891 *Field* 28 Nov. 843/1 He ought in any case to lead trumps.

PHRASAL VERBS

In idiomatic combination with adverbs. (For the non-specialized combinations, see the several senses and the advs.) **to lead away**

1. trans. To induce to follow unthinkingly. Chiefly in *pass.*: to yield to enthusiasm, to give credence to misrepresentation.

- 1736 T. LEDIARD *Life Marlborough* III. 163 Some Men are led away by the Spirit of Party.
- 1861 *Temple Bar* 2 395 Grace is easily led away.

2. Naut. to lead it away: to take one's course.

- 1720 D. DEFOE *Life Capt. Singleton* 225 We led it away, with the Wind large, to the Maldives.

to lead off

1. trans. To 'open', take the first steps in (a dance, a ball); hence *gen.* to begin, make a beginning in; to open (a conversation or discussion). Const. *with*.

- 1817 J. AUSTEN *Sanditon* vi, in *Minor Wks.* (1954) 389 Sir Edw: Denham & Miss Denham, whose names might be said to lead off the Season.
- 1847 *Punch* 27 Mar. 126/2 To lead off a list of Expiring Acts with one that is to live till the National Debt is paid off..is a delusion.
- 1881 E. LYNN LINTON *My Love!* I. xiii. 229 The twins leading off the family ball.
- 1890 A. GISSING *Village Hampden* II. iv. 66 The dance..was led off to the popular strains of the 'Keel-Row'.
- 1893 *Illustr. London News* 28 Jan. 109/2 A well-known dramatic critic led off the congratulations.

2. intr. or absol. Also with *to*.

- 1806 R. CUMBERLAND *Mem.* 18 On some occasions, she would persist in a determined taciturnity, to the regret of the company present; and at other times would lead off in her best manner.
- 1809 B. H. MALKIN tr. A. R. Le Sage *Adventures Gil Blas* I. III. v. 383 I led off with five or six coxcomical bows.
- 1862 *Temple Bar* 4 500 The primo tenore..leads off with 'Hard times no more'.
- 1882 R. L. STEVENSON *Familiar Stud. Men & Bks.* 267 A boy of fifteen to lead off with a lass of seventeen.
- 1893 *Harper's Mag.* Jan. 210/2 He led off with his companion in a sort of quickstep.
- 1911 *Chambers's Jrnl.* July 463/2 From these [wagons] rubber tubes protected by encircling wire lead off to each of the streets.

to lead on

1. trans. To induce gradually to advance; to entice or beguile into going to greater lengths.

- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1623) II. i. 91 Giue him a show of comfort in his Suit, and lead him on with a fine baited delay.
- 1833 J. KEBLE *Serm.* (1848) vi. 141 She will continually be led on from bad to worse.
- 1841 DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop* I. vi. 115 I've led her on to tell her secret.
- 1891 MRS. HENNIKER *Sir George* vi. 113 Don't pretend, now, you didn't encourage and lead me on.

2. intr. To direct conversation *to* a subject.

- 1891 F. W. ROBINSON *Her Love & his Life* III. VI. ix. 195 Mike led on to the one subject which engrossed him.

to lead out

1. trans. = *to lead off* at Phrasal verbs. Also, to conduct (a partner) to the dance.

- 1819 SCOTT *Bride of Lammermoor* viii, in *Tales of my Landlord* 3rd Ser. III. 115 The picture of auld Sir Malise Ravenswood came down on the ha' floor, and led out the brawl before them a'.
- 1859 C. READE *Love me Little* (1868) xiv. 190 The stable-boy..leading out one of the housemaids..proceeded to country dancing.

absol.

- 1776 S. J. PRATT *Pupil of Pleasure* (1777) I. 172 The soft things he said, while we led out.

2. intr. Of cattle: to set *out* when driven.

1903 A. ADAMS *Log of Cowboy* xx. 129 The cattle led out as if walking on a wager.

to lead through

Mountaineering. Said of two climbers: to act alternately as leaders (see quotes.). Hence **leading through** *n.*

1945 G. W. YOUNG *Mountain Craft* (ed. 4) v. 184 Nowadays, two such experts..make a practice of 'leading through': that is..the second man on reaching his leader climbs straight on past him and leads the next section.

1955 M. E. B. BANKS *Commando Climber* ix. 177 We were leading through, that is to say, one of us would climb a pitch and belay himself to the rock, whereupon the other would climb up to him and then continue beyond to lead the next pitch.

1970 A. BLACKSHAW *Mountaineering* (rev. ed.) v. 143 For experienced climbers two is the best number since this is quick and allows them to 'lead through'.

1970 A. BLACKSHAW *Mountaineering* (rev. ed.) xvii. 420 Leading through may not save as much time on alpine rock as it does on British rock.

to lead up**1. trans.** = *to lead off* at Phrasal verbs ? *Obs.*

1731 LADY M. W. MONTAGU *Farewell to Bath* in *Poems* v I've led up many a ball.

1753 S. RICHARDSON *Hist. Sir Charles Grandison* VI. xxvii. 166 What a frolic dance will she and her new husband, in a little while, lead up.

1766 O. GOLDSMITH *Vicar of Wakefield* I. ix. 82 Mr. Thornhill and my eldest daughter led up the ball.

1804 M. EDGEWORTH *Limerick Gloves* iii, in *Pop. Tales* I. 260 She did not object to her own Jenny's leading up the ball.

2. intr. to lead up to: to prepare gradually for: to form a gradual preparation for.

1861 *Temple Bar* 4 101 The circumstances which led up to the explosion of the..conspiracy.

1880 J. MCCARTHY *Hist. our Own Times* III. xlv. 381 Perhaps he had deliberately led up to this very point.

1892 B. F. WESTCOTT *Gospel of Life* Pref. 22 All earlier history leads up to the Incarnation.

1892 *Sat. Rev.* 2 Jan. 16/2 The harlequinade..is led up to by a tasteful transformation scene.

DRAFT ADDITIONS 1997

Boxing. To make an attacking punch; to make the first of a series of punches. Frequently const. *with*. Cf. LEAD *n.*² 5c.

- 1895 T. ROOSEVELT *Wks.* (1926) XIV. 205 If you are going to 'lead freely' you have got to 'take punishment', if you will allow me to speak in the language of those who box.
- 1927 D. HAMMETT in *Black Mask* Feb. 28/1 A paluka who leads with his right.
- 1935 *Encycl. Sports, Games & Pastimes* 105/1 When a beginner is directed by his instructor to lead to the body, it is no use his aiming a blow at his antagonist's chest.
- 1952 *Amat. Boxing* ('Know the Game' Ser.) 16/1 As he leads, parry his right towards your right with the left and then lead with a right swing to head or body.

DRAFT ADDITIONS 1997

Law. To ask (a witness) leading questions. Cf. sense *to lead on* 1 at Phrasal verbs below. Chiefly *U.S.*

- 1833 A. ALISON *Practice Criminal Law Scotl.* xiii. 545 Witnesses are to be examined without being led.
- 1899 *Southwestern Reporter* 50 124/1 It..enables the examiner to lead even an honest witness in such manner as to give to the testimony a false color.
- 1973 *Times* 17 Oct. 20/3 The police sergeant..was..slapped down by the clerk of the court for leading his witnesses.
- 1983 *Southern Reporter* (U.S.) CDXXXVI. 479/1 Ordinarily, leading questions are permitted on cross-examination, and the rule against leading one's own witness is relaxed.

DRAFT ADDITIONS 1997

a. trans. Sport. To be ahead of (another team or player) in terms of points, goals, etc. Usually const. *by*. Also *transf.*, to exceed or outnumber *by* a specified margin.

- 1877 *Spirit of Times* 24 Nov. 449/2 At 800 yards the Massachusetts men held steadily, Wemyss leading with 71, Jackson and Law 70.
- 1907 C. E. MULFORD *Bar-20* xi. 120 In this contest Hopalong Cassidy led his nearest rival..by twenty cut-outs.
- 1946 *Times* 26 June 2/3 The Dutch pair, after missing a set point when leading by six games to five,

finally secured the first set at 9–7.

1979 *Amer. Speech* 54 73 In another study..will led shall in frequency of occurrence by only 59 percent to 41 percent.

1989 *Daily Tel.* 6 July 35 (*heading*) Northants, with seven wickets standing, lead Kent by 90 runs.

b. intr. Of a newspaper or other journalistic media: to use a particular item as the main story. Const. †*upon, with*.

1907 *Daily Chron.* 5 Mar. 6/7 The case was of an entrancing subtlety;..and every newspaper 'led' upon the result.

1986 *Times* 23 July 16/6 For Princess Margaret's wedding *The Times*, under a notoriously uncourtierly editor, did not even lead with the story.

1990 A. GORDON *Safe at Home* iii. 14 There was nothing about the latest murder, which had been discovered after the morning edition deadline, but the 7:00 CBC Radio news led with it.

DRAFT ADDITIONS JUNE 2015

intr. Mountaineering and Rock Climbing. To climb in first place while being belayed, with the responsibility of ascending a route or pitch and of placing gear or protection, or of attaching a rope to preplaced gear.

Also *trans.*: to climb (a route, grade of route, etc.) in this way. Cf.

SECOND *v.*¹ 1e.

In *traditional climbing* or *trad climbing* the lead climber places the gear; in *sport climbing* the lead climber uses preplaced gear.

1899 *Climbers' Club Jrnl.* Feb. 104 The usual modesty about who has to lead is discussed and settled as the climb up the first pitch is completed.

1912 *Sc. Mountaineering Club Jrnl.* Feb. 26 Ling, who was leading, then strode over to a foothold, which gave an awkward position, but here..one had a really good belay.

1920 G. W. YOUNG *Mountain Craft* i. 40 To lead and choose the line is definitely more fatiguing than to follow.

1975 *Climber & Rambler* Apr. 154/1 At that time, 1955, you were regarded as pretty good if you could lead VS and the harder climbs were guarded by an aura of difficulty.

1989 *N.Y. Times* 31 Dec. SM43/1 I had tried leading it. I knew you had to totally commit to doing the moves, otherwise the chance of surviving would be minimal.

2008 A. RICHARDSON *Rock Climbing* (2009) 15 Learning to lead is exhilarating, yet daunting.

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