

# Declarer Play in a Suit Contract

Presenter/s

Date

# DECLARER PLAY IN SUITS - Count Winners

In a spade contract, how many winners are there between these two hands?

♠ KJT832

♥ A53

♦ K53

♣ 5

Declarer (West)

♠ AQ7

♥ K42

♦ A62

♣ JT98

Dummy (East)

<b>spades</b>	6
<b>hearts</b>	2, the ace and king
<b>diamonds</b>	2, the ace and king
<b>clubs</b>	0
<b>Total</b>	10

In a spade contract, how many losers are there here?

♠ KQJ98

♥ 985

♦ K

♣ K832

Declarer (West)

♠ T765

♥ KQJ

♦ 983

♣ AQ5

Dummy (East)

**spades** – 1, the ace

**hearts** – 1, the ace

**diamonds** – 1, because while there are 3 low cards in the East hand, West can ruff the second and third rounds

**clubs** – 1, unless there is still a trump in the East hand to ruff the fourth round

**Total = 4**

# DECLARER PLAY IN SUITS - Count Losers

**Contract – 4♥ by North**

Lead – ♣ K (top of touching honours)

**Assess the hand**

**Count winners & losers**

2♠ 5♥ 0♦ 1♣      1♠ 0♥ 2♦ 0♣

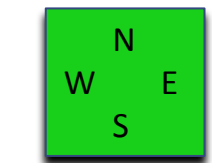
Total winners = 8 – 2 more needed

**Work suit – diamonds** Force out ♦ A

**Default setting in a suit contract is DRAW TRUMPS**

COUNT the cards in the trump suit so you KNOW if the opponents have any cards remaining in the trump suit

	♠ A K 4		
	♥ Q J T 3 2		
	♦ K J 4 2		
	♣ 6		
	14 HCP		
♠ Q T 8 7 5		♠ J 9	
♥ 9		♥ 8 7 6	
♦ A 8 7		♦ Q 9 6	
♣ J 7 3 2		♣ K Q T 8	
		5	
	♠ 6 3 2		
	♥ A K 5 4		
	♦ T 5 3		
	♣ A 9 4		
	11 HCP		



**Bidding**

<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>West</b>
1♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

# DECLARER PLAY IN SUITS - Count Losers

♠ 9 5 4 2  
 ♥ K Q J  
 ♦ K Q  
 ♣ A 8 7 6  
 15 HCP

♠ J 6  
 ♥ A T 7 6  
 ♦ J T 9 7 6  
 ♣ T 3



♠ T 3  
 ♥ 5 4 3 2  
 ♦ 8 5 4 3  
 ♣ K Q J

♠ A K Q 8 7  
 ♥ 9 8  
 ♦ A 2  
 ♣ 9 5 4 2  
 13 HCP

## Declarer Count your Losers

0 ♠ (but 1 if split 4:0) 1 ♥ 0 ♦ 3 ♣ = 4 maybe 5

## Declarer Count Winners

5 ♠ 0 ♥ 2 ♦ 1 ♣ = 8 (2 more needed)

**Work suit** is needed— Where? **Hearts!**

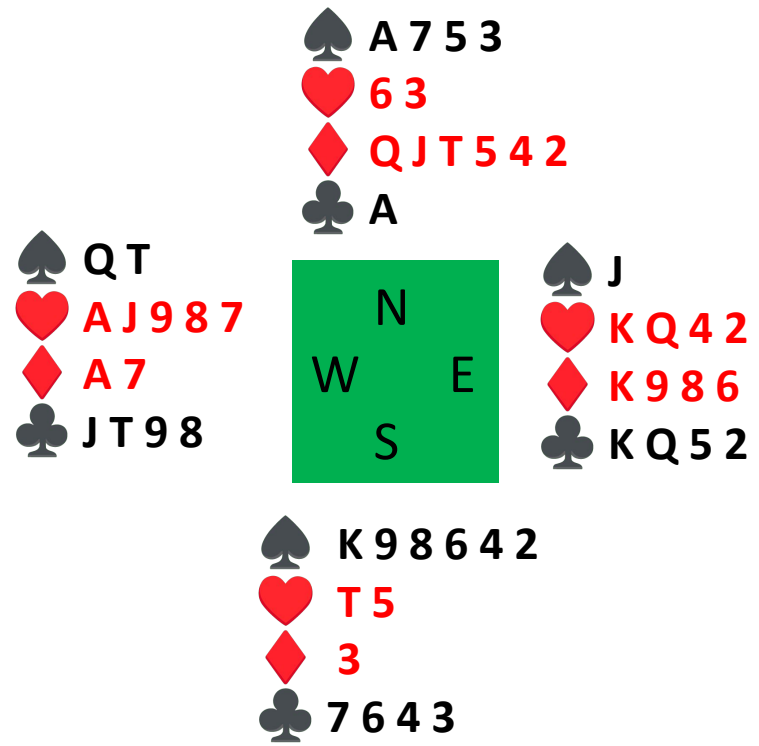
**Draw trumps - remember to count**

Force out the ♥A - now there are 2 winners.

Contract 4 ♠ by South

Lead - ♦ J by West

# DECLARER PLAY IN SUITS - Plan



**Contract** - 4♥ by West

**Work suit** – Clubs – Force out ♣A

**North's opening lead** – ♦Q, top of touching high cards

**Declarer's Plan** – draw trumps

Force out ♣A. Now there are 3 club winners

**Danger** – What happens if Declarer fails to draw trumps before playing clubs?

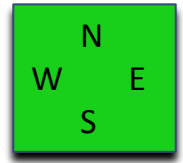
North will win the ♣A and continue with a second diamond which South can ruff 😞

# DECLARER PLAY IN SUITS - Ruff in the Short Hand

East is in 4♠  
Lead ♥ Q

♠ T  
♥ 7 5 4  
♦ A Q J 9 6  
♣ Q J T 8

♠ A Q 6 5  
♥ 8 3  
♦ K 5 4  
♣ A 5 4 2  
13 HCP



♠ K 7 4 3 2  
♥ A K 6 2  
♦ 8 3  
♣ K 6  
13 HCP

♠ J 9 8  
♥ Q J T 9  
♦ T 7 2  
♣ 9 7 3

**Winners:** 5♠ 2♥ 0♦ 2♣ - need another trick

**Losers:** 0♠ 2♥ 2♦ 0♣

Possible Options:

- try ♦ K finesse (50%)
- try ♦ ruff in East (does not add a trick)
- try ♥ ruff in West (need a trump left)

Best Option is the last (♥ ruff in West) - if it fails we can try ♦ K finesse anyway

- Win lead with ♥ K & draw trumps (split 3:1)
- Play ♥ A & then a 3rd ♥ & ruff in West with the remaining trump
- Later can try ♦ K finesse but fails

# DECLARER PLAY IN SUITS - Techniques

Draw Trumps  
 High from Short Side  
 Discarding a Loser on a Winner

**Contract - North playing in 4 ♠**

East - leads ♥Q

Winners: 5 ♠ 1 ♥ 3 ♦ 0 ♣ - need 10

Losers: 0 ♠ 0 ♥ 0 ♦ 3 maybe 4 ♣

Plan: Need to create 2 extra tricks & the length of diamonds looks promising

- 1 Win lead & draw trumps (how did they split?)
- 2 Play ♦ Q (high from the short side)
- 3 Play ♦ 3 to South's ♦ K - how did ♦ s split?
- 4 Play remaining ♦ s & discard ♣ s from North (discarding loser on a winner)
- 5 Now only have 2 losing ♣ s & can make 11 tricks

♠ K Q T 9 8  
 ♥ A  
 ♦ Q 5 3  
 ♣ K 9 7 5

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



♠ 7 6 5  
 ♥ Q J 8 7 6  
 ♦ 8 7  
 ♣ A T 2

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



## Recommended leads against **suit**

### GOOD LEADS

<b>AK83</b>	A from AKxx
<b>4</b>	Singleton (not trump)
<b>KQJ6</b>	K from KQJx
<b>KQ76</b>	K from KQxx
<b>QJ104</b>	Q from QJ10
<b>QJ52</b>	Q from QJxx
<b>83</b>	Top of xx doubleton

### POOR LEADS

<b>852</b>	High x from rubbish.
<b>Q952</b>	Low from Qxxx
<b>J4</b>	Honour top of doubleton
<b>K7532</b>	Low from Kxxxx
<b>KJ53</b>	Low from KJxx
<b>AT74</b>	Low from an A - <b>Don't</b>

- In a suit contract begin by counting **winners & losers**.
- When playing in a suit contract, declarer's first task is typically to "draw trumps" if it safe to do so
- If drawing trumps will exhaust one hand's trumps, there will be no trumps remaining to ruff losers. The ruffs will need to be taken before trumps are drawn
- Always count the trump suit. (Count remaining cards)
- On top of NT techniques (Promotion, Length & Finesse), now have two extra techniques (Ruffing in the Short Hand, Discard a Loser on a Winner)