Counting Tricks, Winners and Losers

How to Count Tricks	Example:			
Count the length of long suits then deduct 1 trick for each of the top 4 cards (Ace-Jack) that are missing.		♠	852	= 0 tricks
		♥	AKJT863	= 6 tricks (7 card suit, missing the Q = 6 tricks)
		♦	AK	= 2 Tricks
		♣	A	= 1 Trick
				9 Tricks Total

You count "**winners**" when you are playing NT. A "winner" is a card that will take a trick without giving up the lead to the opponents.

Exercise 7-1: How many winners are in each sequence?

N-Dummy	AKQ	A2	J9	KQ3	A8762	AJ	Q832	KQ
S-Declarer	982	Q9	AKQT5	J87	KQ543	KQ	K95	42
Answer								

You count "**losers**" when you are playing a suit contract. In a 4♠ contract you can only afford 3 losers; in a 6♥ contract, you can afford only one loser. Focus on the declarer's hand and then glance across the table to see if there is any help in the dummy.

Exercise 7-2: How many losers are in each sequence?

N-Dummy	KQ	KQ	QJT	xxxxx	AK	Kx	xxx	KJT
S-Declarer	A43	43	43	AK	xxxxx	xx	AQJ	872
Answer								

There are two types of losers: *quick* and *slow*. Quick losers are those that the opponents can take right away if they have the lead. Slow losers are those that the opponents cannot take right away.

Exercise 7-3: Decide how many losers there are in the following sequences and if they are quick or slow.

N-Dummy	*KQJ4	JT98	9862	A5	K64	Q43	K76	KQ5
S-Declarer	A98	5432	A5	9862	85	983	JT93	742
Answer								

When playing out a suit with honors on both sides, play high from the short side. In the * example above, the south hand has 3 cards and the north has 4. Lead the **A** first, playing the **4** from dummy, and then lead the **9** to the **K**. That way you will end up in the dummy to play the rest of your suit.

Exercise 7-4: Which card do you play first in order to play out the following suits?

#1		Answer	#2		Answer	#3		Answer
N	AQJT3		N	A4		N	AJ4	
S	K2		S	KQ5		S	KQ73	

Counting Tricks, Winners and Losers - *continued*

Exercise 7-5: East is the dealer. How does the bidding go and what is the final contract? Count the winners and decide how to play it.

♠	75
♥	732
♦	AQT63
♣	A82

♠	KQJT8		N		♠	943
♥	AT6				♥	QJ984
♦	97	W	→ E		♦	2
♣	T65		S		♣	J874

♠	A83
♥	K5
♦	KJ854
♣	KQ3

Exercise 7-6: South is the dealer. Bid, count the winners and play the hand.

♠	AQ
♥	864
♦	KJT8
♣	QT63

♠	JT9752		N		♠	K
♥	A73				♥	QJT92
♦	64	W	↓ E		♦	9532
♣	54		S		♣	972

♠	8643
♥	K5
♦	AQ7
♣	AKJ8