

DECLARER PLAY

ELIMINATE LOSERS Ruffing & Discarding

Bridge Lab

with the Mouros

When playing in a trump suit contract ~

Count Losers - Consider Winners - Make a Plan

What's a Loser?	Tricks the defenders can potentially win are losing tricks for the Declarer.
Make a Plan Winners vs. Losers?	The effect of the trump suit generally makes it easier to focus on losers rather than winners when making a plan.
Counting Losers Fast vs. Slow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> After the opening lead, look at each suit in turn in Declarer's hand (or the hand with long length in trump). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Count as losers the tricks in each suit the opponents may win. Tip: The number of losers in a side suit (a suit other than the trump suit) is limited to the number of cards in that suit held by Declarer.
FAST LOSERS	Tricks the opponents can take when they have the lead.
SLOW LOSERS	Tricks the opponents may be able to take at some point.

How many losers in these card combinations?

DUMMY DECLARER	8 7 5 4 A 2 = 1 Slow	K Q J 9 4 2 = 1 Fast	Q 4 A K 3 = 0	K 3 8 6 = 2 Fast	Q 10 4 J 6 3 = 2 Fast	J 8 9 7 2 = 3 Fast
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Techniques to Eliminate Losers

1	Ruff Losers in Dummy (the hand with the short length in trump). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for an <i>unevenly</i> divided side suit with fewer cards in Dummy. Keep enough trump in Dummy to ruff the Loser(s). Ruffing in Dummy eliminates a loser AND creates a winner.
2	Discard Losers on extra winners in a "side" suit (a suit other than trump). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for an <i>unevenly</i> divided side suit with extra winners.
The Hidden Dummy	Be on the lookout! The hand you hold as Declarer may actually be the Dummy hand for play purposes. The Real Dummy is the hand with the fewer trumps.

To Draw or Not To Draw? Drawing trump is a priority *if* Declarer's losers are under control (Slow Losers). Consider whether the opponents have tricks to take if they gain the lead (Fast Losers).

ELIMINATE LOSERS - Ruffing & Discarding

South Deals

	♠ Q 9 8 3		
	♥ A K 6 4		
	♦ 8 6		
	♣ J 6 3		
♠ K 5	N	♠ 2	
♥ Q J 10 9	W	♥ 8 7 3 2	
♦ K 9 5 3	E	♦ Q J 10 4	
♣ 9 5 4	S	♣ K Q 10 8	
	♠ A J 10 7 6 4		
	♥ 5		
	♦ A 7 2		
	♣ A 7 2		

10
9 8
13

West *North* *East* *South*

Pass 3 ♠² Pass 4 ♠

All pass

1. 13 HCP + 2 Length Points = 15.
2. 10 HCP + 1 Dummy Point (doubleton ♦) = 11 support points.
Invitational.

CONTRACT: 4 ♠ by South **LEAD:** ♥ Q, Top of Honor Sequence

Losers = one ♠, two ♦s, two ♣s = 5 **Eliminate:** Two Losers

DECLARER PLAY. Ten tricks are needed to make the contract, and three tricks can be lost. Focus on counting losing tricks from the perspective of Declarer's hand (the hand with longer length in trump), suit-by-suit and categorize the losers as either fast or slow.

♠ (trump)	1 Loser, ♠ K - <i>Slow</i>	♥	0 Losers
♦	2 Losers - <i>Slow</i>	♣	2 Losers - <i>Slow</i>

There are five total losers, and two must be eliminated to make the contract. Declarer looks for an unevenly divided side suit to help eliminate the two excess losers.

Discard Suit. Dummy has more ♥s than Declarer, and one of the ♥ winners can be used to discard a loser from Declarer's hand. Declarer must decide whether to discard a club or a diamond to eliminate one loser. Does it matter which suit is discarded?

Short Suit. Is there another way to eliminate a loser? There is a second unevenly divided suit with shorter ♦s in Dummy, which means a ♦ loser can be ruffed in Dummy. With a way to dispose of a ♦ loser (ruffing), Declarer should discard a ♣ on the extra ♥ trick.

Combining both a ruff and a discard eliminates two losers.

Draw Trump. The ♦ and ♣ losers are *slow*, and Declarer's priority is to draw trump with the losers under control. With ten total trump, the opponents have only three, which are expected to divide 2-1. With a plan in place to eliminate two losers, Declarer can afford to lose the ♠ K and still make the contract. Remember to leave one trump in Dummy to ruff the ♦!

Ruffing & Discarding

Board 1
South Deals

Discard a ♣ & Ruff a ♦

♠ K 5 ♥ Q J 10 9 ♦ K 9 5 3 ♣ 9 5 4	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 2 ♥ 8 7 3 2 ♦ Q J 10 4 ♣ K Q 10 8	♠ A J 10 7 6 4 ♥ 5 ♦ A 7 2 ♣ A 7 2
	N											
W		E										
	S											

West North East South

Pass 3 ♠¹ Pass 4 ♠

All pass

1. 4-♠s, 11-12 support points

Contract: 4 ♠ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♥ Q, seq., East plays ♥ 2
Losers: 1-♠, 2-♦, 2-♣ = 5.

Play: Declarer wins the ♥ A, wins the ♥ K discarding a ♣, loses the ♠ finesse, draws trump, and eventually ruffs a ♦ in Dummy.

Board 2
South Deals

Discard a ♣ on a ♦

♠ A ♥ Q 9 7 6 ♦ J 7 6 2 ♣ K Q J 7	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K 7 ♥ 10 8 3 2 ♦ 10 9 5 4 ♣ 10 9 2	♠ Q 10 6 4 3 2 ♥ A K ♦ Q 3 ♣ A 5 4
	N											
W		E										
	S											

West North East South

13 3 15

Dbl¹ 2 ♠ Pass 1 ♠

Pass 3 ♦³ Pass 3 ♣²

All pass

1. Takeout Double, All Suits but ♠s
 2. Invite, 17-18 Points
 3. Poor ♣s, Good ♦s

Contract: 4 ♠ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♣ K, seq., East plays ♣ 2
Losers: 2-♠, 2-♣ = 4.

Play: South wins the ♣ A, the ♦ Q, the ♦ A, and the ♦ K discarding the ♣ 4. South then draws trump, and wins the ♥ AK.

Board 3
North Deals

Discard a ♦ & Ruff a ♣

♠ 6 ♥ A 7 6 4 ♦ K 9 8 7 ♣ 10 9 4 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 9 4 ♥ 9 8 3 2 ♦ J 3 2 ♣ K Q J 2	♠ K Q 8 7 5 3 ♥ K 5 ♦ A Q ♣ 8 7 6
	N											
W		E										
	S											

West North East South

Pass 1 ♦ Pass 1 ♠¹

Pass 2 ♠² Pass 4 ♠

All pass

1. 4+♠s, 6+ Points
 2. 4-♠s, 12-16 Points

Contract: 4 ♠ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♣ 10, seq., East plays ♣ K
Losers: 1-♥, 1-♦, 2-♣ = 4.

Play: Declarer wins the ♣ A, draws trump, promotes ♥s, discards the ♦ Q on a ♥, and ruffs a ♣ in Dummy.

Board 4
North Deals

Discard a ♣ on a ♠

♠ J 8 7 2 ♥ 6 ♦ A 10 9 6 ♣ Q J 9 8	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ A K Q 6 ♥ 8 7 5 3 ♦ K Q ♣ 7 6 2	♠ 10 9 5 ♥ A 9 2 ♦ 8 7 3 2 ♣ K 10 5
	N											
W		E										
	S											

West North East South

14 11

Pass 1 ♣ Pass 1 ♥

Pass 2 ♥ Pass 3 ♥¹

Pass 4 ♥ All pass

1. 11-12 Points

Contract: 4 ♥ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♣ Q, seq., East plays ♣ 10
Losers: 1-♥, 1-♦, 2-♣ = 4.

Play: Declarer wins the ♣ A and plays the ♠ AKQ, discarding a losing ♣. South then draws trump and promotes ♦s.