

Look at this hand in 4Sp and see if you can work out the number of potential losers AND what you intend to do about that number.

AQ654	10987
AK2	76
AQ3	87
32	KJ754

Spades : 2 losers  
Hrts : 1 loser  
diamonds : 2 losers  
clubs : 2 losers

7 losers !!

Lets us examine each of the suits more closely.

Spades : We have said 2 losers but frankly we would have to be very unlucky for that to be the case. The King is missing { as is the Jack } but in all probability we will not lose more than 1 trick at most.

The best play will involve going to dummy and finessing the Q sp.

Perhaps the Q sp will win and then we will lay down the Ace hoping the King and Jack will drop together.

Even if the finesse of the Queen fails we will still play the Ace the next time and hope the Jack will drop.

Hearts : The holding is AK2 -----76 and quite properly we say there *could* be a loser in the suit. Could be , but of course we know that we can at some point trump that 2 of diamonds loser in dummy. As long as you remember to trump the losing diamond then you will have no losers in the suit.

Diamonds: The holding is AQ3-----87 and again pessimistically we work on the basis that we have two losers. In practise this will hardly ever be the case.

There are various possibilities e.g we can finesse the Q. { lets say that the finesse wins }. Now we could play the Ace and then , finally , trump our last diamond in dummy. { No losers in such circumstances }. Or -perhaps the finesse loses -well we can still trump the last losing diamond in dummy when we gain the lead.

Clubs : Even the holding of 32 -----KJ754 offers some hopes of avoiding losing two tricks. We can lead the 2 and finesse the J ; although the J is unlikely to win , it may be headed by the Ace thereby promoting our King. You might prefer the other approach of leading the 2 and playing the King hoping it will win. It will be a guess either way but there is scope to gain.

We started by saying there were 7 losers. If all the chances so far noted were taken and they all worked out as hoped for, then miraculously the 7 losers become only 1 loser. Twelve tricks would be made !!

Counting losers tells you what the worst is that might happen and gives you the opportunity to reduce the number of tricks the opponents *might* make before they actually *have* made.

Losers can be reduced by : finesses, trumping in dummy and throwing losers on winners. Always check each suit to see if you can influence the number of losers by these plays.

