

**Intermediate
Counting
At Bridge**

**By
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Inferences

1. After the opening lead, 26 cards are known, or 27 if you are not the leader. Your goal is to figure out the location of those missing cards.

Guarantees from the Play of the Hand

2. When a concealed hand shows out of a suit, you know the other concealed hand's entire holding in that suit.
3. When a concealed hand shows out of a suit, you know how many cards that hand holds in the other three suits.

Opening Lead Inferences

4. When the opening leader against a suit contract does not lead the A or K of a side suit or a singleton; (a) they are unlikely to hold both the A and K of a side suit; and (b) they are less likely to have a singleton unless they have 4 or more trumps.
5. When an opening leader against NT leads 4th best from a suit, and there were other unbid suits, he probably does not have five or more of an unbid suit.
6. When the opponents bid and raise a suit, but lead a different suit, the opening leader likely has the A and not the K of "their" suit. Exceptions: singleton and powerful holding such as KQJ.

Bidding Inferences

7. When an opponent passes instead of opening the bidding they usually have less than 12 HCP.
8. When an opponent opens the bidding in 1st or 2nd seat, they generally have at least 11 HCP.
9. When an opponent passes instead of overcalling, and then leads the A and K of a suit that they could have overcalled at the one level they usually do not have 5 or more of that suit.
10. When an opponent passes instead of opening the bidding and then leads an honor card, they usually have fewer than 6 of that suit. Exception for clubs.
11. If an opponent passes his partner's opening bid, he generally has less than 6 HCP.
12. Opening bids of 1N or 2N, or an overcall of 1N, or a natural response of 2N or 3N to an opening bid, have narrowly defined HCP ranges. By looking at the dummy and your hand, a defender can quickly count the HCP in partner's hand.

Inferences from cards played by the defenders

13. Always make sure that you know the carding and lead agreements of the opponents. As a general rule, assume that they are following their agreements.

Inferences from Declarer's play

14. When declarer does not immediately draw trumps in a suit contract, they usually have losers in a side suit that they either need to trump or pitch after setting up winners in another suit.
15. When the dummy in a NT contract has a powerful suit missing just the A or K and declarer plays a different suit, declarer generally holds the missing A or K.

<u>North</u>	
S	QJ10xxx
H	KQx
D	xx
C	KJ

<u>West</u>	
S	_____
H	AJxx
D	K10xxx
C	A10xx

<u>No one Vulnerable</u>			
S	W	N	E
1S	X	2N*	P
4S	P	P	P
* 2N = limit raise+, 4+S			

Trick 1 – CA, J, x, x
2 – C, K, x, H2
3 – SQ, x, x, C
4 – S5, K, A, C
5 – H8, A, x, x
6 - ?

<u>North</u>	
S	J10xx
H	KQ
D	xx
C	_____

<u>West</u>	
S	_____
H	Jxx
D	K10xxx
C	_____

<u>North</u>			
<u>S</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>C</u>
10	K	K	K
9	Q	x	8
8	x	x	x
	x		

<u>West</u>			
<u>S</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>C</u>
Q	x	A	A
J	x	Q	x
x		x	x
x		x	

<u>All Vulnerable</u>			
<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>
IN*	P	2D**	3C
P	P	3H	3S
X	4C	P	P
X	P	P	P

* 1N = 11-14
** 2D = Hearts

Trick 1 – CA, x, Q, x
 2 – C, 8, H, x
 3 – HK, A, C, x
 4 – D, A, 3, 2
 5 – H, Q, x, S
 6 – S10, x, x, J
 7 – C, K, H, 9
 8 – H, 8, C10, D6
 9 – CJ?

Defenders play
 Upside down
 count & attitude

<u>North</u>			
<u>S</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>C</u>
9	x	K	--
x		x	

<u>West</u>			
<u>S</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>C</u>
Q	--	Q	--
x		x	
x			