

# Lesson 16

***Declarer Play techniques:  
In a suit contract***

**Book Pages 62-66 sections 4.3 & 4.5**

# Lesson Objectives

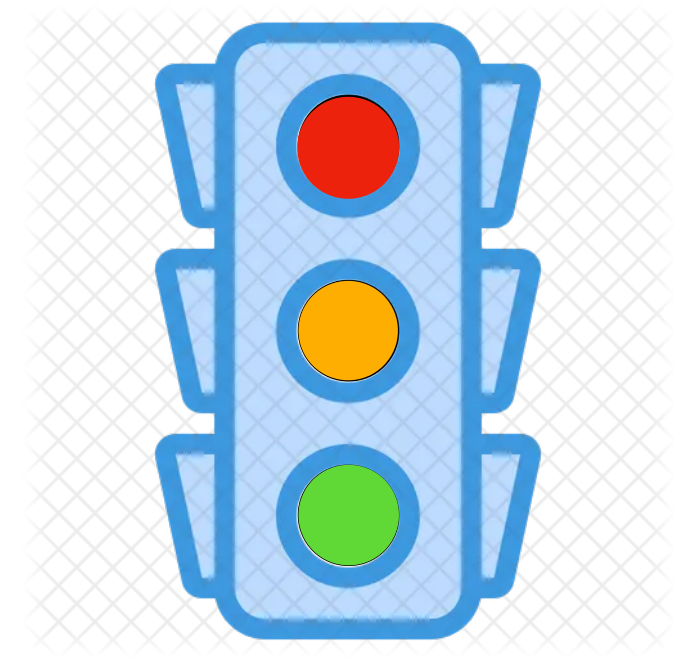
- Recap no-trump *declarer play*
- Counting *winners & losers* in *suit contracts*
- When to *draw trumps*
- When to *delay drawing trumps*
- Setting up a *side suit* by *ruffing*
- Future lessons: *finessing*

# Recap *declarer play* techniques

THINK

PLAN - including analysing opening lead

PLAY

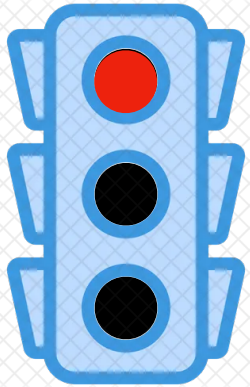


# Recap no-trump *declarer play*

As soon as *dummy's* cards are revealed, perform your *S.W.O.T.* analysis...

## THINK

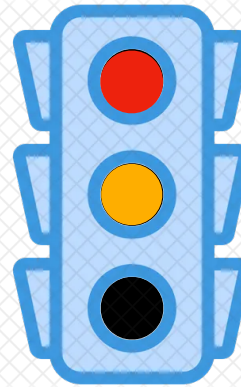
What *contract* are you in?



- how many *tricks* needed?
- how many *Top Tricks*?
- can you *make contract*?
- are there any threats?

## PLAN

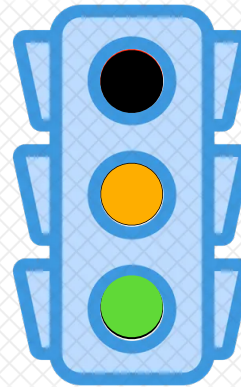
How to make extra *winners*:



- analyse the *opening lead*
- *drive out* missing *honour/s*
- *establish length winners*

## PLAY

Techniques:



- *Unblock*
- *Entries*
- *Duck*
- *Hold-up*

# S.W.O.T. analysis

- S**trengths      *NTs*: Count *Top Tricks* (*tricks* you can *make* without losing the *lead*)  
*Suit contracts*: Count *winners and losers*
- W**eakness      Work out how many *tricks* you are short of your target
- O**pportunities      Inspect each *suit* in turn looking for opportunities to *make* extra *tricks*
- T**hreats      Think about what could go wrong and how you can to counter it

# Counting *losers*

Ways of taking *tricks* in no trumps apply equally to *suit contracts*

But the *trump suit* gives extra considerations... rather than *Top Tricks* in no trumps:

- How many *tricks* might you win? - *winners*
- How many *tricks* might you lose? - *losers*
- The *winners* + *losers* indicate how the 13 *tricks* might play out
- What can you do to prevent the *contract* failing?

**West** is *declarer*

*dummy* is **East**

## 3NT by W need 9 *tricks lead* K♣

♣K *lead* promises either ♣QJx(x), ♣Q10x(x), and denies the ♣A

WEST

♠ A K Q J 10 9

♥ 5

♦ A K Q J 2

♣ 2

EAST

♠ 8 6 2

♥ A 7 6 2

♦ 10 9 7

♣ 9 6 4

Count *Top Tricks / winners*:

12: ♠=6 ♥=1 ♦=5 ♣=0

Count *losers*:

5+: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=5+

*Losers + Winners = 17+*

*A suit contract would have swung the balance of control into our favour*



**6♠ by W need 12 tricks lead ♣K**

♣K lead promises ♣Q or a singleton

**WEST**

♠ A K Q J 10 9

♥ 5

♦ K Q 8 7

♣ A 2

**EAST**

♠ 8 6 2

♥ A K 6 2

♦ J 10 9

♣ 9 6 4

Count winners:

Once the ♦A is forced out...

12: ♠=6 ♥=2 ♦=3 ♣=1

Count losers:

K♣ lead sets up a defence winner

2: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=1 ♣=1

Losers + Winners = 14

Plan your play...

# Counting *losers*

In a no trump *contract*, count *Top Tricks*

In a *suit contract*, count *winners* and *losers*

Count from the perspective of the *hand* with the longer *trumps*

Look to see how any *losers* can be *covered* by *winners*

*Throw a loser* on an extra *winner*

# **When to *draw trumps***

*Drawing trumps:*

Playing *high trumps* until your opponents have none left

4♠ by W need 10 *tricks lead* ♦ K

WEST

♠ K Q 10 4 3

♥ K 6 4

♦ 2

♣ A 7 6 2

EAST

♠ J 5 2

♥ A 3 2

♦ A 8 3

♣ K Q J 9

Count *winners*:

Once the ♠A is *forced out*...

11: ♠=4 ♥=2 ♦=1 ♣=4

Count *losers*:

2: ♠=1 ♥=1 ♦=0 ♣=0

*Losers + Winners = 13*

Plan your *play*...

4♠ by W need 10 *tricks lead* ♥Q

WEST

♠ A 7 6 3 2

♥ K 8

♦ 7 2

♣ A K 8 7

EAST

♠ K 8 5 4

♥ A 5 2

♦ 9 4

♣ Q J 6 2

Count *winners*:

*Top tricks*: ♠=2 ♥=2 ♦=0  
♣=4

+ *length winners* ♠=2-3

Count *losers*:

2-3: ♠=1? ♥=0 ♦=2 ♣=0

*Losers + Winners = 13*

Plan your *play*...

4♠ by W need 10 *tricks lead* ♦ K

WEST

♠ K Q 10 4 3

♥ K Q 4

♦ 2

♣ 10 7 6 2

EAST

♠ J 5 2

♥ A 3 2

♦ A 8 3

♣ K Q J 9

Count *winners*:

Once ♠A & ♣A forced out...

11: ♠=4 ♥=3 ♦=1 ♣=3

Count *losers*:

2: ♠=1 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=1

*Losers + Winners = 13*

Plan your *play*...

# When to *draw trumps*

Count *losers*

Count *winners*

Enough *winners* and not too many *losers*? ...

**Draw *trumps* before *cashing side suit winners***

Count down the missing *trumps*

Leave one *master trump* out

4♠ by W need 10 *tricks* lead ♣Q

WEST

♠ A K Q J 10

♥ A K 7

♦ 9 7 5

♣ A K

EAST

♠ 9 8 7

♥ 8 4

♦ 8 6 4 3

♣ 5 4 3 2

Count *winners*:

9: ♠=5 ♥=2 ♦=0 ♣=2

Count *losers*:

4: ♠=0 ♥=1 (7♥) ♦=3 ♣=0

*Losers + Winners = 13*

Plan your *play*... need one  
extra *trick*...



# When to delay *drawing trumps*

Count *losers*

Count *winners*

Enough *winners*? No...

***Ruff a loser in the hand with the fewer trumps***

*Draw trumps* unless there is a good reason not to

**6♠ by W need 12 tricks lead ♣K**

**WEST**

♠ K Q J 10 9 7

♥ 5

♦ A K Q J

♣ A 2

**EAST**

♠ 8 6 2

♥ A K 6 2

♦ 10 9 7

♣ 9 6 4

Count winners:

Once the ♠A is forced out...

12: ♠=5 ♥=2 ♦=4 ♣=1

Count losers:

K♣ lead sets up a defence winner

2: ♠=1 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=1

Losers + Winners = 14

Plan your play... need one extra trick...


# **When to delay *drawing trumps***


Too many immediate *losers*?

***Throw away a loser on side suit winners***

## Lead K

WEST


 A Q 10 7 6 3

 9 7 5 4 3 2




 A

EAST

 K J 9 8 5 4



 10 9 6 4 3 2

 4

How many *tricks* can you *make* if you have the *top* 12 spades...

- In a no trump *contract*?
- In a spade *suit contract*?

















Plan your *play*...

# When to delay *drawing trumps*

When you need to make all your *trumps* separately by *cross-ruffing*

*Cash side suit winners* first

Use *low trumps* on early rounds

















	   Q J 6 	
   5 	<div>N</div> <div>W<div>E</div>S</div>	   A K 4 3 2 
	   10 9 8 7 	

**Setting up a *side suit*: no trumps**

How many *tricks* can be set up in this *suit* if you play *no trumps*?

Assume you can safely *lose the lead* and *win the lead* back

What about a *spade suit contract*...

	  K  Q J 6 	
 K J 9 6 5 3 2  A 6  5  A 6 2	<div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div>	 A Q 10 8  7  A K 4 3 2  5 4 3
	   10 9 8 7 	

**7♠ by W need 13 *tricks***  
**lead ♥K**

Count *winners*:

*12th trick by ruffing a heart*

12: ♠=7+1 ♥=1 ♦=2 ♣=1

Count *losers*:

1: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=1?

*Losers + Winners = 13*

Can you *make* all 13 tricks?

Plan your *play*...

**Set up a *side suit* by *ruffing***

***Extra winners from establishing a long side suit***

*Entries required*



**7♠ by W need 13 *tricks lead* ♦ Q**

Count *winners*:

11: ♠=5 ♥=1 ♦=1 ♣=1

Count *losers*:

2: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=0

You don't appear to have enough *winners* for a *grand slam*, but you have *length winners* in diamonds:

- Win ♦ A, ruff ♦ 2, win ♥ A, ruff ♦ 3
- If diamonds *split* 3-3 then the remaining diamonds are winners, and you can draw trumps
- If diamonds *split* 4-2, win ♣ A, ruff ♦ 5, ruff a heart and then draw trumps

**WEST**

♠ K 8 7

♥ 8 7 5 2

♦ 10

♣ 7 6 5 4 3

**EAST**

♠ A Q J 10 9

♥ A

♦ A 8 7 5 3 2

♣ A

# Quiz

**5♦ by W need 11 tricks lead ♠K**

Count winners:

10: ♠=1 ♥=0 ♦=6 ♣=3

Count losers:

2: ♠=0 ♥=2 ♦=0 ♣=0

A heart *ruff* in *dummy* will provide the 11th *winner*:

- win ♠A
- lead a heart which loses
- whatever they *lead* win the *trick* and *lead* another heart which loses
- you can *win* all remaining tricks or *ruff* another heart

## Quiz - 1/6

WEST

♠ A

♥ 5 4 3

♦ A K Q J 10 9

♣ A K 6

EAST

♠ J 5 4 3 2

♥ 6 2

♦ 8 7 6

♣ Q 8 7

4♥ by W need 10 *tricks lead* ♦K

Count *winners*:

7: ♠=1 ♥=4 ♦=1 ♣=1

Count *losers*:

3: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=3 ♣=0

Can't *draw trumps* as needed to defend spades & clubs, instead:

- *win* ♦A, ♠A, ♣A
- *cross-ruff* the spades & clubs backwards & forwards for 6 *tricks*
- *win* ♥A making 10 *tricks*

## Quiz - 2/6

WEST

♠ 8

♥ A Q J 9

♦ A 6 5 4

♣ A 8 7 6

EAST

♠ A 4 3 2

♥ K 10 8 7

♦ 9 8 3 2

♣ 5

**7♠ by W need 13 *tricks lead* ♦K**

Count *winners*:

10: ♠=6 ♥=1 ♦=1 ♣=2

Count *losers*:

2: ♠=0 ♥=1 ♦=1 ♣=0

We need to find 3 club *length winners*:

- Win ♦A, ♠K, ♠Q, retain ♠A *entry*
- Win ♣A, ♣K, *ruff* the ♣2
- *Lead* a spade back to the ♠A
- Win the remaining clubs, discarding heart & diamond *losers*
- Win ♥A and remaining *trump*

## Quiz - 3/6

WEST

♠ J 10 9 8 7 6

♥ A 3

♦ A 8 2

♣ 7 6

EAST

♠ A K Q

♥ 4 2

♦ 10 5

♣ A K 8 5 3 2

4♠ by W need 10 *tricks lead* ♥Q

Count *winners*:

11: ♠=5 ♥=2 ♦=1 ♣=2

Count *losers*:

2: ♠=1 ♥=1 ♦=1 ♣=1

One *loser* in every *suit*!

Throw *losing* diamond under *winner*:

- Win ♥A, lose ♦Q to the ♦A
- If/when a heart is *led*, win ♥K
- Win ♦K discarding *losing* heart

## Quiz - 4/6

WEST

♠ K Q J 9 8 7

♥ 5 3 2

♦ Q

♣ K Q 10

EAST

♠ 10 6 5

♥ A K 4

♦ K 6 4 2

♣ J 4 3

6♠ by W need 12 *tricks lead* ♣K

Count *winners*:

11: ♠=5 ♥=3 ♦=3 ♣=1

Count *losers*:

2: ♠=1 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=1

The ♣K *lead* has left a club *loser*,  
and also have a spade *loser*

Must *discard* the club loser on a  
diamond *winner*:

- Win ♣A, ♦A, ♦K, lead to ♥A,  
discard ♣4 on ♦Q winner
- Now *drive-out* the ♠A

## Quiz - 5/6

WEST

♠ K Q J 10 6 4

♥ K Q 2

♦ A K

♣ 4 3

EAST

♠ 5 3 2

♥ A 7 6 4 3

♦ Q 4 3

♣ A 2

7♠ by W need 13 *tricks lead* ♦K

Count *winners*:

11: ♠=5 ♥=1 ♦=1 ♣=1

Count *losers*:

2: ♠=0 ♥=3? ♦=5? ♣=4?

Too many *losers* in your own *hand* to contemplate a *grand slam*, but if you start *ruffing* diamonds in *dummy* you will find that you can establish *length winners*

Diamonds might *break* 4-2!

Plan your play...

## Quiz - 6/6

WEST

♠ A Q J 10 9

♥ A

♦ A 8 7 5 3 2

♣ A

EAST

♠ K 8 7

♥ 8 7 5 2

♦ 10

♣ 7 6 5 4 3



# Summary

## What you have learnt in this lesson

Think, plan, play

Count *losers* as well as *winners*

- throw a *loser* on a *side suit winner*

Usually *draw trumps*

Opportunities for *extra tricks* in *trumps*:

- *ruff* in the *hand* with *fewer trumps*
- *cross-ruff*
- set up a *side suit* by *ruffing*

Playing *hands*...

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

1st Board : Dealer: North

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1NT	Pass	2♦
All Pass			

















- South rescues a poor NT *contract* with a *weak-takeout* into ♦
- West should *lead* ♠Q
- South has 4 *winners* but needs 8:
  - 2 x ♠, 0 x ♥, 0 x ♦, 2 x ♣
- South can *ruff* one spade
- South now plays *trumps* - taking three *trump tricks*
- *Winning* ♣A and ♣K *making* 8

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


2nd Board : Dealer: East





WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

- South *leads* ♥K, won by ♥A
- Before *drawing trumps*, East must *ruff* a club loser
- First *losing* the ♣K to the ♣A
- When East *regains* the *lead*, wins the ♣Q, then *ruffs* the 3rd *round* of clubs
- East can now safely *draw trumps* and *make game*

	 K Q J 5 4 3  Q  K Q J  7 6 4	
 A  10 9 7 6 2  9 7 6 5  9 8 2	<div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>S</div> <div>E</div>	 8 6  J 8 4 3  A 4 3  K Q J 5
	 10 9 7 2  A K 5  10 8 2  A 10 3	

3rd Board : Dealer: East

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			Pass
Pass	1 	Pass	3 
Pass	4 	All Pass	

- East *leads*  K
- The *defence* could *win* two clubs and two aces!
- South *wins* with  A, and the  A, then *throws* a club *loser* under the  K
- Now the *defence* can only *cash* one club trick not two

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

### 4th Board : Dealer: West

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

- South leads ♥Q
- If declarer draws trumps they will be short of their contract
- Declarer should aim to make trumps separately
- Win ♥A, then cash ♦A, ♦K and ♣A, and play a low heart
- Defenders might win two club tricks, but declarer will eventually regain the lead and can then cross ruff diamonds and hearts
- If defence trumps then declarer can over trump with a higher card