

# LOSING TRICK COUNT - predicting total tricks

**WHEN ?** Works best when your hand passes the three UFO tests -

- U = Unbalanced** contains a void, or singleton, or two doubletons  
**F = Fit** you are certain of an 8 card fit in trumps  
**O = Opened\*** your side opened the bidding (at the 1 level)  
 \* if opponents open the bidding, use LTC with caution

**PROCESS:** **A)** Count your losers, **B)** Add partner's assumed losers, **C)** Subtract from 24.

**A:** In each suit, consider only the top three cards.  
 Aces, protected Kings and Queens, are winners. All other cards are losers.  
 Max. losers = 3 per suit = 12 per hand.

0 losers:	void	A	AK	AKQ...		
1 loser:	x	Ax	Kx	AKx...	AQx...	KQx...
2 losers:	xx	Axx...	Kxx...	Qx	(Qxx is weaker = 2½ losers)	
3 losers:	xxx...					

**B:** Partners bidding shows:

Opening strength	Intermediate strength (10+)	Supporting strength (6-9)
opens the bidding at 1 level	jumps in your suit (1♥ - 3♥)	simple raise (1♥ - 2♥)
doubles opponents' opening	replies at the 2 level (1♠ - 2♥)	replies at the 1 level (1♥ - 1♠)
jumps in a new suit (1♥ - 2♠)	overcalls opponents @ 2 level	overcalls opponents @ 1 level
<b>assume 7 losers</b>	<b>assume 8 losers</b>	<b>assume 9 losers</b>

**C:** Partner opens 1♥

You open 1♥, partner raises to 2♥

♠ 3 HCP = 8  
 ♥ KQ643 losers = 1+1+2+2=6  
 ♦ 64 24 - 6 - 7 = 11 tricks  
 ♣ K9875 so bid 4♥

♠ 8 HCP = 13  
 ♥ AQJ74 losers = 1+1+2+1=5  
 ♦ 74 24 - 5 - 9 = 10 tricks  
 ♣ KQJ so bid 4♥

what might you bid on these trickier hands?

You open 1♥,  
 partner bids 2♠

Partner opens 1♠

Partner opens 1♥

RHO opens 1♦, you X,  
 partner bids (stop) 2♠

♠ KQ842  
 ♥ AQJ643  
 ♦ -  
 ♣ 75

♠ K876  
 ♥ A97  
 ♦ A87  
 ♣ A32

♠ 8  
 ♥ QJ743  
 ♦ 754  
 ♣ J976

♠ AQ983  
 ♥ KQ54  
 ♦ -  
 ♣ AK32