

# Helensburgh Bridge Club Lesson 23 Examples

## Examples of Suit Play: Counting Losers

♠ AJ653  
♥ K7  
♦ J104  
♣ A97



♠ KQ72  
♥ Q64  
♦ AQ95  
♣ 103

West is declarer in 4♠, North leads ♣K.

How many **losers** can West count?

First the **trump suit** is **solid**: ♠AKQJ will draw all opponents' trump

In **hearts** he has *one* top loser, ♥A. ♥K/Q are good for 1 trick and he can ruff the third round in his hand.

In **diamonds** he *may* lose one trick if South has ♦K

In **clubs** West makes the ace, leaving *one* loser and one to be ruffed in dummy

A maximum of 3 losers, and he can hope to make the other 10 tricks

West wins ♣A, draws trump and takes the diamond finesse.

If it wins he takes it again, if it loses the defenders can cash 1 club and 1 heart. Either way, 4♠ makes.

## How many Losers has declarer in these examples?

♠ 1076  
♥ AK7  
♦ AJ10875  
♣ J



♠ 982  
♥ Q65  
♦ K92  
♣ KQ53

West plays in 2♦ North leads ♠A  
(5 losers: 3 in spades, 1 in diamonds and 1 in clubs)

The defence cash 3 spades, then play a heart.

We do not finesse with 9 cards, so West plays ♦A and ♦K can

If the queen appears there are no diamond losers

♠ AQJ84  
♥ K83  
♦ 9  
♣ AK43



♠ 10632  
♥ AJ6  
♦ KQ7  
♣ J92

West plays in 4♠ North leads ♦J  
(4 losers: 1 in each suit)

Declarer can hope not to lose so many tricks

If South wins ♦A and returns a diamond you

discard a heart, and win in dummy.

Now you have no heart loser.

Run ♠10 so you can finesse again if it works – there may be no loser in trump if South has ♠K.

## Disposing of Losers

♠ A76  
♥ AKQ73  
♦ Q9  
♣ QJ8



♠ 982  
♥ 10965  
♦ AK7  
♣ 1096

West plays in 4♥ North leads ♠Q  
West counts 4 losers, 2 in spades and 2 in clubs  
One too many.

But he has 3 diamond winners. 1 losing spade can be **discarded** on dummy's third diamond.

West wins ♠A.

He draws trumps with ♥A, ♥K (and ♥Q if necessary.)

Next he plays three rounds of diamonds, discarding one spade loser.

Finally, he sets about the Work Suit, clubs, to establish a trick there. When the defenders win a top club they can cash a spade, but West ruffs the next spade and plays another club to establish a trick.

♠ A76  
♥ KQJ73  
♦ Q9  
♣ QJ8



♠ 982  
♥ 10965  
♦ AK7  
♣ K109

West plays in 4♥. North leads ♠Q  
4 losers, 1 in hearts, 2 in spades, 1 in clubs  
Still one too many

Again, we can **discard** a spade on dummy's high diamond. But if we win ♠A and tackle trumps the defenders will win ♥A and cash two spade winners

They also have ♣A to take, and that is one down  
The only way to make the contract is to discard a spade **before** playing trumps

We risk having a diamond ruffed by a defender, but it is the only hope

Note that if North had not led a spade the losers in spades would not be **immediate** so you could play trumps first.

## Example Hands where we have to Postpone Drawing Trumps

## 1) Taking a discard

♠ QJ652	N W E S	♠ 109843
♥ 8		♥ QJ32
♦ AKQ		♦ 82
♣ 10764		♣ A3

West plays in 4♠. North leads ♣K and the ace wins.  
 There are 4 losers, 2 in spades, 1 in hearts and 1 in clubs.  
 One too many  
 If he starts to draw trumps the defenders will cash four tricks.  
 Before *giving up the lead*, he cashes three top diamonds and discards dummy's ♣3 on the third one.  
 Now when he gives up the lead in trumps the defenders have only 3 winners

**Note:** The losers in spades and hearts are *immediate losers*: the defence can cash them as soon as they get on lead. The club loser becomes *immediate* when the ace is knocked out  
 If North had not led clubs the club loser would be *eventual*, not immediate.  
 With no *immediate* loser you would start to play trump since there is no rush to take the discard

♠ AQJ62	N W E S	♠ 10984
♥ 8		♥ QJ32
♦ AQ5		♦ K2
♣ 10764		♣ A53

Again West plays in 4♠. North leads ♣K and the ace wins.  
 There are 4 losers, 1 in spades, 1 in hearts and 2 in clubs.  
 One too many  
 You want to finesse in trumps in case there is no loser in spades  
 But if the finesse fails the defenders can cash 3 more tricks  
 So even when you *may* have to lose a trick take the discard first

**Note:** Again, on any other lead there would be no *immediate* club losers, so you would start by drawing trumps.

## 2) Keeping control while you establish the Work Suit

♠ 6	N W E S	♠ KQ104
♥ QJ1093		♥ A65
♦ A92		♦ K5
♣ J984		♣ 7632
♠ AJ97		♠ 8532
♥ K4		♥ 872
♦ QJ1043		♦ 876
♣ Q5		♣ AK10

West plays in 4♠. North leads ♥Q.  
 There are 3 losers, 2 in clubs and 1 in diamonds. No problem  
 West wins the first trick with ♥A and starts to draw trump  
 Everybody follows to ♠K, but North shows out on ♠A  
 South has four trumps, and it will take 4 rounds to draw them all  
 But then you will have none left in either hand  
 When the defenders win ♦A they can cash at least 3 club tricks  
 You must keep a trump in hand to *control* the club suit  
 Establish the Work Suit, diamonds, *before you finish drawing trumps*  
 When you have knocked out ♦A you can draw the rest of the trumps and cash your diamond winners