Playing in a suit contract is quite different from playing in no-trump.

The element of trump changes everything.

Tricks are no longer Sure: until trump are drawn one of the defenders may be able to trump your aces.

That is why we start by drawing trump when that is possible.

In suit contracts we do not count our Sure Tricks: instead we count *Losers.*

To count losers we consider both hands together: (counting losers in just one hand would be too depressing)

♠ AKQJ3	**N** **W E** **S**	♠ 10952	West plays in 4♠. North leads ♦K. West counts Losers
♥ A5		♥ KQ4	0 Losers in spades, this is a *solid* suit.
♦ 985		♦ A72	0 Losers in hearts (unless somebody ruffs an honour)
♣ QJ5		♣ K83	2 Losers in diamonds once ♦A is played
			1 Loser in clubs, since the defenders hold ♣A
			A total of 3 Losers

West is trying to make just 10 tricks, so he can afford to lose 3 tricks

He can expect to win 5 spades, 3 hearts, 1 diamond and 2 clubs.

His plan is to draw trump and set about the Work Suit, Clubs

Sometimes there are more losers than we can afford.

We must consider how to reduce them to the required number.

We might   ***Take a finesse.*** If that worked it would reduce our losers.

              Establish a side suit. Then we could discard losers from another suit on our winners

These plays are typical of coping with the Work Suit in no-trump

Before we can play in no-trumps we must ***draw opponents' trumps*** to prevent them ruffing our winners.

Draw trump as soon as you safely can

If the trump suit is *solid* you can draw trump right away.

If you have to give up the lead in trumps check ***how many winners opponents can cash when they get in***

This is one time when it is right to postpone drawing trumps: you have something more urgent to do.

If you can discard one or more ***immediate losers*** before giving up the lead you may risk having your winners trumped.

♠ KQ6	**N** **W E** **S**	♠ J9	West plays in 5♦. North leads ♣K. How many Losers are there?
♥ A5		♥ KQJ4	1 immediate loser in spades
♦ KQJ764		♦ 10953	0 in hearts, provided nobody ruffs
♣ A9		♣ J84	1 in diamonds, we must lose the ace of trump
			1 immediate loser in clubs once ♣A is removed
			A total of 3 Losers
			West must make 11 tricks, so he can afford to lose only 2 tricks
			On any lead but a club West would set about drawing trumps
			After ♣K lead he plays 3 rounds of hearts first to *discard* his club

Making a Plan in a Suit Contract

1. Count the Losers
2. If there are too many look for ways of reducing them to the right number
3. Draw trumps if **either***: you can do so without losing the lead*
            or: *you can afford to lose the lead because your losers are not Immediate*
                  If you have too many immediate losers take essential discards first – but
                  draw trumps as soon as possible
4. Do not draw more trumps than necessary: you need trumps to keep control of the side suits
5. Establish Tricks in the Work Suit – continue as if you were playing in no-trump