

The Suit Quality Test

The suit Quality test is a measure of the strength of a long suit. It can often provide the information necessary to determine the level at which a suit can be bid. It is appropriate for all bids associated with weakness such as Weak-Twos, Preempts and OverCalls.

It can also be helpful in determining if you can insist on your suit being Trump. Here's how it works.

Add the number of Cards in your long suit to the number of Honors in that suit. The number you arrive at is the suit quality (**SQ**) of that suit. For example: your ♥ holding is Q8765. It has 5 Cards and 1 Honor, **SQ**=6.

An OverCall at the 1-level (7 Tricks) requires an SQ of 7. The above hand does not qualify. Consider this suit KJ7532. It has an SQ=8. Not only does this suit qualify as an OverCall suit, it qualifies at the 2-level. These examples suggest that for an OverCall the SQ needs to be equal to the number of Tricks required to make the Contract.

For a Vulnerable Weak-Two and other Preemptive Openings we suggest that the SQ equal the level +1, thus for Weak-Two SQ should = 9; 3-level Preempt SQ should = 10.

It is also suggested that if a J is included in the suit that it be accompanied by another Honor and that Tens not count as an Honor for this purpose. Thus KJ9843 has an SQ = 8; but J98432 only has an SQ = 6.

To insist that your suit (vs Partner's suit) be Trump it should have a SQ = 10.