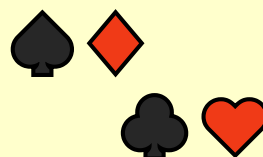


Bridge on Sundays



Suit Quality Values

A measure of suit quality is to add together the number of honour cards plus the suit length.

Honour cards are A,K,Q. Only count a J as an honour if it is supported by higher honour card in the same long suit. Count the 10 as an honour if the J and a higher honour card is present in the suit.

Assuming you have adequate high card points, an overcall requires having a suit quality value of at least the level of the overcall - the old adage is *do not overcall in a suit you would not want led*. Overcalling on suits such as J97532 is bad unless you win the contract!

Examples:

- a suit of AJ984 has a suit quality value of 7 (2 honours+5 card suit), so is good enough to overcall at the 1 level but NOT the 2 level. With a better than minimum hand, you may still decide to overcall at the 2 level.
- A suit of 10987643 is not good enough to overcall at the 2 level. (At favourable vulnerability, you may make a weak jump overcall pre-emptively).
- A similar 7 card suit headed by the Ace qualifies for a 2 level overcall with adequate outside strength and favourable vulnerability.

Is your suit good enough to insist as the trump suit?

With a suit quality value of 10 or more it is! Holding a suit of AKJ1075, this suit has a suit quality value of 10 (6 card suit+4 honour cards), so you should insist this is the trump suit. You are unlikely to lose more than 1 trick in the suit