

Evaluating Shortness



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What is the Value of a Short Suit?

- As with most things in bridge it depends...
 - What suit is short
 - And which hand contains the short suit.
 - Consider the following suit as trump:

♠ A K Q J 10

♠ 7 5 2

Now Imagine You Have this Hand

Declarer

♠ A K Q J 10

♥ Q J 10

♦ 5

♣ A K 5 3

Dummy

♠ 7 5 2

♥ A 8 6

♦ 9 7 3

♣ Q J 8 2

Declarer

♠ A K Q J 10

♥ K 5

♦ 9 7 3

♣ A K 5

Dummy

♠ 7 5 2

♥ A 7 6 4 2

♦ 5

♣ Q J 5 3

Consider Two Auctions

North
 ♠ A 10 9 8 4
 ♥ A 4 3
 ♦ 5
 ♣ K 5 3

North	East	South	West
1 ♠	pass	1nt	pass
2 ♠	pass	3 ♠	pass
??			

North	East	South	West
1 ♠	pass	3 ♥ *	pass
??			

*natural and invitational

Points to Keep in Mind

- The more trump you have, the more valuable your short suits.
- Shortness in an unbid suit is usually good.
- Shortness in a suit partner has bid naturally is probably bad.
- Shortness in declarer's hand is of dubious value.
- Shortness in dummy is often very good.

Revalue Your Hand As Dummy

- If you have a fit with partner and your hand will be dummy, a short suit is valuable.
- The more trump you have, the more valuable your short suit.
- With 4 trump, revalue in the following way:
 - A void = 5 points
 - A Singleton = 3 points
 - A doubleton = 1 point

Consider this Hand

North

♠ K J 4 3



♦ A K 7 6 5 2

♣ K Q 3

- Partner opens 2 ♠ .
- Partner opens 2 ♥ .

Consider this Hand

North - 1

♠ K J 4 3
♥ K Q 4
♦ 9 6 5 2
♣ K J

North - 2

♠ K J 4 3
♥ K Q 4
♦ K J 9 2
♣ 8 3

North	East	South	West
---	----	1 ♠	pass
2nt	pass	3 ♦	pass

Shortness in the Opponent's Suit is Good

North - 1

♠ K J 4 3
♥ Q 4
♦ A J 10 8 3
♣ 8 3

North - 2

♠ K J 4 3
♥ Q 4 3
♦ 3
♣ A J 10 8 3

North	East	South	West
---	----	1 ♠	2 ♦
??			

Shortness in the Opponents Suit is Good

North

♠ K 10 4 3
♥ A J 10
♦ 4
♣ A Q 9 8 3

South

♠ A Q 10 8 6
♥ 9 4
♦ 8 6 3
♣ K 7 5

North

1 ♣

??

East

1 ♦

Pass

South

1 ♠

West

pass

Shortness in Partner's Suit is Not Good

North

♠ 3
♥ A Q J
♦ J 4 2
♣ A Q J 9 8 3

South

♠ A Q 10 8 6
♥ 9 4
♦ 8 6 3
♣ K 7 5

North

1 ♣

??

East

1 ♦

Pass

South

1 ♠

West

pass

Shortness in an Unbid Side Suit Is Usually Good

North

♠ K 10 5 2
♥ A K 10 7 5
♦ A 10
♣ 4

South

♠ A Q J 10 9 8
♥ 9
♦ J 8
♣ 9 6 3 2

North

1 ♥
4 ♠

East

2 ♦
Pass

South

2 ♠

West

pass