

Don't Depend Solely on the Probabilities

This probability table is informative, but don't let this table keep you from learning how to count in bridge. A good player first tries to count opponents' points to locate missing honor. If this fails, he counts the cards in each suit in the opponents' hands. If this also fails, then he applies these probability statistics..

Missing	Distribution	Percent		Missing	Distribution	Percent
4	4-0, 0-4	10%		5	5-0, 0-5	4%
4	2-2	41%		5	4-1, 1-4	28%
4	3-1, 1-3	50%		5	3-2, 2-3	68%
6	6-0, 0-6	2%		7	7-0, 0-7	1%
6	5-1, 1-5	15%		7	6-1, 1-6	7%
6	3-3	36%		7	5-2, 2-5	31%
6	4-2, 2-4	49%		7	4-3, 3-4	62%

Percentages have been rounded up.

Here is an example of counting opponents' points to locate a missing honor:

Contract: 3 NT

<p>♠AK 6 ♥6 5 3 2 ♣A 7 6 ♦7 5 3</p>	<p>♠8 4 2 ♥A K J 4 ♣9 8 4 2 ♦QJ</p> <div style="background-color: #00FF00; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 10px auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠Q 5 3 ♥Q 7 ♣5 3 ♦10 9 8 6 4 2</p> <p>♠J 10 9 7 ♥10 9 8 ♣K Q J 10 ♦A K</p>
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Auction:

W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 ♣
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West cashes A K ♠ and leads 6♠. East wins and switches to ♦10. South wins. Now, South can count 8 tricks: 1 spade, 2 hearts, 3 clubs and 2 diamonds. It seems as if the contract depends on the finesse of ♥Q. But before applying this finesse, South can locate ♥Q easily. Since West couldn't open, he does not have 13 points. Until now he showed 7 points (AK♠). If West is also holding ♣A, he cannot have ♥Q. Because, his total points makes 13. With 13 points he was supposed to open. So, South must learn this by cashing club honors. If he discovers that West has ♣A, he must cash all master cards and play to drop ♥Q because finesse will lose.