

Distribution Points

 bridgebum.com/distribution_points.php

Distribution points are a corollary to High Card Points. Two methods are available. The first method is to count points for length of 5 cards or more in a suit. The second is to count points for suit shortness, namely any doubleton, singleton, or void.

Length Points

Length points are used for 5-card suits or longer.

- 5-card suit = 1 point
- 6-card suit = 2 points
- 7-card suit = 3 points
- Etc.

For example:

♠ AT873
♥ A93
♦ 6
♣ AT43

This hand has 12 HCP (3 aces x 4 points), plus one length point in spades. So the total is 13 points.

What's the purpose? Well, imagine if we change the hand slightly:

♠ AT87
♥ A93
♦ 643
♣ AT3

Unlike the first hand, this one lacks a long suit that could be used for trumps, or running tricks in no-trumps. So it has only 12 points, whereas the first hand has 13.

Length points can also be assigned to two suits:

♠ AT875
♥ AQ6532
♦ —
♣ 54

This hand has 10 HCP, plus 1 length point in spades and 2 length points in hearts. If your criteria for opening the bidding is 13 points, then this hand has just enough.

Short Suit Points

Short suit points are a hand evaluation method when bidding suit contracts. It assigns points to each doubleton, singleton and void:

- Doubleton = 1 point
- Singleton = 2 points
- Void = 3 points

For instance:

♠ AT87
♥ A9
♦ 7643
♣ AT3

12 HCP + 1 point for the doubleton = 13 points. If counting length, this would only be a 12-pointer. As another example:

♠ A654
♥ AT87
♦ A764
♣ 5

12 HCP + 2 points for the singleton = 14 points.

Things to bear in mind:

- Do not count short suit points in no-trump auctions.
- Singleton honors should be counted for HCP or shortness, but not both. This rule also applies to doubleton honor holdings like AK, KQ, KJ, QJ, etc.

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