

# Compare Win-Lose Contests with Win-Win or Lose-Lose Contests



	Win-lose	Win-win or lose-lose
<b>Contest</b>	The contest is between <b>people</b> who are on opposing “sides.” The challenge is for one side to win by <b>outperforming</b> the other side or being superior to the other side. <b>One side</b> can win only if the other side loses.	The contest is people against a <b>problem</b> . People from different “sides” unite against a problem. The challenge is for different sides to win together by <b>overcoming</b> impersonal limitations such as time, fear, ignorance, disease, war, or other problems. <b>Both sides</b> lose or both win depending on whether they can make progress in overcoming the problem.
<b>Scoring goals</b>	The numbers on the scoresheet count goals scored <b>separately</b> . Goals are <b>conflicting</b> . If one side achieves their goal, the <b>other side does not benefit</b> .	The numbers on the scoresheet count goals scored <b>collaboratively</b> . Goals are <b>complementary</b> . If one side achieves their goal, the <b>other side also benefits</b> .
<b>Skill levels</b>	Players need to be reasonably <b>close in ability</b> or skill level for the contest to be meaningful because the score measures whose performance is best.	Players can be extremely <b>different in ability</b> and the contest can still be meaningful because the score measures whether their combined scores improve each time they play together.
<b>Determine winner</b>	<b>One event</b> can be sufficient to determine which side is the winner and which side is the loser if winning is based on which side has the better score.	At least <b>two events</b> are required to determine whether both sides win or both sides lose if winning is based on whether scores are improving. Play multiple times to avoid gaming the score.
<b>Deception or candor?</b>	Players on one side may benefit by <b>withholding</b> information or giving <b>misleading</b> information (such as a bluff or fake) to the other side.	Players on both sides benefit by giving the other side <b>accurate, comprehensive</b> information because it can help them increase their combined scores.
<b>Assistance</b>	Helping or sharing with one side <b>hurts</b> the other side. (For example, helping the other side in war games is treason.)	Helping one side <b>increases</b> both sides’ chances for success.
<b>Who wins?</b>	<b>Only one side wins</b> . There must be a least one loser (or if the score is a tie, neither wins).	<b>Both sides win or both lose</b> depending on whether they can improve performance together.

**Both types of contests teach valuable skills. Both can be improved by coaching and practice.**

**Both measure performance using objective standards of excellence.**

### Classify games by asking:

1. **Contest** – Does the contest pit one side against the other **or** are both sides collaborating to achieve goals together?
2. **Scoring goals** – Does the scoresheet count conflicting goals or mutually beneficial goals?
3. **Skill differential** – To have a fair contest, do different sides need to be approximately equal in skill and ability?
4. **Determine winner** – What is the minimum number of events needed to determine who wins?
5. **Deception or candor?** – Do players benefit by communicating honestly with players on the other side?
6. **Assistance** – Do people on one side benefit by sharing resources and information with people on the other side?
7. **Who wins?** – If one side wins, can the other side also win? Can both sides lose?