

## Mini Lesson

# Many Ways to Finesse

A finesse is a method of playing your cards to win a trick with a card lower than your opponents highest card! You are seeking to take advantage of favorably placed honors.

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### Basic finesse:

1	A Q	x x	Lead to the Queen 50/50
2	K Q x	x x x	Lead to the King, repeat to the Q
3	K x	x x	Lead to the King 50/50
4	Q x x	A x x	Cash ace, lead to the Q
5	K J x	A x x	Cash ace, lead low to Jack

### Double finesse:

7	A J T x x	x x x	Lead to the Jack, then lead to Ten
8	A Q T	x x x	Lead to the Ten, then lead to Q

### High card finesse

9	A x x	Q J T	Lead Q, then J, then T. Duck unless K shows
10	A J x x	Q T 9 x	Lead Q, T then 9, ducking unless K shows...repeatable finesse.

### Two way finesse

11	A T x	K J x	Does bidding or other cards give you a clue? Try to get opps to open this suit...which helps you.
12	K T 9 x	A J x x	

### Deep finesse (defenders have 3 cards higher)

13	A Q 9	x x x	If you need two tricks, lead low to the nine, then finesse to the Queen
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## The Odds of Suit Breaks

Cards Missing	Break	Percent
2	1-1	52
	2-0	48
3	2-1	78
	3-0	22
4	3-1	49.7
	2-2	40.7
	4-0	9.6
5	3-2	67.8
	4-1	28.3
	5-0	3.9
6	4-2	48.5
	3-3	35.5
	5-1	14.5
	6-0	1.5
7	4-3	62.2
	5-2	30.5
	6-1	6.8
	7-0	0.5
8	5-3	47.1
	4-4	32.7
	6-2	17.1
	7-1	2.9
	8-0	0.2

These are the odds for how suits might break.

Example: As declarer you have a seven card suit. Which has the higher probability, a 3/3 break or a simple finesse?

Answer: The finesse is 50/50. A 3/3 break is only a 35% probability... so the finesse is a better bet.

An ODD number of missing cards are more likely to break evenly. An EVEN number of cards are likely to break unevenly.

Example: Six missing cards are more likely to divide 4-2 than 3-3.

## Odds of multiple finesses

The expected success rate (percent) of multiple finesses:

50%	One finesse
75%	One of two finesses
25%	Two of two finesses
50%	At least two of three finesses

## Eight Ever, Nine Never

A great bridge player, Eddie Kantar, suggested taking the finesse for a Queen when you have eight cards, but play for the drop when you have nine. The statistics are complicated. Don't treat this as rigid, bridge requires good judgement.

## Example 1

Dealer N, none vul

	<b>North</b>	
	7 6 3	
	A Q 8	
	8 5 2	
	K Q 6 2	
<b>West</b>		<b>East</b>
Q T 8 2		J 9 5
J 9 6 3		T 7 5
K T 4 3		A 9 7
T		J 9 8 4
	<b>South</b>	
	A K 4	
	K 4 2	
	Q J 6	
	A 7 5 3	

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
pass	3 NT	pass	1NT (15-17)
pass			pass

Deuce of Spades is lead

You have 8 top tricks. Another trick can be found if clubs break 3-2.

Win the spade lead and test clubs with A then K. When West shows out, you still have a double finesse in diamonds!

Lead twice to Q, then Jack of diamonds! Note how important it is to still have entries to dummy A and Q of hearts and club Q.

## Example 2 (from Eddie Kantar)

Dealer N, none vul

	<b>North</b>	
	9 8 7	
	A J T 3	
	Q J T	
	A Q T	
<b>West</b>		<b>East</b>
K 6 5 3		J T 4 2
4 2		6 5
K 9 6 2		A 8
K 9 8		7 6 5 4 2
	<b>South</b>	
	A Q	
	K Q 9 8 7	
	7 6 4 3	
	J 3	

South is declarer at 4 Hearts

Diamond is lead to ace. East returns a diamond to the king. The 3rd diamond is rought by East.

East exits with a spade, should you finesse?

Note, East should not lead a club and finesse partner! Rise with the Ace of Spades. Pull two rounds of trump ending in South. Now take the repeatable finesse in clubs by leading the Jack and ducking, then lead to the Queen, finally playing the Ace and discarding the Spade Queen.

Why this line? You still have to take the club finesse anyway...