



Introduction

A *finesse* is an attempt to gain the extra tricks needed to make your contract. You must try to win a trick when the opponents have a higher card than the one you hope to win the trick with.

Leading Towards a HIGH Card

Finessing Against the Ace

NORTH (DUMMY)

K 8

WEST

?

EAST

?

SOUTH (DECLARER)

7 2

Lead small card towards the King
If WEST has the Ace you will make 1 trick

Finessing Against the King

NORTH (DUMMY)

A Q 8

WEST

?

EAST

?

SOUTH (DECLARER)

7 6 2

Lead towards the Ace-Queen
Use the Queen if the King doesn't show



Finessing Against the Queen

NORTH (DUMMY)

A K J

WEST

?

EAST

?

SOUTH (DECLARER)

7 6 2

lead towards the Jack (A K J)

Repeating a Finesse

Sometimes you can Finesse more than once. This is called a *Repeating Finesse*

Repeating a Finesse Against the Ace

NORTH (DUMMY)

K Q x

WEST

?

EAST

?

SOUTH (DECLARER)

7 6 2

Typically used if you have K Q x in one hand
Lead towards the K Q x. If Ace doesn't come out play the Q. Then return to
the original hand and try it again



Repeating the Finesse Against the King

NORTH (DUMMY)		
A Q J		
WEST		EAST
?		?
SOUTH (DECLARER)		
7 6 5		

Lead LOW from your hand, if WEST plays low you play the Jack
Come back to your hand using a different suit
Repeat the finesse. If WEST has the King you will make 3 tricks

Finessing against TWO Cards

Missing the King and Jack

NORTH (DUMMY)		
A Q 10		
WEST		EAST
?		?
SOUTH (DECLARER)		
7 6 2		

Lead LOW towards DUMMY (A Q 10) and play the 10, if WEST plays low
Return to your hand and repeat the finesse
If EAST has both K and J you will only make 1 sure trick



Missing the King and Queen

Consider the following hand:

NORTH (DUMMY)

A J 10

WEST

?

EAST

?

SOUTH (DECLARER)

7 6 2

You have ONE sure trick with the ACE.
Try getting a second trick by playing up to the Jack first.
If WEST plays LOW dummy will play the 10.

Missing the Ace and the Queen

Consider the following hand:

NORTH (DUMMY)

K J 10

WEST

?

EAST

?

SOUTH (DECLARER)

7 6 2

Start by leading a LOW card towards the dummy and playing the 10, if WEST plays low Come back to your hand and repeat the finesse, ending up with 2 tricks



Play of the Hand – Suit Combinations



To Finesse or to Play for the Drop

North

A Q T 3

K 6

South

Goal is to make 4 Tricks (7 cards with Opp)

Play the King first then low to the 10

A Q T 4

K 7 2

Cash the Ace and King. If Jack does not fall --

Lead towards dummy's Q 10. Play the Queen.

Safety Plays

North

A J 7 6 3

K 9 8 5 4

South

Play the King First to guard against West having

Q 10 2

North

A K T 6 4

Q 9 7 3

South

First play the Ace. If either defender shows out
you can now finesse the other for the Jack.

When Entries are Limited

J 9 3

Lead the 9 . This will allow you to the lead in

A Q T 2

dummy if East has the King.

A 10 7

To Guard against East having Jxxx Cash King

K Q 9 3 2

Unblock the 10, then lead low to dummy's Ace
and finesse the 9 on the way back



Counting Winners

Counting Winners at No-Trumps

Count the winning tricks in the combined hands and then plan on how to achieve your goal.

<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>
♠A5	♠K53
♥QJ2	♥A6
♦KJ763	♦1098
♣932	♣AKQJ10

Contract is 3NT with the Q♠ Lead.

Looking at this hand, we can see that we have 8 sure winners (winners are tricks we can take without giving up the lead).

The ninth trick can be achieved by taking the initial lead (♠Q) with the ♠ K in hand and playing the ♥A and another heart to knock out the ♥K. Your A♠ is your entry back to make the ninth trick with the ♥J.

Counting Winners at Trump Contracts

My preference is to count losers in one hand.

<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>
♠A73	♠KQJ109
♥97	♥AK82
♦763	♦AJ
♣Q9432	♣85

Contract is 4♠ with the K♦ Lead.

This hand has 5 losers from South's view. (2 clubs, 1 diamond, 2 hearts).

To play this hand take the K♦ and then play the A and K of Hearts and another heart – Trumping with the 7♠. Then play the 2♠ back to your hand and play the last heart trumping with the A♠.