

Finesse

Simple Finesse

North A Q 5	You can make two tricks if west has the king. Chance of success is 50%.	Lead the two and play the queen as long as west does not play the king.	North K 6 5	You can make one trick if west has the ace. Chance of success is 50%.
South 7 3 2			South 9 4 3	Lead the three and play the king as long as west does not play the ace.

Repeated Finesse

North A Q J	You can make three tricks if west has the king. Chance of success is 50%.	Lead the two and play the queen as long as west does not play the king. Then, play the five to the jack.	North K Q 5	You can make two tricks if west has the ace. Chance of success is 50%.
South 6 5 2			South 9 4 3	Lead the three and play the king as long as west does not play the ace. Then, play the four to the queen.

Honours in Both Hands

Lead Up to Strength		Unsupported Queen	
North A 7 5	You can make three tricks if west has the king. Chance of success is 50%.	North A 6 5	You can make two tricks if east has the king. Chance of success is 50%.
South Q J T	Lead the queen and play the five as long as west does not play the king. Then, play the jack - seven.	South Q 4 3	Lead the three and play the ace. Then, play the five to the queen.

Double Finesse

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

It is possible to make four tricks with this combination. Play the three to the ten and then the four to the queen. The chance of making four tricks is just 8%.

If east has four cards including the king and jack, just one trick is possible. The chance of that happening is 16%. More likely, the king and jack will be in different hands and you will make two or three tricks.

Deal 1

North

♠ K 6 4
♥ K 5
♦ K 8 3 2
♣ A J T 5

North: 1♦
East: 1♠
South: Double
North: 1NT
South: 2NT
North: 3NT
East leads Q♠

South

♠ A 8 3
♥ A 9 7 3
♦ A 4
♣ 8 7 4 2

There are seven sure tricks (2+2+2+1). The other two tricks will have to come from clubs. The hope is that east does not have both the king and queen of clubs.

Win the lead with the A♠ and lead the two of clubs to the jack. North will probably win with the king or queen and return another spade. Win that with the king and get back into dummy with the A♦.

Now, play the four of clubs to the ten and hope that north does not have the remaining club honour. You will be lucky three times out of four.

Deal 2

West

♠ A 7 4
♥ J T 6 5
♦ J T 4
♣ K J 8

East: 1♣
West: 1♥
East: 2NT
West: 3NT
South leads Q♠

East

♠ K 8 2
♥ A 3 2
♦ A K 7
♣ A 7 4 2

There are seven sure tricks (2+1+2+2). There are several possible sources for the extras:

1. The hearts may be favourable placed. The problem is that to establish an extra heart, you will probably lose the lead twice.
2. The diamond finesse may provide a trick.
3. The club finesse may provide a trick.
4. The clubs may break 3-3.

Since we can only afford to lose the lead once, hearts are out. Try and utilise the other three possibilities and hope that two of them work.

Win the opening lead with the AS and play the jack. If north does not play the queen, play the seven from east's hand.

If south wins with the queen, one of the three chances has gone. Win the spade return from south and play the two of clubs to the jack. If that does not win, it is your unlucky day. Hopefully, the jack will win. Now, cash the two top clubs and hope the suit is evenly divided.

If the earlier diamond finesse was successful, take the club finesse as just described. If it is your lucky day, the club finesse will work and the suit will divide evenly, allowing you to make ten tricks.

Entries

Ducking

West

♠ A K 2
♥ A K 3
♦ 7 4 3
♣ A T 7 5

West: 1♣
East: 1♦
West: 2NT
East: 3NT

North leads Q♥

East

♠ 8 7 6
♥ 5 2
♦ A K 6 5 2
♣ Q 4 3

There are seven sure tricks (2+2+2+1). The other two tricks could come from either clubs or diamonds. For clubs to work, there will need to be an extremely favourable lay of the cards so by far the best bet is diamonds.

If we cash the ace and king of diamonds, we can then give up a diamond. As long as the diamonds break 3-2 (a 68% chance), there will then remain two diamond winners. The problem is that there is no entry left in dummy to get to the winners.

To overcome this, give up a diamond before playing the ace and the king. On regaining the lead, you can take four diamond tricks as long as the suit breaks 3-2.

If either defender does not follow to the second diamond trick, pray for a miracle in clubs. Play the three to the ten and hope that takes out the king. Now you can make three club tricks if the hearts break 4-4 and the clubs break 3-3. Unlikely but not impossible.

Overtaking

West

♠ A Q 2
♥ A T 9 3
♦ K
♣ A J 5 4 3

West: 1♣
East: 1♦
West: 1♥
East: 1NT
West: 3NT

South leads J♠

East

♠ K 7 5
♥ 5 2
♦ A J T 9 8
♣ 8 7 6

There are seven sure tricks (3+1+2+1). The other two tricks could come from either clubs or diamonds. If clubs, the lead will need to be lost twice. There is then the danger that the defence will set up some heart tricks. So, it is better if diamond tricks are established.

One way would be to cash the K♦, cross to the K♠ and start playing diamonds from dummy. The problem is that when the defence take their diamond trick there is no entry remaining in dummy for the winning diamonds.

The solution is to overtake the diamond king with the ace. Now run the diamonds. The defence can take the queen but the K♠ remains as an entry to the diamond winners.

Of course, this all assumes that you won the first trick in west's hand, preserving the all-important K♠ as an entry.

Deal 3

North

♠ 7 6 2
♥ 8 5 2
♦ 8 5 4
♣ A 9 8 2

South: 2NT
North: 3NT

West leads 6♦

South

♠ K 3
♥ A Q J
♦ A 7 2
♣ K Q J T 3

There are seven sure tricks (0+1+1+5). The other two tricks will have to come from hearts by means of two finesses. To take the finesses, two entries are required in the north hand. The only entries are in the club suit and care must be taken how that suit is played.

Win the ace of diamonds as soon as east looks like winning the trick. You can't risk east leading spades through the K3. Play the ten of clubs and win with the ace. Take the heart finesse. Now, play the three of clubs to the nine and take the second heart finesse.

Deal 4

West

♠ K 8 2
♥ A Q T
♦ A Q J T
♣ 6 5 3

West: 1NT
East: 3NT

North leads Q♠

East

♠ A 7
♥ K J 2
♦ 8 5 4 3
♣ Q 8 7 4

There are six sure tricks (2+3+1+0). The remaining three tricks will come from the diamond suit by as many as three finesses against the king. The three entries are the king and jack of hearts and the ace of spades. The heart suit must be managed carefully.

Win the first trick with the ace of spades and take a diamond finesse. Play the ten of hearts to the jack and take another diamond finesse. North shows out, so a third finesse is needed. Play the queen of hearts to the king and then take the final diamond finesse.

Deals 1 to 4, The Full Hands

<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>S</td><td>♠ K64</td><td>Pts</td><td>Fr</td><td>%</td></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>♥ K5</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>♦ K832</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>♦ JT42</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>D</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>♦ JT96</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>C</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>♣ Q93</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1 ♠ QJT52 1 ♥ Q86 1 ♦ Q75 1 ♣ K6</p> <p>1 ♠ A83 1 ♥ A973 1 ♦ A4 1 ♣ 8742</p> <p>Opt res: NS 3N; NS 5C; 400</p>	N	S	♠ K64	Pts	Fr	%	N	3	3	♥ K5			S	3	3	♦ K832			H	3	3	♦ JT42			D	3	3	♦ JT96			C	5	5	♣ Q93			<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td>♠ 96</td><td>Pts</td><td>Fr</td><td>%</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ Q864</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>♦ Q53</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>♣ QT53</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>2 ♠ A74 2 ♥ JT9 2 ♦ JT42 2 ♣ KJ8</p> <p>2 E W ♠ QJT53 2 N 4 4 ♥ K75 2 S 3 3 ♦ 986 2 H 4 4 ♣ 96</p> <p>Opt res: EW 3N; -430</p>	♠ 96	Pts	Fr	%	♥ Q864				♦ Q53				♣ QT53				<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td>N</td><td>S</td><td>♠ 762</td><td>Pts</td><td>Fr</td><td>%</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>♥ 852</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>♦ 854</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>D</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>♦ K963</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>C</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>♣ A982</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>3 ♠ A98 3 ♥ T96 3 ♦ KJ963 3 ♣ 74</p> <p>3 E W ♠ QJT54 3 N 1 1 ♥ A32 3 S/EW ♦ QT 3 H 1 1 ♣ 65</p> <p>Opt res: EW 3N; -430</p>	N	S	♠ 762	Pts	Fr	%	S	2	3	♥ 852			H	3	3	♦ 854			D	3	3	♦ K963			C	3	3	♣ A982			<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td>♠ QJT96</td><td>Pts</td><td>Fr</td><td>%</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ 87543</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>♦ 2</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>♣ A2</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>4 ♠ K82 4 ♥ AQT 4 ♦ AQJT 4 ♣ 653</p> <p>4 E W ♠ A7 4 N 3 3 ♥ KJ2 4 S/EW ♦ 8543 4 H 1 1 ♣ Q874</p> <p>Opt res: S 3N; 400</p>	♠ QJT96	Pts	Fr	%	♥ 87543				♦ 2				♣ A2			
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