

Missing Cards Break %

2 Missing Cards

1-1 Break	52%
2-0 Break	48%

3 Missing Cards

2-1 Break	78%
3-0 Break	22%

4 Missing Cards

2-2 Break	40%
3-1 Break	50%
4-0 Break	10%

5 Missing Cards

3-2 Break	68%
4-1 Break	28%
5-0 Break	4%

6 Missing Cards

3-3 Break	36%
4-2 Break	48%
5-1 Break	15%
6-0 Break	1%

7 Missing Cards

4-3 Break	62%
5-2 Break	30%
6-1 Break	7%
7-0 Break	1%

Making Extra Tricks

From start of the hand:

- In a suit contract we count our possible loser in the hand with longer trumps
- In a NT contract we count our Immediate winners and look for ways to get the extra tricks

Our plan to get extra tricks to make the contract, uses 3 main techniques:

- Ruffing (in a suit contract)
- Finessing
- Discarding, Establishing a long suit

The Simple Finesse

Dummy (North)

A Q 2

7 3

Declarer (South)

Sometimes the honor we are leading towards is accompanied by a higher non touching honor, a familiar form of play called **Finesse**.

Here we lead towards the queen hoping that **West has the king (on side)**.

50% chance of success if West has the King

The Simple Finesse

Dummy

K J 2

A 7 3

Declarer

Here to make all 3 tricks, you cash the ace and:

lead towards the jack hoping **West has the queen**. 50% chance

The Simple Finesse

Dummy

9 6 4

J 8 2

A K T 5

Q 7 3

Declarer

Even when you only hold the queen, you can setup a trick. In this case if **East holds the ace and king**, you can score a trick. When you lead from dummy towards the queen, East should raise immediately with king or ace to stop you scoring an immediate trick. You can then go back to dummy and repeat. You are lucky to find East with both king and the ace.

25% chance of success is better than 0%

The Simple Finesse

North

♠ 7 6 3

♥ A Q 8

♦ 8 5 2

♣ K Q 6 2

♠ 2

♠ A K 4

♥ K 4 2

♦ Q J 6

♣ A 7 5 3

West leads ♠ 2 against your 3 NT contract

- How many top tricks?
- What is the best chance of getting the extra trick?
- If it fails, what is your alternate plan?

The Simple Finesse

North

♠ 7 6 3

♥ A Q 8

♦ 8 5 2

♣ K Q 6 2

♠ Q T 8 2

♥ J 9 6 3

♦ K T 4 3

♣ T

♠ J 9 5

♥ T 7 5

♦ A 9 7

♣ J 9 8 4

♠ A K 4

♥ K 4 2

♦ Q J 6

♣ A 7 5 3

- We have 8 top tricks, needing one more
- ♣ is our best chance, on 2nd ♣ we notice the bad break, we should stop at that point
- Our backup plan is now ♦ suit finesse

Finesse by leading a high card

	<u>Dummy</u>	
	A 4 2	
K 9 7 3		8 6 5
	<u>Q</u> J T	
	<u>Declarer</u>	

You lead the queen and if West duck, you lead the jack.

If West covers the queen with the king. **Just kill the King!!**

Finesse by leading a high card

	<u>Dummy</u>	
	A J 7 2	
K 8 6 3		5
	<u>Q</u> T 9 4	
	<u>Declarer</u>	

This is a similar case, if you lead low towards the jack, you are in the **wrong hand**.

Best is to **lead the queen** and if wins you simply repeat the finesse.

A similar position, but not so!

	<u>Dummy</u>	
	A J 7 5 3	
K		T 9 2
	Q 8 6 <u>4</u>	
	<u>Declarer</u>	

This is a similar case, but it is wrong to lead the queen as will be covered by the king and East will score a trick.

You should play low towards the ace jack, intending to finesse the jack. Once stiff king appears (**13% probability**), you will score all 5 tricks.

Most will get this one wrong

Dummy

A 8 2

Q J 4 3

Declarer

Here no point in playing the queen (9, T & K are missing).

Best is to cash the ace and play low towards Q J 4. you score 3 tricks

- when suit braks 3-3 (36%) and
- when East has the king

The two-way finesse

Dummy

A T 2

K J 4

Declarer

If you think **West** has the queen, you finesse the ten. If you think **East** has the queen, you finesse the jack.

A Tip!

In absence of a clue, best is to play the other suits and if one opponent has majority of the cards in this suit, we should assume he has the queen

The case of missing jack!

Dummy

K 9 3

Q T 4

Declarer

This is a similar case; you are going to lose one trick to the ace.

What about Jack?

Remember previous tip!?

You should play the other suits and place the jack with defender with majority of the cards in this suit.

Should you finesse or go for drop?

Dummy

K J 6 3

A 7 5 2

Declarer

With 8 cards, we finesse. Cash the ace and finesse the jack.

Finesse is 50% and drop is 33%.

Eight Ever, Nine Never

Should you finesse or go for drop?

Dummy

A J 6 4 3

K 7 5 2

Declarer

With 9 cards, odds are marginally in favour of drop (53%).
We play the king and then low towards ace with intention of going for drop.

A similar tip!

However if East was known to have another long side suit, odds are better for finessing the jack (placing the Queen with West).

Eight Ever, Nine Never, but never say never

Missing King with 10 cards!?

Dummy
A J 9 8 4 2

Q T 7 6
Declarer

With a combined holding of 10 cards, we play the queen and run it if West plays low.

A Tip!

With 11 cards, we go for the drop.

Should we cash a high card before finessing?

Dummy
A K 9 2

J T 5 3
Declarer

Here with 8 cards, odds are in favor of finessing

A Tip!

Before finessing, we should ***cash the ace first***
- so we won't lose to a singleton queen at East (3%).

What about this combination?

Dummy

A K J T 9 2

6 3

Declarer

With 8 cards, odds are in favour of finesse

If we cash the ace (**3%**), we can only finesse once after that.

If West has Q x x x (**14%**), we can't pick up the queen.

- We should finesse on the first trick

A Tip!

Bridge is a thinking game !!

Double Finesse

Dummy

A Q 10

4 3 2

Declarer

Here we are *missing two honors* needing two finesses
We lead a low cards and play dummy's 10

- If west holds both K & J, luck is with us. 10 wins and we return to hand and play towards Queen.
- More often honors are split and we make two tricks

A Tip!

We need to finesse **the lower card** (10) in first round

Double Finesse – Similar Combination

Dummy

K J 7

4 3 2

Declarer

Trying to make as many tricks as possible

We lead low to dummy's Jack on the first round

- If **West** has both **Ace and Queen** we make two tricks
- If honors are split, we make one trick
- If East has both honors, none

*Again we need to **finesse the lower card** (Jack) first round*

Double Finesse

Dummy

K T 9

4 3 2

Declarer

Trying to make **one trick**

- Leading low to King (**assuming West has the Ace**) is a 50% chance
- Leading low to T (or 9) is an immediate success if West has both Q and J
 - More often T with lose to Jack or Queen
 - We finesse the 9 in second round

This will score when **West** holds Queen or Jack or Doubleton Ace

We will score 75% of the time

Rising with King on second round scores 62% of the time

Double Finesse – a choice of play

Dummy

Q T 9

A 4 2

Declarer

How to play this suit for 2 tricks?

- Playing the ace and then low towards the Queen is about 50%

A better idea is a Double Finesse

- Leading the Queen towards Ace
 - If East has the King, cover or not you make two tricks
 - If Queen loses to King at West, you run the Ten

With this line, we will score 75% of the time

Double Finesse – a choice of play

Dummy

J T 9

A 4 2

Declarer

Here we replaced dummy's Queen with the Jack

Strangely prospects are exactly the same as before

A better idea is a Double Finesse

- Leading the Jack towards the Ace
- If it loses, we then run the Ten

We should score two tricks unless West has both missing honors

The Deep Finesse

Dummy

A Q 9

J T 8 2

K 5 4

7 6 3

Declarer

You aim to make 2 tricks, you lead towards 9. It is called **deep finesse** as defenders have **3 cards** higher than card that you are finessing (**T J K**):

- If **West** has the Jack and Ten, you make 2 tricks if West plays low. If West insert Ten or Jack, we cover with Queen and finesse the 9 next.
- If 9 loses to jack or ten at East, you still can finesse Queen, nothing lost

The Deep Finesse

Dummy

A J 9

K T 8 4

Q 7 2

6 5 3

Declarer

A similar position

If you lead low to Jack, you only succeed when **West** has both K and Q

A better idea is to take a deep finesse of the 9

- It will succeed if West holding is headed by K-T or Q-T (twice more likely)
- The nine will force East honor and set up a successful finesse of the Jack

Simply we assume K & Q are split and **West has the Ten**

The Deep Finesse

Dummy

Q T 3

K J 9 2

A 8 5

7 6 4

Declarer

Deep finesse is very common, a third example:

You lead low to Ten on first round, forcing East's ace.

You can then lead towards dummy's Queen establishing a trick in the suit

As long as King and Ace are split and West has the Jack, you make it

The Deep Finesse

North

♠ Q 7 4

♥ Q 9 3

♦ A J 9 8

♣ K 9 3

♣ Q

♠ A

♥ A K J T 6 4

♦ 6 4 3

♣ A 8 2

West leads ♣ Q against your ambitious small slam in hearts:

How many losers do we have? 3, two in ♦ and one in ♣

It looks a hopeless situation!!

Can we possibly make the contract?

The Deep Finesse

North

♠ Q 7 4

♥ Q 9 3

♦ A J 9 8

♣ K 9 3

♠ T 8 6 3

♥ 5

♦ K T 7 2

♣ Q J T 5

♠ K J 9 5 2

♥ 8 7 2

♦ Q 5

♣ 7 6 4

♠ A

♥ A K J T 6 4

♦ 6 4 3

♣ A 8 2

West leads ♣ Q against your small slam in hearts:

♦ is our only chance, assuming **K & Q are split** and **West has the Ten**
→ **It will restrict ♦ loser to one and a discard for our ♣ loser**

The Backward Finesse

North

♠ T 6 3

♥ K 9 7 4 2

♦ A 5 3

♣ K Q

♠ A

♠ Q 2

♥ A Q J 8 6 3

♦ K J 9

♣ 7 5

West

1NT (15-17)

Pass

North

Pass

4 ♥

East

Pass

Pass

South

2 ♥

Pass

Ace of ♠ lead

How many losers you have?

How many points East has?

The Backward Finesse

North

♠ T 6 3

♥ K 9 7 4 2

♦ A 5 3

♣ K Q

♠ A K J 7

♥ T 5

♦ Q 8 2

♣ A J 9 4

♠ 9 8 5 4

♥ ---

♦ T 7 6 4

♣ T 8 6 3 2

♠ Q 2

♥ A Q J 8 6 3

♦ K J 9

♣ 7 5

We have 3 certain losers (2 in ♠ and Ace of ♣)

We have to avoid ♦ loser and almost certain Q is with West

We should play Jack of ♦ and if not covered let it run

- If covered we should take with the ace and now finesse the Ten

The Ruffing Finesse

		<u>Dummy</u>			
		A Q J T 3			
8 6 4					K 9 7 2
		5			
		<u>Declarer</u>			

If this is a *side suit* in a *suit contract*

You can catch East's King with a **ruffing finesse**

You cash the ace and then lead the Queen:

- If East covers with king, you will **ruff**
- Otherwise you **discard a loser** and continue playing dummy's honors until king is played

The Ruffing Finesse

North

♠ A T 4 3
♥ K Q J T 6
♦ J 5
♣ A 6

♣ J

♠ K Q J 8 7 6 2
♥ ---
♦ A Q T 4
♣ 7 5

West leads ♣ J against your ambitious small slam in spades:

How Many losers do you have?

What can you do about it?

What is the chance of you making your contract?

The Ruffing Finesse

North

♠ A T 4 3
♥ K Q J T 6
♦ J 5
♣ A 6

♠ 5
♥ A 9 7 4 2
♦ K 8 3
♣ J T 9 3

♠ 9
♥ 8 5 3
♦ 9 7 6 2
♣ K Q 8 4 2

♠ K Q J 8 7 6 2
♥ ---
♦ A Q T 4
♣ 7 5

We have one loser in ♣ and one potential loser in ♦.

A successful ♦ finesse, a 50% chance will work.

You can increase your chance to 100% by a Ruffing Finesse

- *We run the King of ♥ and if not covered discard our ♣ loser*
- *If it loses to West, we now have 3 ♥ discards for ♦s*

Let's Play

North

Hand 1

♠ A
♥ T 5 4 3
♦ J 4 3
♣ K Q J T 9

♠ Q T 9 5 4
♥ 7 6
♦ K 8 7 6
♣ 8 7

♠ 8 7 6 3
♥ K Q 9 8
♦ T 9 5
♣ A 6

♠ K J 2
♥ A J 2
♦ A Q 2
♣ 5 4 3 2

South (Dealer)

3 NT contract, lead ♠5, plan the play

Let's Play

North

Hand 2

♠ A J T
♥ T 9 8 7
♦ 6 5 4 3
♣ K J

♠ K Q 9 8 7
♥ 3 2
♦ Q J 9
♣ 6 5 4

♠ 6 5 4
♥ A
♦ K T 8 7
♣ A T 9 8 7

♠ 3 2
♥ K Q J 6 5 4
♦ A 2
♣ Q 3 2

South (Dealer)

4 ♥ contract, lead K of ♠ and in first opportunity switch to ♦

Let's Play

North

Hand 3

♠ 6 5 2
♥ A T 5
♦ A J 4
♣ K 7 4 3

♠ K J 8 4 3
♥ 8 7 2
♦ 9 7 6
♣ Q 8

♠ Q T 7
♥ J 9 6 4
♦ Q T 2
♣ T 9 5

♠ A 9
♥ K Q 3
♦ K 8 5 3
♣ A J 6 2

South (Dealer)

♠ 4 is lead against you 3NT contract

Let's Play

North

Hand 4

♠ 7 6 5
♥ J T 9 8
♦ A Q
♣ K Q J T

♠ T
♥ A K Q 5
♦ 8 7 6 5
♣ 5 4 3 2

♠ 3 2
♥ 7 6
♦ K J T 9
♣ A 9 8 7 6

♠ A K Q J 9 8 4
♥ 4 3 2
♦ 4 3 2
♣ ---

South (Dealer)

4 ♠ contract, West cashes A K & Q of ♥ and lead a 4th ♥

Let's Play

North

Hand 1

♠ A
♥ T 5 4 3
♦ J 4 3
♣ K Q J T 9

♠ 5

♠ K J 2
♥ A J 2
♦ A Q 2
♣ 5 4 3 2

South (Dealer)

3 NT contract, West leads ♠ 5

- We have 4 tricks on top needing 5 more tricks
- ♣ will yield 4 after knocking the Ace
- East is a danger hand (can lead ♠ through our K J)
- ♦ finesse can safely yield the extra trick (win or lose the King)
 - On trick 2 we should play ♦ J and let it run

Let's Play

North

Hand 2

♠ A J T

♥ T 9 8 7

♦ 6 5 4 3

♣ K J

♠ K

♠ 3 2

♥ K Q J 6 5 4

♦ A 2

♣ Q 3 2

South (Dealer)

4 ♥ contract, West leads ♠K

- We have 4 losers in each suit, nothing we can do about C, H & S loser
- ♠K lead allows us to establish a winner in ♠ to discard ♦ loser
- If we take the ♠K with ace & play the Jack, they take with Queen and switch to ♦
- Best is to duck the King, and then finesse the Jack and discard ♦2 on Ace

Let's Play

North

Hand 3

♠ 6 5 2
♥ A T 5
♦ A J 4
♣ K 7 4 3

♠ 4

♠ A 9
♥ K Q 3
♦ K 8 5 3
♣ A J 6 2

South (Dealer)

♠ 4 is lead against you 3NT contract

- We have 8 top tricks requiring 1 more
- Finesse in ♣ and ♦ suits can yield the extra trick, each is 50% chance
- In ♣ suit, playing A and K, there is 33% chance that Q may drop
- If this fails, we can finesse ♦. This combine two chances

Let's Play

North

Hand 4

♠ 7 6 5

♥ J T 9 8

♦ A Q

♣ K Q J T

♥ A

♠ A K Q J 9 8 4

♥ 4 3 2

♦ 4 3 2

♣ ---

South (Dealer)

4♠ contract, West leads ♥A

We have 3 ♥ losers, two ♦ losers

- Finesse of ♦ and ♦ ruff is a 50% chance

- Ruffing finesse in ♣ is an option

- West cashes A, K and Q of ♥ (he most likely doesn't have the ♣A)

We should preserve ♠4 to be able to get back to dummy