

ALL ABOUT FINESSES

To finesse in bridge simply means to surround a high card(s) that an opponent may hold. There are many different types of finesesses. Examples include leading towards high cards to take a finesse or leading a high card of your own with the intention of trapping your opponent's high card.

SIMPLE FINESSES

The simple finesse requires leading towards high cards and simply covering whichever card your opponent plays.



In example a), declarer leads towards the ♠AQ, inserting the Q if the opponent plays low. Similarly, example b), declarer leads towards the ♠Q hoping the ♠K is behind. The ♠Q will win in both examples 50% of the time.

- Don't lead out unsupported honours

PUSH FINESSES

The term push finesse refers to leading a high card to capture an opponent's honour card. The most common are combinations missing only the king.



In a), declarer would lead the ♠J. If the next player holds the SK it will be trapped. In b), the ♠10 is missing. If declarer leads the ♠J and the next player covers with the ♠K, the ♠10 will become a winner.

- Don't lead the Jack without the 10.

REPEATING FINESSES

The term push finesse refers to leading a high card to capture an opponent's honour card. The most common are combinations missing only the king.



In a), you are missing the ♠K but hold all of the support cards down to the ♠9. If the ♠K is inside you would like to remain in declarer's hand to repeat a successful. Start by

leading the ♠Q. If the next player covers with the ♠K, all cards are high. If they do not cover and the ♠Q wins the trick, declarer remains in hand to repeat the finesse.

In b), similar positive thoughts should be applied by declarer. Picture West with ♠Kxxx. A good defender won't cover when you advance the ♠J. Declarer will need to be in hand three times to succeed.

If declarer leads the ♠J and it wins the trick, all of dummy's spades are now higher than declarer's. Dummy must be on lead after the 2nd finesse. Declarer is now required to waste an entry (if one exists) back to hand to repeat the finesse. How to avoid this situation?

- Lead the ♠9 on the 1st round. Dummy contributes the ♠4
- Lead the ♠J on the 2nd round. Dummy plays the ♠10 underneath.
- Declarer remains in hand to take a successful 3rd finesse.