

MINI UNIT 2 Finesse ♠♥♦♣

Finesse

Look at this suit

♦ A Q 8 7 4 2

? ♦ K West

East ? ♦ K

♦ 9 6 3

You, North or South, are declaring. You don't know whether ♦K is in the East or the West hand. If you play a small card from South and play ♦Q from North (assuming West has not played the king) you have a 50% chance of winning the trick, depending on the location of the king. If West has ♦K the queen will win, but if East has it your queen will be beaten.

Here are some other examples of finesse positions:

1 ♥ A K J 5 (West) ♥ 7 4 3 (East)

Lead a small card from East. Here you are looking for the queen, so if no queen appears from the South hand, play the jack from West hoping that the queen is in the South hand.

2 ♥ A J 9 (West) ♥ K T 8 (East)

Here you could take the finesse either way, looking for the queen.

3 ♥ K 6 5 (West) ♥ 7 4 (East)

This position is slightly different, but the principle is the same. Lead a small card from East towards your king. If the ace is in the South hand you will be able to make a trick with your King. So once again, you have a 50 % chance of success depending on the location of the ace. Of course if you just lead out your king, you will lose it 100% of the time

4 ♥ K Q 5 (West) ♥ 7 4 (East)

This is the same idea: if you have a holding like this, try to lead towards your high cards twice. If the ace is in the South hand you can make **both** your king and your queen. If North holds the ace you will only make one of your top cards. The important point of examples 3 and 4 is that you **lead towards your honours** and don't just lead them out.

5 ♥ A 6 5 (West) ♥ Q 7 4 (East)

In this final example, there is no point in leading the Queen. Lead from West towards your Queen hoping that the King is in the North hand. You could cash the Ace first if you wished.

Quizzes ♠♥♦♣

Q1 You, West, are Declarer – how should you play the suit below?

♥ 7 6 3

♥ A Q 9 4 2

West

East (Dummy)

Answer: Lead a heart from West towards Dummy. If the ♥K does not appear from North, play the ♥Q. If North holds the ♥K, Dummy will win this trick. If South holds the ♥K, your ♥Q will lose to the ♥K. You have taken a finesse. You have a 50% chance that the ♥K in the North hand.

Q2 You, West, are Declarer – how should you play the suit below?

♥ 7 6 3

♥ K Q 5 4 2

West

East (Dummy)

Answer: Lead a heart from the West hand towards the high cards in Dummy. You are hoping that North holds the ♥A. If North has the ♥A your honour heart can win the trick. If you later repeat the process, leading from the West hand, it might be possible to win both the ♥K & ♥Q. If South holds ♥A it will beat one of your honours. You have a 50% chance of making both high cards depending on which defender holds the Ace.

SET BOARDS

<p>Board 3 ♠ 10 9 4 South Deals ♥ 9 6 2 None Vul ♦ A K ♣ K Q J 6 5</p> <p>♠ 7 5 3 ♠ K 6 2 ♥ J 8 5 4 ♥ A 10 ♦ Q J 10 5 4 ♦ 8 7 6 ♣ 2 ♣ 9 8 7 4 3</p> <p>♠ A Q J 8 ♥ K Q 7 3 ♦ 9 3 2 ♣ A 10</p> <p>West North East South Pass 3 NT All pass 1 NT</p> <p>Lead: ♦ Q</p>	<p>North bids game knowing N/S have min 28 HCP Theme: Finesse, high from short side Lead: ♦Q – top of 3 card sequence Winners: 1♠ 2♦ 5♣ Play: Win lead & try ♠ finesse (play ♠T from North) & only play ♠A if East plays ♠K – can make 4♠ tricks. Play ♣A & ♣T & then back over to ♦A to play remaining ♣s</p>
<p>Board 6 ♠ A K J 6 East Deals ♥ 6 4 None Vul ♦ 10 8 6 4 ♣ Q 8 3</p> <p>♠ 5 4 2 ♠ Q 10 9 ♥ A J 7 ♥ K 8 2 ♦ J 9 7 ♦ A K Q 2 ♣ 10 9 4 2 ♣ K 7 5</p> <p>♠ 8 7 3 ♥ Q 10 9 5 3 ♦ 5 3 ♣ A J 6</p> <p>West North East South 1 NT All pass</p> <p>Lead: ♥ 5</p>	<p>West only has 6 HCP – not enough for game & passes Theme: Finesse Lead: ♥5 (4th highest from honour) Winners: 2♥ 4♦ Play: Win lead ♥K & then cash 4♦ tricks. Next play ♥2 & West's ♥J (unless South plays ♥Q) – finesse works & play ♥A for 7 tricks. Could try finessing ♣K, hoping ♣A is in North but this fails</p>