Lesson 39 Examples

Some card combinations are quite dull:

♥A72

♥KQ6

♥KJ2

♥A53

With this holding we will make 3 tricks. No more and no less. We can cash our tricks in any order we please.

This time we cash the ace, then lead low to the jack, finessing against the queen. We make 3 tricks 50% of the time, when West has ♥Q.

Percentage Plays

a)   ♠J10965

♠AQ7432

b)   ♠Q1096

♠AJ872

Lead ♠J from dummy. If East plays ♠8 should we finesse or play ♠A, hoping the king drops? We are missing just 2 cards. They will divide evenly, **a 1-1 break,** 52% of the time. One player will hold both cards, **a 2-0 break**, 48% of the time. So we *play for the drop*.

This time lead ♠Q from dummy. If East follows with any low card, (♠5, 4 or 3) - **finesse**. If ♠Q wins continue with ♠10, and run that unless East plays ♠K. The difference is in the number of cards we hold. In a) we have 11 cards, here only 9. The king is very unlikely to drop

c)   ♠J1062

♠AK943

d)   ♠A543

♠KJ76

Start by cashing the ace in case the queen is singleton. When the queen does not drop and both East and West play low there are 2 missing cards ♠Qx. Play ♠K next, relying on the 2-2 break.

This time we have 8 cards, missing the queen and ten. Lead to ♠A, then back towards ♠KJ7. If nothing interesting happens finesse the jack *Eight ever, nine never* (finesse)

'Best' Plays

a)   ♠J972

♠-   ♠K103

♠AQ8654

b)   ♠Q876

♠A5432

Lead ♠J from dummy, run it if East plays low. *NB: it is wrong to play low to ♠Q with **10 cards.*** If East has ♠K10x the ♠Q scores but East's K10 must make a trick later. If East covers ♠J and West shows out you have a *marked finesse* against ♠10.

This time leading the queen is silly – it is a 'Chinese finesse'. Cash the ace, then lead *towards the unsupported honour*, ♠Q

c)   ♣J10

♣AK96

d)   ♣43

♣AKJ1072

Here we cannot afford to cash the ace before we finesse. If East has ♣Q873 we must run the jack on the first round.

We must finesse on the first round to pick up ♣Qxxx in East. Laying down ♣A would drop a singleton queen, but a small singleton is four times as likely.

e)   ♣J43

♣AK72

f)   ♣ J4

♣AK72

Cash the ace than *lead towards the unsupported honour*, the jack.

Here we cannot afford to cash the ace first – if you lead towards a singleton honour the queen is bound to win!

Lesson 39 Examples

'Sure Trick' Plays

a) ♦ Q1053   With this combination you can make 5 tricks no matter how the cards are divided. ***When the missing cards are Jxxx*** start with a high card from the hand with 2 top
    ♦ AK942   honours (here ♦A). If everybody follows you continue to play top cards, but if anybody shows out you have a ***marked finesse*** against his partner's remaining Jxx.

Combination finesses

a)   ♥AJ10

      ♥543

Start by playing low to ♥10. If West has ♥KQ he must ***split his honours*** or you make 2 tricks at once. If West plays low and East wins ♥K or ♥Q lead low to ♥J later, making 2 tricks unless East has ♥KQ. (A 75% chance)

b)   ♥AJ9

      ♥543

This time play low to ♥9. If East has ♥10 you make just 1 trick. If West has ♥10 and East wins ♥K or ♥Q you can lead low to ♥J making 2 tricks if West has ♥K10x or ♥Q10x.

c)   ♥AJ6

      ♥543

The only hope of 2 tricks is that West has ♥KQ - a 25% shot. Still worth a try!

d)   ♥KQ10

      ♥543

Start by playing low to ♥K. If East wins ♥A finesse ♥10 next time. If ♥K wins play low to ♥Q. (Note that East gives you a nasty guess by refusing to take his ace on the first round)
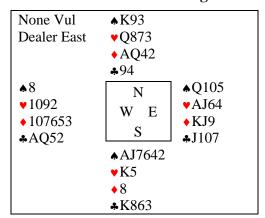
e)   ♥K109

      ♥543

Low to ♥9 will probably lose to ♥Q or ♥J Later try low to ♥10 - you win a trick whenever West has ♥Q or ♥J. It does not matter who has ♥A

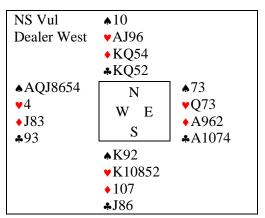# Lesson 39 Examples

Some Real Hands where Logic is More Important than Rules.

	None Vul	♠K93	
	Dealer East	♥Q873	
		♦AQ42	
		♣94	

♠8	N	♠Q105
♥1092	W E	♥AJ64
♦107653	S	♦KJ9
♣AQ52		♣J107

	♠AJ7642	
	♥K5	
	♦8	
	♣K863	

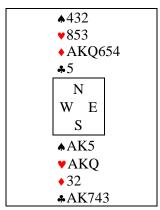| *West*	*North*	*East*	*South*
-	-	1NT	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠

West leads ♥10. East wins ♥A and returns ♣J to ♣K and ♣A. West cashes ♣Q and switches to a diamond. You have 22 HCP between the hands, and West has shown 6 so far, leaving 12 outstanding. East opened 1NT, 12-14 HCP. ***He must hold ♣Q,*** so ignore the percentage play and finesse.

	NS Vul	♠10	
	Dealer West	♥AJ96	
		♦KQ54	
		♣KQ52	

♠AQJ8654	N	♠73
♥4	W E	♥Q73
♦J83	S	♦A962
♣93		♣A1074

	♠K92	
	♥K10852	
	♦107	
	♣J86	

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
3♠	Dble	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads ♣9 to East's ace. East cashes ♦A and and returns ♠7 to ♠J. South has lost 3 tricks and must pick up the trump suit for no losers. West has shown 7 spades in the bidding and has not been able to ruff anything. He is very likely to hold a singleton heart, so you should finesse.

A Safety Play

	♠432
	♥853
	♦AKQ654
	♣5

| N |
| W   E |
| S |

	♠AK5
	♥AKQ
	♦32
	♣AK743

South plays in 6NT. He can count 10 Sure Tricks: 2 spades, 3 hearts, 3 diamonds and 2 clubs. If diamonds break 3-2 he will make 3 extra diamond tricks, 13 tricks in all. But if either defender has 4 diamonds (which happens 28% of the time) declarer will go down in his slam if he plays diamonds 'from the top', laying down ♦AKQ. He makes no length tricks in diamonds, and no more than the 10 tricks he started with A good player guards against such unlucky breaks. He plays *low from both hands* on the first round of diamonds, conceding an 'unnecessary' trick to guard against a bad break. Later he plays ♦AKQ and makes 2 length tricks unless the suit breaks 5-0.

(Note that our expert can afford to lose the lead because he has all the other suits double stopped. Safety plays are a luxury - you should not make them if losing the lead means you will go down!)