

# The Exciting World of Bridge – Lesson 11

## Tricks to take Tricks

### Introduction

Tonight's lesson is going to be a little different. I'm going to get you playing more hands than we have on prior nights. The goal is to teach as we go without long breaks in between. I've got several techniques that I want to talk to you about that I think are best taught this way. Hopefully it works well...here we go...

### Hand 1 – Leading a High Card to Repeat a Finesse

	♠A4	
	♥AQJ965	
	♦954	
	♣AK	
♠T9652		♠KJ8
♥K84		♥7
♦8		♦KQJT32
♣T982		♣QJ4
	♠Q73	
	♥T32	
	♦A76	
	♣7653	

North is the dealer and opens 1♥. East makes a 2♦ overcall after which South bids 2♥. West passes and now North, with a maximum, bids 4♥ ending the auction. East leads the ♦K. Make your plan.

Declarer (North) has 4 losers, 2 diamonds one spade and a trump. Now that your ace of diamonds has been driven out your diamond losers become fast losers so there is no hope in getting rid of one of them on a spade. It seems our only hope is to take a finesse in hearts and hope that West has the ♥K. Is there a specific way that we need to play the hearts? There sure is! We MUST start with the ♥T and if West doesn't "cover" it, we need to play a low heart from our hand. If we instead start with a low heart we won't be able to repeat the finesse as we do not have any more entries to Dummy.

Sometimes, when you have enough high cards, you can afford to lead one of them to try to trap one of the opponents' cards. This is the case when you don't lead toward the card you hope will take a trick, but lead the high card itself. Before leading a card for a finesse, always ask yourself whether you would be happy if the opponent played a higher card on it. If not, try to lead toward the card you hope will take a trick.

## Hand 2 – The Double Finesse

	♠962	
	♥T762	
	♦QJ6	
	♣Q75	
♠AKJT8		♠Q43
♥854		♥A93
♦72		♦K543
♣AJT		♣862
	♠75	
	♥KQJ	
	♦AT98	
	♣K943	

South is dealer and opens 1♦. West overcalls 2♠ and after North passes, East raises to 2♠. This ends the auctions. North, being the good partner that they are, leads their partner's suit, leading the ♦Q. It's time for West to make their plan.

West has 2 heart losers, 2 diamond losers and 2 club losers. If North happens to have the ♦A then we are down to 4 losers but the chances of that happening don't look very good but we might as well give it a try and see what happens. We cover the ♦Q with the ♦K but it loses to South's ♦A. It's time to turn our attention to the club suit. We have to hope that South has the ♣K or the ♣Q (or both). The trick is that we have to be able to lead towards our ♣AJT twice. Therefore, once we get on lead we should pull trump in three rounds planning on winning the third round with Dummy's ♠Q. We then lead a low club and play our ♣J. After that we use the ♥A to get back over to Dummy and play another low club planning on playing the ♣T if South plays low.

This double finesse has a 75% chance of working since we only need South to have one of two cards.

### Hand 3 – Combining Your Chances

	♠4	
	♥JT	
	♦T52	
	♣AKT9752	
♠AQT8		♠KJ762
♥K842		♥AQ3
♦AQ4		♦963
♣J4		♣Q6
	♠953	
	♥9765	
	♦KJ87	
	♣83	

North opens 3♣. East is not quite strong enough to make an overcall at such a high level so they should pass. After South passes, West make a takeout double. North passes and now that they know their partner has some strength and support for spades, East should bid 4♠. South is on opening lead and begins with the ♣8. Let's make our plan.

Declarer (East) sees two club losers and two diamond losers, that's one too many. The diamond finesse is one way to get rid of one loser but is there another? As long as the missing hearts divide 3-3, Declarer can pitch a loser on Dummy's fourth heart. Do we need to choose between these two options? No we don't. Once we've pulled trump, Declarer can play on hearts to see if they divide. If they do we can pitch a losing diamond on the last heart to make our contract secure. We can also then try the diamond finesse. If hearts had divided, this would be for an overtrick!

## Hand 4 – The Best Chance

	♠J2	
	♥AQ72	
	♦9432	
	♣AKQ	
♠94		♠A6
♥JT95		♥K43
♦AQ87		♦KT6
♣J75		♣98432
	♠KQT8753	
	♥86	
	♦J5	
	♣T6	

South opens 3♠ and North raises to game, East and West pass throughout. West is on opening lead and leads the ♥J. Make your plan.

South has a sure trump loser, a heart loser and two diamond losers for a total of four losers. The heart lead is unfortunate as it means Declarer has to decide right now how they are going to play the hand. The best choice is to forget about taking the heart finesse. Win the opening lead with Dummy's ace and immediately play three rounds of clubs. Declarer can discard a loser on the third club and now Declarer can afford to play trumps.

## Hand 5 – Pay Attention!

	♠A42	
	♥KT763	
	♦K7	
	♣J72	
♠983		♠QJ65
♥J5		♥94
♦QT93		♦J854
♣T954		♣A83
	♠KT7	
	♥AQ82	
	♦A62	
	♣KQ6	

South bids 1♣ and North responds 1♥. South rebids 3♥ showing a medium opener and North bids game. The opening lead is the ♠Q – make your plan.

This one seems pretty easy. We probably don't have any trump losers, we have no diamond losers and we have a sure club loser. We also have a spade loser so our total loser count is two – we're making an overtrick! There are two very important things to see on this hand. The first one is that since East lead a queen, there's a high chance that they also have the jack. We MUST win the first trick with the ♠A so that later we can finesse East out of their ♠J. Now we're making two overtricks!

The second important point is how to play the trump suit. Our only possible issue is if the trumps split 4-0. As long as we win the first trick with the ♥A or ♥Q, we can handle either player having all four missing trumps. If we make the mistake of cashing the ♥K first, we can only handle East being the one with all four trump.

## Hand 6 – Keep Paying Attention!

	♠T642	
	♥862	
	♦QJT3	
	♣A3	
♠A97		♠KQJ3
♥JT3		♥AQ95
♦75		♦A86
♣KQJ64		♣T7
	♠85	
	♥K74	
	♦K942	
	♣9852	

East bids 1NT and West raises to 3NT. South leads the ♦2 – plan the play.

We have four sure spade winners, one heart winner and one diamond winner. That's only six and we need nine. We could take a heart finesse and if it wins, we'd have 3 extra winners and make our contract. The other option is to knock out the ♣A establishing a bunch of club tricks. Which choice is correct? The opening lead is our clue! Since the lead was the ♦2, South should have four diamonds. If South has four, then North has four and we will only lose three diamond tricks. If we try the heart finesse and it doesn't work, we can no longer knock out the ♣A without losing too many tricks.

## Hand 7 – Still Paying Attention?

	♠A32	
	♥A432	
	♦AQ	
	♣A432	
♠54		♠K9876
♥K87		♥QJT9
♦T987		♦6
♣K987		♣QJT
	♠QJT	
	♥65	
	♦KJ5432	
	♣65	

North bids 1♣ and South responds 1♦. North rebids 2NT to show their 18-19 point balanced hand after which South bids 3NT.

East leads the ♠7 giving Declarer a free finesse in spades. Time to plan the play - be careful!

The trick here is that this is one gift horse that you definitely need to look in the mouth! You need Dummy's ♠QJ as an entry to the diamonds if the diamonds break badly. You win your ♠A at trick one, play your ♦A and then your ♦Q. Now you exit with a spade. You win 10 tricks this way.