

Simple Squeeze Plays

A **Squeeze Play** is defined as forcing an opponent to discard a winning card, a potentially winning card or a guard to a winning card in any suit.

A simple squeeze operates against one opponent. .

Clyde Love in *Bridge Squeezes Complete* says that a simple squeeze is present when the following conditions are met:

B – One opponent is busy in two suits. The other opponent is helpless

L – Declarer has only one loser remaining.

U – At least one threat lies in the upper hand. (The hand behind the squeezed opponent)

E -- There will be an entry to an established threat.

A simple squeeze will only gain one trick. In order for the squeeze to work, you must *Rectify the Count*. This involves losing all of your losers but one. The squeeze will not work if you don't do this.

Other terminology:

Threat card: A card that threatens to be good once a higher card is discarded.

Idle cards: Cards that defenders can safely discard.

As a general principle it is a good idea to cash all your winners when you have one loser left and the defenders have to defend two suits.

Sample Hands

1. Basic squeeze. Running all of tricks squeezes an opponent.

West	East
S 4	S Q 8 3
H K 9	H 10 8 4 2
D A K J 10 8 7 3 2	D Q
C Q 5	C A 10 8 6 3

West is in 5D after the opponents bid spades. North opens the spade A and shifts to a heart. South takes the ace and returns a heart to West's K. West has 10 tricks and can get one more if North has the Club K. Threat cards = spade and club queens. Entry = Club A. Run all of the diamonds. On the last diamond East has A 10 of clubs and the spade Q. North has the spade K and the K J of clubs and has to discard before East.

2. If both threats are in one hand and you have winners in both suits, cash all winners in one of the suits, if possible, before the squeeze trick.

	North	
	S A K 3 2	
	H A 9 6 5	
	D A 9	
West	C A K 9	East
S 10 9 7 6		S J 8
H 7		H 8 4 3
D 10 7 6 5		D J 8 4 3 2
C Q J 10 6		C 8 7 4
	South	
	S Q 5 4	
	H K Q J 10 2	
	D K Q	
	C 5 3 2	

South is in 7 hearts. West leads the club Q taken by the K. South has 12 tricks and a 13th is there if spades break 3-3. However, if spades don't break West can be squeezed if he has the long spades. The threat cards are the C9 and the S3. Draw trumps, cash the CA, the diamonds, and the rest of the hearts. Look for the J 10 of clubs.

3. Rectify the count by losing the required number of tricks as soon as possible.

	North	
	S A 3	
	H A 8	
	D A K Q J 8 7	
West	C A K 7	East
S 10 9 8 6		S K Q 7
H Q 9 7 6 3 2		H K J 10
D 10		D 9 6 3
C 6 5		C J 10 9 2
	South	
	S J 5 4 2	
	H 5 4	
	D 5 4 2	
	C Q 8 4 3	

South is in 6NT doubled by East. West leads the H6. South has 11 tricks on top and can get the 12th if clubs break or if East who probably has all the outstanding stuff has the 4 clubs. Since no other lead can hurt, South should Rectify the Count by ducking the first trick. East takes the HK and leads the SK. South takes the A and plays 7 red cards. East can't keep 4 clubs and the SQ. All South has to do is look for the SQ.

4. Watch your entries.

	North	
	S A 3	
	H J 4 3 2	
	D A Q J 4	
West	C 7 4 3	East
S 10 8 7		S J 0 6 5 2
H K 9 6 5		H A 8 7
D 10 8 2		D 9 7 6
C Q 10 8		C J 6
	South	
	S K Q 4	
	H Q 10	
	D K 5 3	
	C A K 9 5 2	

South is in 3NT. The defense takes 2 heart tricks and leads a third heart. South has 10 tricks so the contract is safe. But a squeeze is possible for trick 11 if either defender has the last heart and the long clubs. The threat cards are the H4 and the C9. Run the diamonds and spades and West will not be able to keep 3 clubs and the high heart. However, watch your entries. If you play the diamonds before the spades, you will not be able to get to dummy to cash the H4. If you cash the spades first, you will be in dummy at trick 10.

5. Declarer cashes all of his winners in one threat suit before the squeeze trick to keep the suit from being blocked. (Vienna Coup)

	North	
	S A J 4	
	H 10 7 4	
	D A K J	
West	C A Q J 9	East
S 10 7 6		S 3
H Q 9		H A K 8 6 2
D 9 8 6 4 2		D Q 10 7
C 7 6 3		C K 8 5 2
	South	
	S K Q 9 8 5 2	
	H J 5 3	
	D 5 3	
	C 10 4	

South is in 4 spades after East opens 1 heart. The defense takes 3 heart tricks and East shifts to a spade. South has 9 tricks but both the minor suit finesses figure to lose based on the bidding. East can be squeezed in the minors with the C10 as the other threat. However the suit will block unless the CA is cashed first. Run the spades after cashing the CA throwing 3 clubs. East can't keep the CK and 3 diamonds.