

TIP OF THE WEEK: PERFECTING FINESSES

A **finesse** is an attempt to gain a trick with a card that would normally be beaten by a higher card. Usually you play a low card towards honor cards hoping that the second player has the missing card.

BEGINNERS

Finesse basics with Joan Butts



<https://youtu.be/VyH3m7ghEuY>

Finesse the lower of two honors first

KJ64
93

Lead towards an honor that you hope will win.

A83
Q3 --> Lead toward the Q

Should You Lead an Honor When Taking a Finesse? (Source: Barbara Seagram and David Bird)

A76

QJ32

You would like 3 tricks

You don't hold the 10 so it's a bad idea to lead the Q on the first round. If west covers with the King, you would only make two tricks with the A and J. The third round would lose to the 10 or 9. If the suit happens to break 3-3, you would make 3 tricks.

Ruffing and Double Finesses with Graeme

North

West East

Ruffing Finesse

Better Card Play

South

Q	J	6	5	4	2	A	8	7	5	A	K	Q
♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♣	♣	♣	♣	♦	♦	♦

Hand: 1 Contract: NS: 0 EW: 0

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<https://youtu.be/LTpDwYvOHyA>

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3NT S 12 - 1 Back

Double finesse in bridge

J	8	6	2	Hand 1, Vul Nil				1	9	6	
♣	♣	♣	♣	West	North	East	graeme	♠	♠	♠	
K	7	5		P	P	P	1NT	K	9	6	5
♦	♦	♦		P	3NT	P	P	♥	♥	♥	♥
T	8	4		Score: 490 Result: 50%				Q	6	♦	♦
♥	♥	♥						T	9	5	3
K	J	7						♣	♣	♣	♣
♠	♠	♠						A	Q	5	4
								♥	♥	♥	♥
								A	Q	J	7
								♣	♣	♣	♣
								K	7	4	3
								♦	♦	♦	♦
								2			

Redeal Next Scores

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<https://youtu.be/BI1SoT2Ny1o>

ADVANCED LEARNERS

When two non-touching honors are accompanied by the nine, finesse the 9 first.

AQ95
763

(Source: B. Seagrams)

In a suit contract, be wary of finessing when the opening lead is a spot card in a suit that has been bid by the dummy. It might be a singleton!

1D - 1S
4S - 4NT
5S - 6S

Lead: 7D

(Source: D. Bird)

Click, on the following link to read an article by Robert Todd on, “Two-Way Finesses”

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5127d3d2e4b0b304f0b6db24/t/5e408bb22e50ae04a9c1c8d2/1581288370395/2+\(304\)+The+Two-Way+Finesse.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5127d3d2e4b0b304f0b6db24/t/5e408bb22e50ae04a9c1c8d2/1581288370395/2+(304)+The+Two-Way+Finesse.pdf)

Principle of Vacant Spaces

“If as Declarer, you have a two-way finesse (e.g., ATx opposite KJx), your best choice is an endplay. If an endplay is not available, fall back on counting out the distribution of the opponents’ hands and using the principle of **vacant spaces**. The idea of **vacant spaces** is that whoever has more vacant spaces in their hand is more likely to have a card which matters to you.”

(Source: Martha Pottenger)

Join, Graeme as he uses the principle of **Vacant Spaces** to guess which opponent holds the missing honor.

The screenshot shows a bridge hand in a 4♠ contract. The declarer's hand is A♠ 9♠ 8♠ 5♠ 3♠ K♥ Q♥ J♥ K♣ 7♣ 3♣ 8♦ 4♦. The dummy's hand is Q♣ 8♣ 6♣ 5♣ Q♦ T♦ 9♦ 6♦ 5♦. The opponents' hands are partially visible: West has T♥ and T♠; East has 8♥ 7♥ 6♥ 5♥ and K♦ J♦ 7♦. A pop-up window shows the bidding: West passed, North bid 1NT, East bid 2♥, and the declarer bid 3♠. The score is 420 and the result is 0%.

Overlaid on the right is a video of Graeme, who is explaining the principle of vacant spaces. The video title is "Vacant Spaces with a Twist".

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<https://youtu.be/ywZT7WUnICE>

Click on the following link, to see another example how **Vacant Spaces** helps Declarer make his contract.

[https://www.bridgewebs.com/halifax/Hand of the week 43 Vacant Places.pdf](https://www.bridgewebs.com/halifax/Hand%20of%20the%20week%2043%20Vacant%20Places.pdf)

“The Lure of the Finesse” with Peter Hollands



<https://youtu.be/msWSY9QIOLQ>