

Card Combinations

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<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaDeclarerPlay/CardCombinations.pdf>

Missing the Queen

Eight Ever and Nine Never.

With an eight-card fit, one ever (always) finesses for the queen and with a nine-card fit, one never finesses for the Queen. However, the real rule is:

Eight Ever and Nine Almost Never except for a page of exceptions.

<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaDeclarer/EightEverNineNever.pdf>

Please Note that when a ruff is deemed to be imminent, one does not take ~~trump~~ any finesses and one tries to draw trump as quickly as possible.

AKJ10 Cash the ace and finesse to the Jack. Eight Ever Finesse
9876

AKJ10
98752 With nine cards, play for the drop of the Queen, "Never" finesse.

AK76
J10543 Cash A and then play the jack to the King

AJ87 If there is no end play available as usually is the case for trump, play the
K109x Jack (and hope it gets covered) to the King and if not covered then
win the King anyways and run the 10 through.

AK32 Cash A and finesse Jack through.
J10xx

AK32 Cash Ace and King and small to the Jack.
J654

AK32 Cash Ace and small to the Jack.

J65

E	S	W	N
3♣	3♠	P	4♠

N: AJ109

S: K8xxx Play the King and then small to the Jack. Here is a case where it is not never.

E	S	W	N
1♥	1♠	P	2♥
P	3♣	P	3♠
P	4♠	All Pass	

N: ♠AJ109 Small to the ace and then run the Jack through. Here is another case
S: ♠K8xxx where it is not never.

Safety Play

♠A432

♠KJ98 To play for one loser and no more, play the King and then push the 9 through.

Four Ruffs Not Two of yours for one of theirs.

AJ106

K983

If you need two ruffs in both hands, set up the ruffs, play the Ace and King and then take the ruffs without fear of a trump lead. If opponents lead trump at the beginning, the Queen is found.

AK32 You are sure West has the queen or you need zero losers, then run the Jack
J987 through then run the 9 through.

Example

KJ86

A10954

In 3NT, you know East has the rest of his suit ready to cash, so
finesse into West

Missing the Ace

QJ54

K762 Without information, play the 2 to the Queen and if it holds, then play the 6 to the Jack.

Missing the King

With an eleven-card fit, play for the drop, otherwise finesse.

AQxxx Run the Jack through.

J10xxx

Axxxx Play the Queen (and hope it gets covered) to the Ace. With 11 cards, one plays for the drop of the King but one always gives a defender a chance to cover.

QJ10xxx

You have three touching honours in an eight-card fit.

A764

QJ102 Run the Queen through.

You have less than three touching honours in an eight-card fit.

Axxx Play the Queen then small to the Ace if West is known to have the King,

QJxx otherwise cash the Ace and small to the queen. If transportation is needed, then small to the Queen and then small to the Ace than small to the Jack.

Axxx Run the Queen through and if it gets covered right away, likely with a doubleton then finesse the 9.

QJ9x

A7632 If cards are likely 2-2 (no preempt or visible singletons or voids) run Queen through

QJ74

A32 You get two tricks no matter what you do. You cannot end play someone twice. If you cannot lose the lead and need two tricks, then run the queen through.

QJ4

AJ983 Run the Queen through and if East shows out, you can still finesse to the 9.

Qxx

- AJ543** Small to the Jack and now decide if K is Kx or 10 is 10x.
Q9x
- AJ653** Play small to the Jack then cash the Ace.
Qxx
- AJ65** Play small to the Jack then either cash the Ace or run the Queen through
Q9xx depending on which missing honour, the King or the Ten, you think is a
doubleton.
- AJ10x** Do not offer the Queen in case it gets covered by a doubleton or stiff king
Qxx small to the jack and small to the ten.
- AJ10xx** Do not offer the Queen in case it gets covered by a stiff king
Qxx small to the jack and small to the ten.

Missing the Jack

- AKQ10** Cash A then hook the ten
xx
- AKQ10** Cash A and K and if both follow cash the queen (2% better than 3rd
round finesse)
xxx If you can count the hand out then do so.
- AKQ10x** Cash AKQ. Jack could be J, Jx, or Jxx
xx
- AKQ10x** Cash AKQ. Jack could be J, Jx, or Jxx
xx

Missing the King and the Queen

- AJ10x** Small to the Jack then small to the 10.
xxxx
- AJ10x** Small to the Jack then small to the 10. Not small to the Jack and then cash
xxxxx the Ace. If transportation is limited, cash the Ace first.

A1074

J92 Play the 2 to the 10 and then push the J and 9 through.

AJ9x Small to the 9 then small to the Jack

xxxx

Missing the King and the Jack

AQ10xx For zero losers, Play to the ten then small to the Queen. (16% chance of 5 winners)

xxx Play to the Queen and if it loses, play to the 10. (68% chance of 4 winners)

AQ109x Play small to the 10 and then the 9.

xxx

A98x With 8 cards or fewer, play the Ten through then play the Queen through.

Q10xx

A98x With 9 or 10 cards, play to the Ace then small to the Queen.

Q10xxx

AQ64

7532 Play the 2 to the Ace and then the 3 to the Queen

Note: There is always one loser, so take the Ace first guarding against a singleton K.

The Safety Play- When you can afford to lose one trick but not more.

	K	
AQ7643		852
	J109	

In 6♥, the heart suit was as shown above. 6♥ makes if declarer plays small to the Ace with the intention of playing up to the Queen.

Missing the Ace and Queen

K762 J543 Play to the Jack then to the King

Missing the Ace and Jack

KQx xxx play to the king then to the queen

KQ109 xxx play to the king and if it wins, play to the queen. If the king loses play to the 10.
North will hold up with Axx because partner could have the finessable jack.