

Safety Plays

Commonly done in team games, in which overtricks are not nearly as important as in pair games. Some safety plays guarantee success and some greatly improve the odds. Often, safety plays reduce the odds of overtricks or make it impossible to take the maximum number of tricks.

AJxx K9xx: needing 3 tricks - lead Ace and lead toward the 9, covering any honor with the K or playing the 9 if no honor is played. This guarantees 3 tricks.

If there is no outside entry to the long suit AND you don't need all of the possible tricks:

AKQxx xx(x): lead toward the A and play low, or play low from the A

AKQxx 10x(x): lead the 10 and play low (even if the 10 is covered by the J)

AKQ10x xx(x): lead toward the A and play the 10. If the J appears prior to the A, play A

AKxxxx xx(x): lead toward the A and play low

AQxxx Jx: lead the J and play low (even if the J is covered by the K)

AQxxx xx: lead low and play low (even if the K appears prior to the AQ), later lead toward the AQ and play the Q

If you have a two-way finesse against the J, first play a high card on the side that has two of the three high cards (A, K or Q). If an opponent shows out, you now know which way to finesse. Examples:
.AQ9xx K10xx, AQ109x Kxxxx play the A first and see what happens

If you don't have a two-way (missing J9 or J10):

AK9xx Qxxx: play Q and lead toward the AK9 playing the 9 if RHO has shown out and LHO plays low, if LHO play the J or 10 ten win it and lead again toward the K9x

AK10xx Qxxx: play A and, if RHO show out, lead toward the K10xx, playing 10 if LHO not play J.

Other situations:

AQ10xxxx xx: play the A and then lead toward the Q10 if you **only need 6 tricks**

AQ9x J9xxxxx: **if need all 6 tricks**, lead J playing low if LHO plays low, if J wins lead toward AQ If the J is covered by K and RHO shows out, lead toward the Q9 auto finessing against the enemy 10e

AK10xx xxx: if need 4 tricks, play A and then lead toward the K10xx playing the 10 if RHO plays low (if RHO plays Q or J cover it, and then lead toward the 10xx if necessary)

AJxx K10xx: if only need 3 tricks, finesse so that dangerous hand will not be on lead if the finesse loses. (unless you are confident who has the Q).