

Safety Plays (page 1)

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.

A9x KJxxx play K, lead toward A9, put in 9 if no Q or 10 appears, else cover Q or 10 (4 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.

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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 10

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).

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10 card fit, missing Q, finesse either way:

Try to figure out who might have a void. Opponents open with a weak 2 or 3 bid? Opener has void. Responder bids strongly with few HCP? Responder jumps to 3 or 4 or 5 level? Responder has void.

AJxxx K10xxx If left has void, lead up to A or play A. If right lead up to K or play K

A10xxx K9xx Try to figure out who might have shortness. Guard against QJxx or stiff Q or J.

A10xxx Kxx trump fit. Play K lead toward A10 playing 10 if low by defender. Cover is Q or J played. Guards against QJxx on left.

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KJ98 Axxx lead K, lead 9 and play low or cover

QJxxxx xxx if can't lead toward the QJ, lead low from QJ

Axxx J9xx lead toward J9, putting in the 9 if low

Kxxx Qxxx (no 10) guess who has A and lead toward honor behind the Ace then play back low (hoping for Ax)

K10xx Qxxx lead toward Q, then lead toward K10 putting in the 10

AJ10 xx(x) low to 10, then low to J

AJ9 xx(x) low to 9, then low to J

AQ10 xxx low to 10 might get 3 tricks (unless can't afford to lose lead)

AQx 109x lead 10 to Q playing low unless covered (unless ...)

KQ10x xxx low to K, if lose low to 10, if win low to Q10 guessing if LHO plays low

A109 Qxx lead Q on all below, cover the K else duck and repeat

A10x Q9x

Axx Q109

A9x Q10x

Opening leads against you:

If K or Q led, win it. If low led, play low from dummy (on left)

10xx AJ, Jxx A10, J10x A9

If hold AJx (not 10) xx(x) and K or Q led, duck

Jxx (dummy) A9(x) if low led, duck unless strongly suspect opener has KQ

J9x (dummy) Ax if low led, play 9 unless as above

Jxx (dummy) Ax(x) win with A if K led, play J if low led

10xxx (dummy) A9x if KQJ led, win it. If low led, duck from dummy

K10x (dummy) x or xx or xxx play 10 if low led, play K if Q or J led

Q9xx (dummy) x or xx play 9 if low led, cover if J or 10 led

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K109(x) –xx lead low to 9, later to the 10

kJ10xxx(x) – xx (x) [9 card fit](no entry): lead the K

AQ9 – xx(x), if opponents don't have safe exit cards (end play) lead low playing the 9 or covering

You have AJx (dummy) – 9x(x), they lead vs NT (or suit): duck to the 9

You (defender) have AJx over boards KQ10xx(x): duck first one.

You have Ax(x) over KQ10x(x): duck