

Squeeze Play

A “squeeze play” (or simply “squeeze”) is a play in contract bridge in which the play of a card (the “squeeze card”) forces an Opponent to discard a vital card which gives up one or more tricks. The squeeze card is often, but not always, a winner. The Opponent’s discarded card may be either a winner or a card needed to protect the victim's strategic position. Squeezes most often occur late in the hand.

Squeezes operate on the principle that Declarer's hand and Dummy's hand can together hold cards with the potential to take extra tricks that a single Defender's hand cannot protect against (or *cover*).

Most of the common types of squeezes require all of the following conditions to be present:

1. Declarer (together with the Dummy) has enough winners to take all the remaining tricks except for the extra trick(s) that will be gained from the squeeze. In other words, Declarer has already lost all the tricks he/she plans to lose (the count is rectified).
2. In at least two suits, Declarer and Dummy have threat cards or menaces that are not immediate winners, but threaten to become winners;
3. At least one of the menaces is positioned after a squeezed Defender (**The “Squeeze”**).
4. The Declarer has sufficient entries (winners serving as communication between his/her hand and Dummy) to cash the menaces if they develop into winners.
5. The squeezed Defender(s) must hold only busy cards that are covering a menace, with no idle cards that can safely be discarded.

Requirements Necessary For a Squeeze Play to Occur

- 1) You must have only one loser
- 2) You must have given up all inevitable tricks to bring your hand to only one loser (“Rectifying the Count”).
- 3) You must be able to enter either hand.
- 4) Your Opponent must be expecting to win a trick with one of his/her two suits.

A “Simple Squeeze”

Dummy

H -

D - K

C - A2

Declarer

H -

D - A

C - KJ

H - T

D -

C - Q4

West (who is able to see Dummy's hand) expects at least one trick in one of her/his two suits. When Declarer (South) leads his/her squeeze card **HT** West's all great expectations disappear: If West discards the **C1** Dummy will discard **DK** and make two more tricks in Clubs. If West discards **DA** Dummy will discard **C2** and make two more tricks with **CA** and **DK**