

The Bridge Booklet

(BB-14)

Pearls from Mike (1)



Forcing Bids (Jump Shifts and Reverses) and Responses

It is always difficult to reach the 'best' contract through the bidding process. Some bids demand Partner pass, some are invitational, and some are forcing. It is very difficult to reach that 'best' contract when these are confused.

The following chart gives a rough summary of forcing bids:

Opener	Responder
Strong 2♣	New suits at any level
All Cue bids	Jump Shifts
Jump Shifts	Reverses
Reverses	All Cue bids
Some Conventions	Some Conventions
New Suits at the 2-level (if Responder has first voluntairly bid a new suit at the 2-level showing a medium hand)	

This material here will not deal with either Strong 2♣ bids or Cue bids.

It will deal with Jump Shifts, Reverses, and New Suits.

Some Convention bids will be mentionned.

What's Forcing?

The purpose of the auction in bridge is for Opener and Responder to accurately describe their hands through a series of bids describing both strength and shape in order to arrive at the best contract. These bids may be either forcing or non-forcing.

Opener's and Responder's hands will always fall into one of three categories if they have the strength to bid. These are:

- a. according to Audrey Grant

	Minimum	Medium	Maximum
Opener	13-16	17-18	19+
Responder	6-10	11-12	13+

- b. or a more modern treatment

	Minimum	Medium	Maximum
Opener	13-15	16-18	19+
Responder	6-9	10-12	13+

Opener's Forcing and Non-Forcing Rebids

- a. After a response at the 1-level (*Responder is showing a minimum hand*)

- i. **Forcing:**

- (a) **Opener's Jump Shift:** when Responder bids a new suit at the one level, a jump rebid by Opener in a new suit – a jump shift – is forcing to the game level

e.g. 1♦ 1♥
 3♣

Opener's jump shift shows a maximum hand worth 19+ points. Since Responder is expected to have 6+ points for the initial response, the partnership should have

enough combined strength for game

- (b) **Opener's Reverse**: when the Responder bids a new suit, Opener's rebid of a new suit (without a jump) that prevents Responder from returning to Opener's original suit at the 2-level is called a Reverse. As well, Opener's first bid suit should be longer than his second bid suit

e.g. 1♦ 1♠
 2♥

Opener is reversing in this auction. Responder cannot return to Opener's original suit (♦'s) at the 2-level. If Responder wants to return to Opener's original suit, it would have to be at the 3-level (3♦)

Other examples of Opener's Reverse:

1♣ 1♥
2♦

and

1♥ 1NT
2♠

To reverse, Opener needs a medium or maximum strength hand – 17+ points – since Responder might be forced to go to the 3-level to show as few as 6 points; and, the first bid suit must be longer than the second bid suit.

A Reverse is forcing for one round.

Responder's Rebids after Opener's Reverse (Ingberman or Lebensol over Reverse)

If Responder rebids his suit at the 2-level after a reverse, it shows a 5-card+ suit and is forcing for one round. If Opener rebids 2NT, raises Responder's suit, or rebids an old suit at the 3-level, Responder can pass with a minimum hand.

If Responder rebids 2NT (conventional), it denies a 5-card suit and shows a minimum hand. If Opener rebids a suit at the 3-level, Responder can now pass.

Any other rebid by responder shows more than minimum strength and commits the partnership to at least the game level.

- ii. **Non-Forcing**: any other bid by Opener.
- b. After a 2-Level Response (*Responder is showing a medium hand*)
 - i. **Forcing**:

- (a) A new suit by Opener is forcing

Consider the auction:

1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	?	

The 2♦ bid is forcing for 1 round.

- (b) A jump rebid by Opener is forcing to game

Consider the auction:

1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♦	Pass		

The 3♦ bid is forcing to game

ii. **Non-Forcing**

(a) A simple rebid of Opener's suit

Consider the auction:

1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	

The 2♥ rebid is not forcing

(b) A jump-raise of Responder's suit

Consider the auction:

1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♥	

The 3♥ rebid is invitational but not forcing

(c) A rebid of 2NT

Responder's Forcing and Non-Forcing Rebids

Consider the auction:

1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	?	

Most of Responder's rebids are now *non-forcing*. These include:

- Bids of 1NT or, an old suit at the 2-level (2♦, 2♥, 2♠) as these show a minimum hand of 6-10 points.
- Bids of 2NT or, an old suit at the 3-level (3♦, 3♥, 3♠) as these show an invitational or medium strength hand of 11-12 points.
- Bids of 3NT or, a game going bid of 4♥, 4♠, 5♦ as these show a game going or maximum strength hand of 13-16 points.

Responder does however have *forcing* bids available:

a. ***After Opener rebids 1-of-a-suit***

Consider the auction:

1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	?	

A bid of the 4th suit (2♣) is forcing and may be artificial (conventional). If the 4th suit is bid at the 2-level or higher, it commits the partnership to at least a game contract.

(See Fourth Suit Forcing)

b. ***After Opener Rebids 1NT***

Consider the auction:

1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass		

- i. Some partnerships play that any new suit bid by Responder in this situation is forcing. However, a more common agreement is that a new suit here by Responder is forcing only if it is a reverse (11-12 points) or a jump shift (13-16 points).
- ii. If the partnership uses the New Minor Forcing convention then a bid of 2♦ (the new minor) here would show (nearly) game going values and at least a 5-card Heart suit. The bid would be forcing.

c. ***After Opener Rebids 2NT***

Consider the auction:

1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2NT	Pass		

Since Partnerships open 1NT with 15-17 points

and 2NT with 20-21 points, then this sequence shows only 18-19 points with a balanced hand. Most partnerships then would treat Opener's 2NT rebid as non-forcing. Responder can pass with only 6-7 points.

Any other bid by Responder below game level, however, is treated as forcing. Any subsequent bid by Responder is forcing.

(The Checkback Stayman convention might also be used here and if so, would be forcing)

d. ***The Responder can Jump Shift***

Consider the auction:

1♣ Pass 2♥ ?

The 2♥ bid is a jump shift by Responder and shows a maximum hand (13+ points for Responder). Since Opener has at least a minimum hand this bid by Responder is forcing to game.

e. ***The Responder can Reverse***

Consider the auction

1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass
2♣ Pass 2♠

The 2♠ bid by Responder does not let Opener support Hearts at the 2-level and as such is a reverse. The reverse by Responder indicates a medium hand

Notes

After going through the material here you may wish to review:

- Fourth Suit Forcing
- New Minor Forcing
- Ingberman/Lebensohl over Reverses
- Checkback Stayman
- Jacoby 2NT

These websites (and others) may be useful:

- <https://bridgetips.wordpress.com>
- <http://www.bridgebum.com>

