

Major Suit Raises II Teacher Manual



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Introduction for Teachers

Teaching the Major Suit Raises I and II Play Courses

The lesson plans in this manual accompany the ACBL's *Major Suit Raises II "Play" Course*. The two "Play" Courses (*MSR I and MSR II*) can be used in conjunction with Lessons 3 and 4 of *Commonly Used Conventions* and Lesson 8 of *More Commonly Used Conventions* to provide practice on raising opener's major with deals of all strengths, the use of Jacoby 2NT, Drury and 1NT Forcing. In addition to lessons on material covered in the ACBL courses, a lesson on splinter raises has been added to the *Major Suit Raises II "Play" Course* booklet. The teacher manual also includes three bonus lessons that do not appear in the "Play" Course booklet: a bonus review lesson, and lessons on Two-Over-One and Bergen Raises.

The material is flexible. You might teach only the material in the *Major Suit Raises I "Play" Course* and later hold a more advanced course covering the material in the *Major Suit Raises II "Play" Course*. The first set of deals in *Major Suit Raises II* may be used either at the end of *Major Suit Raises I* or at the beginning of *Major Suit Raises II*. Teachers should select material that is suitable for the level of their students. These bidding conventions are used primarily by duplicate players and are not intended for new players or social players. The material is best presented to students who are becoming involved in duplicate.

Teachers are strongly encouraged to use the "Play" Course booklets as a supplementary classroom text. These booklets easily provide classroom notes and allow the students to replay lesson deals at home with their friends. "Play" Course booklets and E-Z Deal Cards are inexpensive and the cost of booklets and cards can be built into the price of your course. You might consider providing a discount for couples wanting only one "Play" Course booklet between them. You can also refer your students to the appropriate places in the primary textbooks, *Commonly Used Conventions* and *More Commonly Used Conventions*, for additional details on the conventions discussed in class.

For extra bonus lessons that are not included in the "Play" Course booklets, I have provided handouts that you may photocopy and distribute. Please note that you have my permission to copy and distribute the handouts for Lessons 5 through 7 of MSRII. **In general, it is neither legal nor ethical to reproduce the work of another author.** Teachers should not photocopy from books to make handouts for their classes without explicit permission from the author. Nor can you simply rewrite the identical material into your own computer. This applies to the actual text as well as exercise sets and answers. It is not sufficient to make a copy and give the author credit. You must have permission first. If you copy material from books, the authors don't sell as many copies and have less incentive to write the books we teachers desperately need. However, a bridge hand can't be copyrighted, so you may use any deal you see anywhere **with your own analysis** without violating copyright law.

The Lesson Format

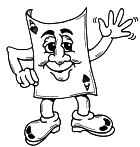
A house is only as strong as the foundation on which it is built. This course provides a lot of practice in the use of each bid rather than one sample of how the bid is used. This practice is necessary to thoroughly prepare students to use the new conventions.

The lesson plans allow the deals to tell the story of the day's bidding topic. You hold center stage only long enough to provide the information needed to move on to the next deal. The intent is to provide as much playing experience as possible. The length of your lesson will determine how many deals the class plays. Using this format, a three-hour lesson is not too long. We generally keep lessons shorter because the students cannot concentrate that long. But, when they are constantly involved in playing, they are able to maintain concentration for that time period. When I used these lessons in a large group, we usually got eight deals in during the three-hour session.

Don't let the students dither over bidding. Give them a reasonable amount of time to bid (preferably without any table talk) and then announce that everyone should be playing. At that point, go to any tables that are not playing and assign them a contract based on the auction they had so far. The class does not like being held up waiting for a slow table to finish playing. I hate stopping a table from completing the deal because everyone is waiting. The delay often comes in the bidding and can be averted as long as you monitor all tables carefully during the auction period.

Students sometimes learn more by reaching the wrong contract. You don't have to require that all tables play in the same contract, unless you feel that an interesting play problem in that contract warrants it.

Students keep their cards classroom (duplicate) style. After a deal is played, all of the hands are placed face up dummy-style, so you can go over key points in bidding and play to be sure that everyone understands the point of the deal.



Even experienced students relate better to seeing concrete examples using actual cards rather than looking at examples written on the board. New concepts are presented with examples using the cards. The manual uses the icon shown on the left of this paragraph to alert you to the fact that an exercise with cards is being done and to warn you to expect card changes at that point in the lesson. While your entire lesson could be taught with no board at all, you may wish to use the blackboard to make a particular point or as a backup for the examples students have laid out on the table. Putting the same hand on the board can help those who had difficulty getting the cards on the table. Expect some students to have trouble and do everything in your power to prevent it. Use a guidecard with the compass directions on it (all guidecards with North facing in the same direction). When you call the cards for an exercise, make sure the class starts with a suited deck and specify the suit first, say "spade person are you ready?" and then give the spade cards. Repeat with each suit. Go slowly enough for the students to keep up and walk around the room to check for errors.

Instructions or information that is provided for teachers only is enclosed in a shaded box.

These lessons are set up so the entire class plays the same deal at the same time. Use the E-Z deal cards when possible. Students should be instructed on how to make up the lesson deals from the accompanying E-Z Deal Cards. When you use the bonus lessons, which are not included in the E-Z Deals, you will have to select a method of creating the lesson deals. In a small class, making boards is not that big a problem but it is far too time consuming in a large class. I use printouts in my classes where all four hands are printed in large bold type with each hand facing the player.

While these printouts can be done by hand on your computer, the Dealmaster program is suggested for easy creation of these hand records (see www.dealmaster.com).

The Teachers Role

Even using a prepared lesson series, your major work comes before you walk into the classroom. A good teacher spends more time preparing for a lesson than actually teaching the lesson! Read over the lesson several times to familiarize yourself with the material. Adapt the lesson plan to the level of your students and be aware that our students frequently have less bridge knowledge than we hope they will. Plan for material to omit if the lesson moves more slowly than expected. Bring the lesson plan to class to use as a guide but do not read from it. Use your own words.

Arrive at class early enough to have all materials out so that class can start right on time. Make sure that you have all the materials and copies you will need for your lesson.

During class, your job is to keep things running smoothly and to provide only as much information as is needed for the students to learn through playing. I believe that students gain more by working things out on their own, and tables should have time to consider the problem or auction without your help. However, I also believe in being available to help or offer encouragement. My policy is to walk around the room and eavesdrop without appearing to do so. I feel it is okay for a teacher to step in when it is obvious that there is a problem or tension at a table. The students appreciate a friendly word of encouragement or assistance when it is truly needed, but they also appreciate being allowed to work a problem through on their own. Don't stand and watch the action at a table or you will make the students nervous and fearful of making mistakes. Don't let the students ask you to do their thinking for them. When a question about bidding or play is asked, help the student think along the right line; don't simply give the answers. I find that this close contact with the students while they bid and play clues me in on the errors in their thinking and allows me to address those errors to the group as a whole without singling anyone out. Just talk like each error is a mistake that is made all the time so nobody is made to feel uncomfortable about misconceptions.

It's fine to pose questions to the entire class, but it is not wise to call on any individual. Let the group feel free to contribute without fear of giving the "wrong" answer. Some teachers don't let the students answer; they answer their own questions. Do you remember being in junior high school and trying to make yourself disappear so you wouldn't be called on? You don't want to make your student feel like that! It's a good idea to announce at the first lesson that they will never be called on unless they raise their hands, so the students should not be afraid to look at the teacher. Above all, protect your student's egos and make them feel comfortable.

Teachers differ in whether they take questions from the floor. I find that it helps me to hear these questions. Sometimes it becomes obvious that I have not made myself clear and I try to say things in a better way. Sometimes, the students ask a question on the topic that will be covered next and that reinforces me in knowing that my lesson is going in the right order. Questions are not disruptive as long as the teacher controls them. If a question is off topic or the answer would be too confusing for the class, simply say that you do not want to go there now. You can discuss the question privately after class. Never feel forced to answer a question if you are unsure of the answer. Research it and get back to the class. I believe that the main problem with questions is that some teachers let the questions run the class. Remember, you are in charge and you have a plan for the lesson. Stick to it.

Handling Uneven Numbers

In an ideal world, bridge class attendance would always be in multiples of four. Even if your registration achieves this goal, emergencies arise and you are likely to have the wrong number of people some weeks. Some teachers will make tables of three. This may work for more experienced students. Some teachers will make a table of five with the declarer sitting out after playing a hand.

We have to be sensitive to the student or students who feel they are putting people out by making someone sit out a deal. We have had success with giving the extras their own table. We then bump players from another table to go visit them for one deal. That way, most tables get inconvenienced once and only once and the “extras” don’t feel uncomfortable about being the oddballs.

Humor

A well-placed laugh can make it easier for your students to learn. It relaxes them and makes them more receptive to new information. The ideal time for a joke is when your class has been working hard and you need to break the tension a bit. In fact, there were a couple of lessons in this series where I found the need to tell TWO jokes. My class was working so hard on learning the new material.

Yes, you can tell jokes – even if you’ve never been able to recall a punch line in that past (trust me – I know this from personal experience). Write the joke down and review it before you tell it. Soon you will find yourself remembering jokes and being able to tell them in social circles (I never would have believed it either). Humor is very personal and a joke that one teacher is comfortable telling would embarrass another teacher, so it is wise to start a collection of jokes. Mark each one when you use it in a particular class. Don’t be discouraged if some students find the joke the most important item in your lesson plan. I once had a student request the joke from a missed lesson but not the lesson sheet. Remember, the students want to have fun while learning and it’s your job to provide it. Jokes help.

Feedback

I hope you enjoy teaching from these lesson plans. I welcome any comments or suggestions. You can contact me (Pat Harrington) at abta@earthlink.net.

LESSON 1 – Raising Opener’s Major

The deals for this lesson are from Session 1 of the *Major Suit Raises II “Play” Course*, the follow-up course to the *Major Suit Raises I “Play” Course*. Although this course is a follow-up course, you need not teach the two courses back-to-back. Taking time off between the two courses will give students time to become comfortable with the methods of raising opener’s major taught in the first course before moving on to splinter bids, 1NT Forcing and Drury. This lesson provides an opportunity to review the bids and conventions taught in *Major Suit Raises I*. Some teachers may wish to make this the fifth lesson in the *Major Suit Raises I “Play” Course*; others will continue straight through all eight lessons. Some teachers will use this lesson as the first lesson of a second course.

Related deals from *CUC* and *MCUC*: *CUC* Lesson 3 all lesson deals.

Reference sections in *CUC* Teacher Manual: Lesson 3, all sections

We begin with a review discussion of raising opener’s major with various strength hands. Even though we have reviewed these bids before, repetition is important for the concepts to solidify.

Teachers might want to take this opportunity to discuss completing the convention card with the conventions that were covered in the *Major Suit Raises I “Play” Course*. Depending on your preferences, you might use a regular convention card or download a copy of ACBL’s Standard American Yellow Card (SAYC). SAYC is the commonly agreed system for internet play and a good place for new duplicate players to begin. The bids taught in *Major Suit Raises I* are part of SAYC. However, at the time this is being written, SAYC does not differentiate between three and four trumps when making a limit raise. Changes are made periodically, so it’s wise to check on ACBL’s website for a new version of SAYC. (Just go to www.acbl.org and type SAYC in the ACBL search site box. You’ll find several links to information on SAYC.) The conventions that are taught in the rest of this course are not part of SAYC at this time.

If you wish to discuss completing the convention card, distribute one to each student before you begin the lesson.

I have given each of you a copy of the ACBL convention card. Before we begin today’s lesson, let’s discuss the bids that you are expected to know at this point and see how to mark those agreements on your convention card.

We are only discussing major suit raises, so the only section of the convention card we will examine is the box labeled “Major Openings.”

When you open 1♥ or 1♠, how many cards do you promise in the suit? Five. Some players open four-card majors frequently in third or fourth seat. I don’t expect you do that, so five is the expected number of cards for a major suit opening in any seat. This doesn’t mean that you are bound under penalty of death to never open a four-card major. It does mean that your partner will be as shocked as everyone else at the table. If you start doing it often enough that partner isn’t surprised, you need to mark that you open four-card majors, but I don’t advise this practice for you.

We don't have a spot on the convention card to mark our weak raises, but let's review them.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	P	2 ♥	

Write this auction on the board

What strength hand is East showing? Minimum – six to a bad ten points. East needs only three trumps for this bid but may have more. What would it mean if West now bid 3 ♣?

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	P	2 ♥	P
3 ♣			

Add 3 ♣ to the auction on the board

West is making a **Help-Suit Game Try**. West wants East to look not only at points but at how well East's hand fits the two suits West has bid. High hearts and high clubs would be helpful. Even a singleton or void in clubs would help – especially if East held four trumps.

W	N	E	S
1 ♠	P	4 ♠	

Write this auction on the board

This is our other weak raise – **the weak freak**. East has no more than six or seven HCP and five-card or longer spade support. East probably also has a singleton or void in another suit. With such crazy distribution, 4 ♠ could easily make on fewer than 26 points. Even if 4 ♠ goes down, think how difficult this bid could make life for South, who could have a pretty good hand and has not yet had a chance to bid!

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	P	3 ♥	

Write this auction on the board

You have to mark the meaning of your double raise – a jump raise of partner's opening bid to the three level as shown in the auction on the board. What strength does this bid show? A limit raise with a good 10 to 12 points. Most players like this limit raise to guarantee four-card support. With only three-card support, they make a two-step raise, bidding a new suit first and then raising hearts next time. Playing this way lets opener accept more game invitations. Opener appreciates a distributional hand more when there is a big trump fit.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	1 ♠	3 ♥	

Write this auction on the board

This auction looks quite similar but many players do not treat 3 ♥ as a limit raise here. They treat it as a preemptive raise showing four hearts and very few HCP.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♠	

Write this auction on the board

Players who use a jump raise as preemptive in competition use a cuebid response to show a limit raise or better. East shows at least three hearts and a good ten points or more. Opener assumes that East has a limit raise and decides whether to bid game or not. If opener signs off in 3 ♥, East will pass with a limit raise and will go to game with a hand that is stronger than a limit raise.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	P	2NT	

Write this auction on the board

You are expected to be using Jacoby 2NT in this course. Jacoby 2NT is a strong raise of opener's major showing an opening hand and at least four-card trump support. Opener's rebids describe the hand – distribution first.

- Three of any new suit shows a singleton or void in that suit.
- A new suit on the four level shows a second fairly good five-card suit.

When opener doesn't have one of these distributional hands, opener describes strength – the lower the bid, the stronger opener is (using **fast arrival**).

- Three of opener's major shows 18 or more points.
- 3NT shows 15-17 points (like a 1NT opener in strength but not necessarily balanced).
- Game bid in opener's major is the weakest bid of all, showing 12-14 points.

Jacoby 2NT is an alertable convention. Opener must alert the 2NT response and responder must alert opener's rebid.

With only three-card support and an opening hand, responder has to make a two-step raise, making forcing bids until game is reached.

Make one small change to our Jacoby 2NT auction and it's a different story.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	1 ♠	2NT	

Write this auction on the board

An intervening bid by our opponent frequently changes the meaning of our bids. We already discussed that with the jump raise to the three level. Jacoby 2NT does not apply in competition. East's 2NT bid has the standard meaning for 2NT by responder after an overcall. Do you know what that is? East is inviting game with about 11 points and at least one stopper in overcaller's suit. The only time a 2NT response shows a strong hand is when it's responder's first bid and the opponents are silent.

That's enough review. Let's get started with our lesson deals. Everything we discussed and then some is fair game!

Remind the students how to construct the lesson deals using the ACBL E-Z Deal cards. Remind students of dealer and vulnerability on each lesson deal.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 1: Deal #1

Dealer: North
Vul: None

♠ 6 2
♥ A K J 8 4
♦ K 7 5 2
♣ A J

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 8 7 4
♥ 10 5 2
♦ 9 4
♣ K Q 9 8 5

♠ A 9 3
♥ Q 7 6
♦ Q J 10
♣ 7 6 4 2

♠ K Q J 10 5
♥ 9 3
♦ A 8 6 3
♣ 10 3

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♥	1♠	2♥
	2♠	3♦	Pass	4♥
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

A one-level overcall does not require opening count. East will overcall with this good five-card spade suit. Both South and West fit their partner's major and both are in the 6 to 10 point range with enough strength to raise to the two level.

North's hand is worth about 17 points, enough to make a game try opposite a single raise. But a bid of 3♥ would not invite game over West's 2♠ bid. It would just be competing for the partscore. North must bid a new suit to make a game try. With enough room, North can mention the suit where help is needed – diamonds. With nine points, South might accept any game try. South's help in diamonds makes accepting even more attractive.

Suggested Lead: East leads the ♠ K.

Suggested Play: North's losers are one spade, one diamond and one club. Declarer makes 4♥ by drawing trump and promoting diamonds.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 1: Deal #2

Dealer: East	♠ J 9	
Vul: N-S	♥ A 9 8 4	
	♦ J 10 9	
	♣ Q 10 8 7	
♠ K 10 6 4 2		♠ A Q 8 7 5
♥ 10 7 6 2		♥ 3
♦ A Q		♦ K 7 6 5
♣ A 3		♣ K 4 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ 3	
	♥ K Q J 5	
	♦ 8 4 3 2	
	♣ J 9 6 5	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♠	Pass
	2NT	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
	4NT	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
	6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

West's 2NT is the Jacoby 2NT, showing a game-forcing raise with at least four spades. East's first duty is to show distribution. Any new suit bid on the three level shows a singleton or void. Once East shows heart shortness, West has to decide if the hands fit well together. West has several heart losers that will not be losers because East can ruff them. West's high cards are working in the suits where East has length. The hands fit very well and West can bid Blackwood to explore for slam. With one ace missing, West signs off in 6♠.

Suggested Lead: The opening lead will probably be the ♥K, even though the bidding tells South that there will be at most one heart trick for the defense.

Suggested Play: Declarer must lose a heart and cannot afford to lose anything else. Declarer has two minor suit losers, which can be ruffed in dummy after drawing trump. Isn't it nice to have so many trumps? A small slam bid and made with only 25 HCP. Nice going!

Using Jacoby 2NT to show a game-forcing raise often allows you to reach a good slam without the suggested number of points. If East-West were not using Jacoby 2NT, it is possible that neither East nor West would consider their hand strong enough to look for slam.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 1: Deal #3

Dealer: South	♠ Q 9 7 4	
Vul: E-W	♥ 8 4 3 2	
	♦ A Q 10	
	♣ K Q	
♠ 5		♠ A 6 3
♥ Q J 10 6		♥ A K 7
♦ 9 7 4 3 2		♦ 5
♣ J 8 3		♣ 10 9 7 6 5 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ K J 10 8 2	
	♥ 9 5	
	♦ K J 8 6	
	♣ A 4	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1 ♠
	Pass	2NT	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

North shows an opening hand with four spades by using the Jacoby 2NT raise. South has a very minimum opening hand and goes directly to game (fast arrival denies slam interest).

Suggested Lead: West leads the ♥Q, top of touching high cards.

Suggested Play: Declarer counts three losers – one trump and two hearts. But East should have other ideas. East is looking at a singleton diamond and should consider the possibility of getting a ruff. With the trump ace, East expects to get the lead before all the trumps are drawn. East also knows how to reach partner to get the ruff. It is very unlikely that West would lead the ♥Q without holding the ♥J.

East overtakes the ♥Q with the ♥K and switches to the singleton diamond. East wins the first trump trick and leads back a low heart for partner to win. Now West has to figure out what's going on. Why would East lead a diamond right into dummy's strength? East must have a singleton diamond. As long as West returns a diamond, 4 ♠ goes down. Fast play by East at trick one might destroy any chance of defeating the contract. It's wise for both declarer and defenders to make a plan for the entire deal before playing to trick one.

Dealer: West
Vul: Both

♠ A J 3		♠ K Q 6
♥ K Q 10 6 5		♥ J 9 8 2
♦ 5 4		♦ A 7 6 3
♣ Q 10 6		♣ J 9

W

N

E

S

♠ 5 4 2
♥ 7 3
♦ Q J 10 9
♣ A 7 4 3

♠ 10 9 8 7
♥ A 4
♦ K 8 2
♣ K 8 5 2

West has a total of 13 points counting length and can open 1♥. East shows a limit raise with four trumps. The extra trump is valuable and game often makes with fewer than 26 combined points provided opener has some plus factors. In this case, West has a bare opening hand with no plus factors (fairly balanced distribution, scattered values and only 13 points). West should pass this limit raise.

Suggested Play: West's losers are one heart, one diamond and two clubs. None of these losers can be avoided, so 3♥ is the limit on this hand.

We have spent a lot of time discussing being aggressive and bidding game on fewer than 26 points, but you have to have some reason to bid game. You need either 26 points or hands that fit together so well that you don't need 26 points. On this deal, there was a nine-card trump fit, but that alone is not an excuse to bid game on fewer than 26 points. Opener needs some extra distribution and West's hand is balanced. You have not really learned our lessons unless you have also learned when to stop below game or slam.

	Dealer: North Vul: N-S	<p>♠ A K Q 5</p> <p>♥ A Q 9 6 3</p> <p>♦ 4</p> <p>♣ J 6 4</p>		
	<p>♠ J 10 6 4</p> <p>♥ 7 4</p> <p>♦ A K 10 8</p> <p>♣ 9 8 7</p>	<div> <div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	<p>♠ 9 8 2</p> <p>♥ K 8 2</p> <p>♦ Q J 9 7</p> <p>♣ K 5 2</p>	
		<p>♠ 7 3</p> <p>♥ J 10 5</p> <p>♦ 6 5 3 2</p> <p>♣ A Q 10 3</p>		
<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥
	Pass	3 ♣	Pass	4 ♥
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

South's clubs look pretty good. Partner has specified the need for good clubs and South accepts the game try with eight total points. If North had made the game try in spades, South would look carefully at the spade holding. A doubleton spade is some help, but would be better with four trumps. In addition, South might downgrade the ♣Q and sign off in 3♥.

Suggested Play: North's losers are one diamond, one club, one heart and one spade (eventually).

There are two finesses available to avoid losers. The trump finesse fails but the club finesse works. With clubs and hearts splitting, all declarers should make game, many with an overtrick. The safest plan is for declarer to play the ♠ A K and ruff a spade high early. Declarers who fail to do this can discard a spade on dummy's fourth club, which becomes good with the lucky 3-3 club split.

Dealer: East
Vul: E-W

♠ A 7 5	♠ Q 10	♠ K 9 6 3 2
♥ J 7 5	♥ 10 9 8 3	♥ A K
♦ K 7 4	♦ 10 8 5 3	♦ Q J 6 2
♣ Q 6 4 3	♣ A K 9	♣ J 7

W

N

E

S

♠ J 8 4
♥ Q 6 4 2
♦ A 9
♣ 10 8 5 2

West has 10 points and three trumps. Ten points is sometimes treated as a single raise and sometimes as a limit raise. West has a very balanced hand with scattered values. West's best bid is a single raise to 2♠. (In Losing Trick Count, West has nine losers. A 10-point hand that is worth a limit raise should have eight losers.) When West bids 2♠, East has no desire to go higher. But a limit raise is likely to encourage East (with 15 points) to go to game.

Suggested Lead: South might lead either the ♥2 or the ♣2 against East's 2♠ contract.

On this deal, a much simpler line of play works, although the odds don't favor it. An early club lead toward the jack forces North to go up with the king and promotes dummy's queen into a trick and a place to deposit a losing diamond. Everyone should make 2 ♠, clever declarers will make 3 ♠, but top scores should go to East-West pairs who double a balancing bid by North-South.

[illegible]

East has an opening hand and a fit for opener's hearts. The common way to describe this hand with only three trumps is to make some forcing bid first and then carry on to game as East did in the above auction. East might rebid only 3♥, a bid that most experts agree is forcing. 3♥ allows room to discuss the possibility of slam, but East has a minimum game-going hand and no desire to have that discussion.

Suggested Lead: Spades is the only unbid suit but it's not usually a good idea to lead an unsupported ace, and we don't like to underlead an ace in a suit contract. With no good lead, North might consider leading a trump.

Suggested Play: Declarer's losers are two spades and possibly two diamonds. In making a plan, declarer should focus on a way to avoid a diamond loser. Declarer might hope for the North-South diamonds to split 3-3 but the odds favor a 4-2 split, and declarer would like to make this game more than the 36% of the time that diamonds do split 3-3. Dummy provides a clue – dummy has fewer diamonds than declarer has. When a suit is shorter in dummy, there is a possibility of ruffing a loser in that suit. But it will take all three of dummy's trumps to draw trump. The solution is not to draw trump immediately; play diamonds instead.

The most likely split of the opponents' diamonds is 4-2, so it's probably safe to cash the top two diamonds right away. Then declarer gives up a diamond. Even if North led a trump originally, declarer can't be hurt as long as the ♥A is still in dummy. The ♥A can be used to ruff declarer's fourth diamond to avoid any possibility of an overruff. Once the diamond problem is taken care of, declarer can draw trump and cash the top two clubs to make 4♥. Declarer ends up winning five hearts, two clubs, two diamonds *and a diamond ruff*. Nicely played!

Dealer: West
Vul: None

♠ 6 4	♠ 8 3	♠ K Q J 10 5
♥ K 6	♥ A 10 8 7 2	♥ Q J 9 3
♦ 7 6 4 3	♦ Q 10 2	♦ A 8
♣ J 9 8 7 4	♣ A Q 5	♣ 6 2

W

N

E

S

♠ A 9 7 2
♥ 5 4
♦ K J 9 5
♣ K 10 3

After East overcalls, South can bid 2NT to show a balanced 11 to 12 points with spades stopped. Neither Jordan nor Jacoby 2NT applies after an overcall, so opener should not expect partner to have a fit. A 2NT response in competition is invitational and shows a stopper in overcaller's suit. With a balanced 13 count, North passes 2NT.

Suggested Play: Declarer counts winners in notrump: one spade, one heart and three clubs. Three additional tricks can be promoted in diamonds. Declarer should work on diamonds early. The defenders can win only four spade tricks and the ♦ A.

LESSON 2 – Splinter Bids

The deals for this lesson are from Session 2 of the *Major Suit Raises II “Play” Course*. The topic of this lesson is splinter bids, the companion convention to Jacoby 2NT. Jacoby 2NT is used for balanced and semi-balanced responding hands. Splinter bids are used for most game-going responding hands containing a singleton or void. Opener can determine how well the partnership hands fit. With good-fitting hands, opener will move toward slam. Splinter bids are not covered in the *Commonly Used Conventions* lesson plans, but they are mentioned in the appendix of the student text.

The lesson begins with the play of Deal #1. Students are likely to use Jacoby 2NT to raise opener’s major. Most tables will probably miss the good slam because neither partner realizes how well the hands fit together. After play is completed, introduce a splinter bid by responder as the way to reach this slam.

Remind the students how to construct the lesson deals using the ACBL E-Z Deal cards. Remind students of dealer and vulnerability on each lesson deal.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 2: Deal #1

Dealer: North	♠ K J 7 6 3 2	
Vul: None	♥ 7 6 4	
	♦ A Q	
	♣ A 5	
♠ 9		♠ 10 4
♥ A K 8 3 2		♥ Q J 10 5
♦ J 9 5		♦ K 10 6 3
♣ J 9 8 6		♣ 10 7 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A Q 8 5	
	♥ 9	
	♦ 8 7 4 2	
	♣ K Q 4 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1 ♠	Pass	2NT
	Pass	3NT	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

Using what you know so far, South might use the Jacoby 2NT to show a forcing raise with four trumps. North will rebid 3NT to show a hand worth 15 to 17 and no singleton or void. Even if North has 17 points, South's 14 total points don't add up to enough for slam. South is likely to bid 4 ♠, assuming South already has shown the hand, and a good slam could be missed.

Suggested Lead: Even if East knows that two heart tricks are not going to be forthcoming, East will probably lead the ♥ Q, a safe lead from a sequence. (West might double a 4 ♥ splinter bid. This is a **lead directional double** and shows length and strength in hearts. It suggests that partner can safely lead a heart. Lead directional doubles are helpful to prevent partner from making a lead that gives up a trick, a very important consideration against a slam.)

Suggested Play: Declarer loses one heart and ruffs the other two hearts in dummy. Declarer shouldn't fall into the diamond finesse trap. Dummy's ♣ Q can be used to discard the ♦ Q. Players who finesse just for the sake of finessing get what they deserve when they win only eleven tricks instead of twelve. Those who take the time to make the best plan will realize the finesse isn't necessary. The toughest defense will have West overtake partner's ♥ Q and return a diamond, testing declarer's skill immediately.

Now that we all agree that slam is a good prospect on these cards, what went wrong in the bidding? Jacoby 2NT is actually intended to be used by a semi-balanced or balanced responder. Opener shows shortness and then responder decides whether the short suit is an asset or not. The problem on this deal is that the shortness was in responder's hand, not in opener's hand. Only South knew about the short suit and South had no way of knowing if partner liked heart shortness.

The solution is for responder to use a different bid with a singleton or void. The bid is called a splinter bid. Splinter bids go hand in hand with the Jacoby 2NT convention. To make a splinter bid, you give a double jump – one level past a jump shift – in your short suit.

The auction for North-South would be:

N	S
1 ♠	4 ♥

Write auction on the board

A 2♥ bid from South wouldn't be a jump at all. A 3♥ bid from South would be a jump shift. A double jump is a jump one level higher than a jump shift. South's splinter bid shows a singleton or void in hearts and a forcing raise with four or more trumps. We require the fourth trump because the extra trump makes South's singleton worth more. Splinter bids are alertable, so North would immediately alert South's 4♥ bid.

What will happen now that North knows South is short in hearts and has points in clubs, diamonds and spades? North should realize that high cards in hearts don't matter any more, so slam might be made with fewer high cards than usual. Use your imagination with North's hand. What would you need from partner to make slam? The ♠A and the ♦K could be enough, but partner forced you to game and has to have more than that. North should take charge of getting to slam. Blackwood shows one missing ace and North can bid 6♠.

Splinter bids add one extra thing to remember but they do help you bid more slams. Whether or not you think you are up to adding them to your bidding arsenal yet, I'd like you to practice using splinter bids today. They are alertable. Opener alerts a splinter bid as soon as responder bids.

Let's all make sure we can recognize a splinter bid response to a major suit opening bid.

Write each auction on the board for discussion. Where no discussion is shown next to the auction, East's bid is a splinter bid.

(1) W N E S
1♥ P 4♣

(2) W N E S
1♥ P 4♦

(3) W N E S
1♥ P 3♠

Since 1♠ is available, a double jump is only to the three level.

(4) W N E S
1♠ P 4♣

(5) W N E S
1♠ P 4♦

(6) W N E S
1♠ P 4♥

As in the auction for our first lesson deal. Be careful – this splinter bid is scary because it's a game bid and sounds like a final decision, placing the contract.

(7) W N E S
1♥ 1♠ 3♠

Most players would treat the 3♠ bid as a splinter bid even though it's not a double jump. We don't have any need for a jump shift in the opponents' suit as a natural bid. Better make sure partner agrees with this even when you have already agreed that you are using splinter bids.

(8) W N E S
1♥ 1♠ 4♣

It's even more important for you and partner to have discussed this auction. 4♣ could be a splinter bid if you agree. What else could it be? A lot of players treat any jump in a competitive auction as a preempt. When the jump is in the opponents' bid suit, you obviously don't mean to preempt in that suit, but here the jump is in a new suit, a suit where you might wish to preempt.

Dealer: East
Vul: N-S

♠ A 6 5 2	♠ J 8	♠ K Q 10 9 4 3
♥ A 8 6 5	♥ K 7 4 3	♥ 9
♦ A 9 7 5	♦ 10 3	♦ K Q 4
♣ 9	♣ Q J 6 4 2	♣ A 8 7

N
W E
S

♠ 7
♥ Q J 10 2
♦ J 8 6 2
♣ K 10 5 3

Suggested Play: The play goes just as East pictured. Declarer draws trump and then ruffs two clubs in dummy. Nicely done – a grand slam bid and made on only 26 HCP. Points schmoits! Distribution and how well your hands fit together matter a lot.

Dealer: South
Vul: E-W

♠ J 9 6 5
♥ 2
♦ Q J 10
♣ J 9 5 3 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 7 4 2
♥ K Q 7 6
♦ K 6 5 2
♣ 7

♠ A 10
♥ J 4 3
♦ A 9 8 3
♣ Q 10 8 4

♠ Q 8 3
♥ A 10 9 8 5
♦ 7 4
♣ A K 6

North bids 4♣ to show shortness in clubs (a singleton or void). While South's ♣A and ♣K are both going to win tricks, those points somewhat duplicate North's ruffing value and would be better placed in other suits. South is counting 3 points for the ♣K, while North is counting 3 points for the singleton club. This is known as **duplication of values** and hands don't fit that well when you have duplication. Without the "useless" ♣K, South would not have an opening hand, so South signs off in 4♥.

Suggested Lead: West will probably lead the \spadesuit Q.

After three rounds of diamonds, the assumption is that East holds four diamonds to the ace. When trumps are drawn, East shows up with three hearts. Declarer has to make a decision while there are still entries to both hands. East held seven red cards and only six black cards. West held four red cards and nine black cards. That makes it a bit more likely that East will have a doubleton spade. Now, if only it's the ace! Declarer can go to dummy with a club ruff to lead a spade toward the queen. If East has the ace and plays low, declarer's ♠Q will win. Next, declarer will play a low spade from both hands. Voila! East's ♠A goes on air and there is nothing East can do to prevent it!

How many defenders made declarer work this hard? West must not discard two spades on hearts or declarer will have no problem. Instead of being 4-2, the six missing spades will be 2-2.

Responder's splinter bid can help opener decide if a slam is likely. With values in responder's short suit, here is how opener should think. "If the wasted high cards I have in partner's suit were little cards, would I like my hand – would my hand still be a full opener?" If it would, opener can move toward slam. If opener's hand goes down to less than a full opener, opener's best choice is to sign off in game as South did on this deal. South had to struggle to make game even though North-South had 28 total points between them.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 2: Deal #4

Dealer: West
Vul: Both

♠ A K 8	♠ 10 6 4 2	♠ Q 9 3
♥ K Q 7 6 3	♥ J 9	♥ A 8 5 4
♦ K Q J 2	♦ 10 8 6 5	♦ 4
♣ 5	♣ K Q J	♣ A 9 8 4 3

W

N

E

S

♠ J 7 5
♥ 10 2
♦ A 9 7 3
♣ 10 7 6 2

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♥	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
	4NT	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
	6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

East's 4♦ bid is a splinter bid, showing a singleton or void in diamonds and a forcing heart raise with four trumps. West is somewhat turned off by this with six points wasted in diamonds. Before giving up on slam, West should consider the value of the hand if those good diamonds were four little diamonds. West would still have a full opening hand! Moreover, the singleton club could be useful. West can imagine a slam opposite as little as the ♥A and the ♣A. The diamonds are strong enough to be set up to provide discards for spade losers in East's hand. Blackwood will tell West how many aces partner does have.

When East shows two aces, West confidently bids 6♥.

Suggested Lead: North leads the ♣K, hoping to promote two tricks to defeat the slam.

Suggested Play: West will lose to the \spadesuit A and ruff a diamond in dummy to make 6 \heartsuit .

Dealer: North
Vul: N-S

♠ 9 6 3 2	♠ A K	♠ 10 5
♥ 9 3	♥ A Q 10 6 5	♥ 7 4 2
♦ 8 6 3	♦ J 2	♦ K Q 10 9
♣ K Q 5 2	♣ 10 8 7 3	♣ A J 9 4

W

E

S

N

♠ Q J 8 7 4
♥ K J 8
♦ A 7 5 4
♣ 6

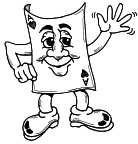
<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	4 ♥
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

South has a heart fit and 14 points including three for the singleton club. But South can't show the heart support right away. Immediate strong raises – both Jacoby 2NT and splinter bids – show four trumps. South temporizes with a forcing bid in a new suit – 1 ♠. North rebids 2 ♣. Now South completes the description by jumping to 4 ♥ – a forcing raise with only three trumps.

Suggested Play: North's losers are one diamond and four clubs. The diamond opening lead has made transportation difficult. On a non-diamond lead, declarer could draw trump and then play spades, taking 11 tricks, as long as the missing spades split either 4-2 or 3-3, which is very likely. On a diamond lead, declarer's only possible entry to dummy's good spade suit is the third trump, and this works only when trumps split 3-2. It's safer for declarer to plan to ruff clubs to guarantee four, but duplicate players sometimes do take risks to make an overtrick. Declarer might consider ducking the $\spadesuit K$ lead. While it is safe for East to continue with the $\spadesuit Q$, East doesn't know that. If East is afraid to continue diamonds, declarer will have the needed entry to use the spades after trumps are drawn.

The problem is that declarer has to ruff at least one club to make six. With only three trumps in dummy, that means losing a club before drawing trumps. East's diamond lead allows the defenders to win the club and a diamond at that time. Even if East had not led a diamond, a diamond switch would cause transportation problems. It would cut off the entry to dummy's spades, which declarer needs to discard the diamond loser.

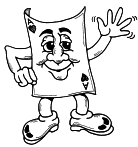
What if South had forgotten that our immediate strong raises promise at least four trumps? South might have used a splinter bid to show a singleton club. When North tries to picture how slam could be made, North will imagine ruffing club losers in dummy. When you make a splinter bid, it is suggested that your opening count include at least 10 to 11 HCP along with points for shortness. North expects those HCP to be enough to help make a slam.



Let's make a couple of card changes to confirm that.

Trade South's ♦ 4 for West's ♥ 3.

Now slam is fairly easy. Declarer can win the ♦ A, five hearts, five spades, plus a club ruff after trumps are drawn and the losing diamond is discarded. Declarer still has to watch transportation and unblock spades before leading a third trump.



Trade South's ♠ 4 for West's ♦ 4. This makes the play a little trickier, but slam is still possible. Declarer has the ♦ A, five hearts and four spades, and declarer must get two club ruffs for 12 tricks. On a diamond lead, a 2-2 trump break is needed to make the hand.

On the hand you actually played, there is NO play for twelve tricks. The reason you can't make slam is that a singleton in dummy is not as valuable when dummy has only three-card support. With a normal eight-card fit, you generally wait to bid slam until you have the suggested 33 points.

Dealer: East
Vul: E-W

♠ A 10 5 3	♠ 8 2	♠ K Q 9 7 4
♥ A	♥ 10 9 8 4 3	♥ K Q 5
♦ J 5 4 2	♦ A 9 8 3	♦ 6
♣ K 8 7 2	♣ 9 4	♣ A J 6 3

W

N

E

S

♠ J 6
♥ J 7 6 2
♦ K Q 10 7
♣ Q 10 5

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♠	Pass
	2NT	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
	3 ♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
	5 ♥	Pass	6 ♠	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

I hope everyone was able to take 12 tricks in spades. You didn't do that if you took the club finesse. But we'll see that the club finesse was unnecessary. How many took 12 tricks? How many bid the slam? Let's see how you can bid and make this slam.

Suggested Play: Declarer can lead two rounds of trump and play the ♥A and a club to the ace. Next declarer discards two of dummy's clubs on the ♥KQ. Now dummy can ruff both of declarer's club losers. (Even if trumps had split 3-1, declarer could discard clubs on hearts and hope for a 3-2 club split, where the ♣Q could be ruffed.)

What went wrong for those of you who missed slam? It could be responder's use of the splinter bid. So far, you may have noticed that when we showed a singleton, it was a small card. This warned partner that honors in that short suit were wasted. But when you have a singleton ace, partner's king-queen can still provide two tricks. When you have a singleton king, partner's queen-jack are going to be tricks. Because of this, we are advised not to show a singleton ace or even a singleton king with either splinter bids or the Jacoby 2NT convention.

What should West do on this deal? Rather than use a splinter bid with a singleton ace, West should use Jacoby 2NT. West will discover that opener has a good singleton in diamonds. West can show a first-round heart control and East can move on to slam, fully appreciating the ♥KQ. You have really learned a convention when you learn when NOT to use it. (West's control bid is suggested rather than Blackwood because West fears a trump loser as well as a diamond loser. Holding two top trump honors, East's only concern is aces and Blackwood provides the answer.)

Dealer: South
Vul: Both

♠ 4
♥ J 3
♦ K J 6 4
♣ A K J 10 9 5

♠ Q J 6 3
♥ A Q 9 4
♦ Q 7 5 2
♣ 6

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A K 9 8 5 2
♥ K 5
♦ A 3
♣ 8 7 3

♠ 10 7
♥ 10 8 7 6 2
♦ 10 9 8
♣ Q 4 2

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1 ♠
	2 ♣	4 ♣	Pass	4NT
	Pass	5 ♦	Pass	6 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

Suggested Lead: West leads the ♣A, hoping to grab the trick before it gets away.

Suggested Play: Declarer makes 6♠ by ruffing two clubs in dummy and discarding the diamond loser on dummy's ♥Q.

Dealer: West
Vul: None

♠ Q J 5
♥ A Q 10 9 3
♦ A 5 2
♣ 9 4

♠ A 9 7 2
♥ 7 5 4
♦ 9 4
♣ Q J 10 7

♠ 3
♥ K J 6 2
♦ K 7 6 3
♣ A 8 6 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 10 8 6 4
♥ 8
♦ Q J 10 8
♣ K 5 3

Suggested Bidding:

	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1 ♥		Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♥		Pass	Pass	Pass

Suggested Lead: North leads the ♣Q.

This concludes your taste of splinter bids. Adding a lot of new bids to your system can be overwhelming. Jacoby 2NT is designed to be used by a semi-balanced or balanced responding hand and splinter bids are used when responder has a singleton or void. However, if all this seems too much for you, you can start off simply using the Jacoby 2NT as your only forcing raise – balanced or unbalanced. You will miss out on the benefits splinter bids offer for a while, but you may feel more comfortable.

You can build even more slowly, simply using 2NT to tell partner that you have a forcing raise and eliminating opener's rebids. It's not Jacoby 2NT but at least it does give you a forcing raise, and opener can express an interest in slam with some three-level bid – three of the agreed major or a control. If all you add by the end of these courses is some way to make a forcing raise and appreciation of how to better evaluate the way your hand fits with partner's, you've gained a lot. Plus you know the rest exists and is waiting for you when you are ready.

LESSON 3 – 1NT Forcing

The deals for this lesson are from Session 3 of the Major Suit Raises II “Play” Course. This lesson introduces 1NT Forcing. The first three deals are discussed in standard bidding, where students will bid the same way with or without 1NT Forcing. If you have taught only the ACBL Bridge Series lessons, some of this material could be new to your students. The ACBL courses have not provided lessons on taking a preference or on allowing responder to sign off in a long suit on the two level after responding 1NT. The fourth deal introduces 1NT Forcing and then we practice. We learn how that response can be used as step one of a two-step limit raise and also as part of the Two-Over-One Game-Forcing system of bidding that is popular today.

Review how to construct the lesson deals using the ACBL E-Z Deal cards. Remind students of dealer and vulnerability on each lesson deal.

Related deals from MCUC: MCUC Lesson 8 Lesson Deals 3 and 4.

Reference sections in MCUC Teacher Manual Lesson 8 – sections entitled 1NT Forcing, Opener’s Rebid after 1NT Forcing, Responder’s Rebid after a Forcing 1NT Response and Handling Interference.

Since the bidding on the first several lesson deals is standard, we begin with Deal #1. Let the students bid and play on their own before discussing the deal.

Dealer: North
Vul: None

♠ 8
♥ K Q J 10 7 3
♦ 9 8 3
♣ 6 4 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 9 5 4 2
♥ A 5 4
♦ K Q J 10
♣ 9 8

♠ A K 7 6 3
♥ 6
♦ 5 4 2
♣ A Q 5 3

♠ Q J 10
♥ 9 8 2
♦ A 7 6
♣ K J 10 7

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	1 ♠	Pass
	1NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
	2 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Across from a standard INT response, opener generally passes with a minimum balanced hand and rebids with either more than minimum strength or a minimum unbalanced hand. East's rebid shows four clubs along with the five spades originally shown. East has not promised any extra strength beyond what was required to open.

Suggested Lead: North has two reasons to lead the ♦ K. It is top of a sequence of honors and the only unbid suit.

Suggested Play in Hearts: Declarer's losers are two clubs, three diamonds and one heart. A loser can be discarded on a high spade. If North switches to clubs, it is necessary to discard before drawing trump. South cannot lead clubs successfully. If the East-West club tricks are not set up, declarer can play it safe and draw trump first.

Suggested Play in Notrump: Isn't it nice that opener had a second suit so responder had the chance to show the hearts? 1NT cannot make. North leads the $\spadesuit K$ and the defenders can take the first four diamond tricks. On the fourth diamond, South can discard the $\heartsuit 2$ to discourage the lead of that suit. North can switch to the $\clubsuit 9$, which either wins or forces a high card from dummy. Declarer might sneak a heart through with North holding up, but even with that, declarer can take only the heart, the $\clubsuit A$ and the $\spadesuit A K$.

Dealer: East
Vul: N-S

♠ Q 5 2		♠ J 9		♠ 6 4 3
♥ K Q J 7		♥ A 6 5 4 2		♥ 10 3
♦ 10 9 5 2		♦ K 7		♦ Q J 6
♣ K 10		♣ 6 5 3 2		♣ A J 9 8 4

W

N

E

S

♠ A K 10 8 7
♥ 9 8
♦ A 8 4 3
♣ Q 7

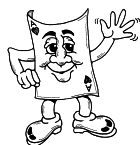
North's 1NT response shows a minimum hand that can't afford to say anything else. South's 2♦ bid gives North an alternative trump suit. North is expected to choose one of these suits as long as there is a semblance of a fit and no better place to play. North shouldn't think about bidding the weak five-card heart suit. North should prefer spades knowing that opener probably has more spades than diamonds.

It's easy to make the right decision if you stop and look at the size of the different "fits" North-South have. Do this from North's viewpoint. South opened 1 ♠ promising five spades. North has two spades, making a seven-card "fit." South's 2 ♦ rebid showed four diamonds. North has two, making a six-card "fit." We saw on the last hand that a 2 ♥ bid from North would be signoff, showing a long heart suit and no game interest. It isn't wise for responder to make this bid without a six-card suit or a fantastic five-card suit, since North has only five hearts and South has not promised to have a single heart. That makes a guaranteed five-card "fit." With all our "fit" counting, we haven't found any suit with the traditional eight-card fit, but we came close in one suit – spades. When responder is weak and opener has not shown any extra values, it's best to stop as low as possible in a reasonable spot. 2 ♠, the bid of an old suit at the two level, is a weak bid and should not make partner expect three-card spade support. North would have raised immediately with 6 to 10 points and three spades. North is simply taking a preference between the suits opener offered.

Suggested Lead: West might lead the ♥K.

Suggested Play: Losers are one spade, one heart, two diamonds and two clubs for a total of six losers. Declarer could hope for the spade finesse to work, but there is a surer line of play. Ruff a diamond before drawing trump. Some declarers might ruff a second diamond to score an overtrick. The defenders can prevent the overtrick if they can get East on lead to lead a trump. West loses a trump trick by leading trump. If West had not had a dangerous trump holding to lead from, a trump opening lead would have been a good choice. It is often a good idea for the defenders to lead trump in a preference auction like the one we just had.

Leave North's hand face up and suit the rest of the cards.

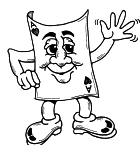


North had: ♠ J 9 ♥ A 6 5 4 2 ♦ K 7 ♣ 6 5 3 2

Trade the ♠ J for the ♥ 9

North has: ♠ 9 ♥ A 9 6 5 4 2 ♦ K 7 ♣ 6 5 3 2

South opens 1♠, North responds 1NT, South rebids 2♦. Now North can bid 2♥ with a six-card suit and not much support for opener's suits. Only six cards are guaranteed in any suit, so it's best to play in the suit where all six cards are in one hand.

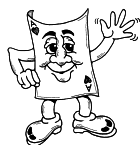


Trade the ♥ 9 for the ♦ 9.

North has: ♠ 9 ♥ A 6 5 4 2 ♦ K 9 7 ♣ 6 5 3 2

You hear the same auction with South bidding spades and then diamonds. Let's count cards in all possible trump suits. Where is your longest "fit"? In diamonds. Is opener's 2♦ rebid forcing? No, new suits by opener are usually not forcing. Pass 2♦.

What would you have done if opener had rebid spades instead of showing diamonds? Pass 2♠. Once opener has shown a six-card suit, a weak responder is safe passing even with no support.



Take away the ♥ 2 and add the ♠ Q.

North has: ♠ Q 9 ♥ A 6 5 4 ♦ K 9 7 ♣ 6 5 3 2

After opener shows spades and diamonds, what should North do? A pass of 2♦ is possible. North expects a seven-card diamond fit but there is also a seven-card fit in spades. Can you think of any advantage to going back to 2♠? It's a major and scores higher. Having five trumps leaves opener with less risk of running out of trump than when holding only four. When opener is 6-4, opener might bid as your partner did, showing the six-card suit and then the four-card suit. In that case, you would have an eight-card spade fit. How many points does opener have? Opener's jump shift starts at 19 points. Opener could have as much as 18 points. While opener's 2♦ bid isn't forcing, it doesn't guarantee a weak hand either. Bidding 2♠ gives opener a chance to move toward game with the top of the range. Your nine points are enough to want to accept if opener is medium.

Let's try another deal. When it's time to choose the best spot, remember to think of the size of your "fits."

Dealer: South	♠ 8										
Vul: E-W	♥ J 7 3										
	♦ K J 8 6 4 2										
	♣ J 10 2										
♠ A 4 3	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 5 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ A 9 8 5		♥ 10 6 2									
♦ 10 3		♦ A Q 9 7									
♣ K 7 5 3		♣ A 9 8									
	♠ K Q J 9 7 6										
	♥ K Q 4										
	♦ 5										
	♣ O 6 4										

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1 ♠
	Pass	1NT	Pass	2 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

East-West should be cautious about entering the bidding when their opponents have not located a fit, so $2\spadesuit$ is likely to end the auction.

Suggested Lead: West doesn't have a good opening lead. When there is a trump suit, we tend to avoid leading suits headed by an unsupported ace. West might lead the ♣3 or the ♦10.

Suggested Play in Spades: Losers are one diamond, one heart, one spade and two clubs. Declarer draws trump and then promotes hearts and clubs to make 2 ♠.

Suggested Play in Diamonds: In diamonds, there are all the same losers as in spades plus more diamond losers. 3 ♦ is likely to go down three.

Dealer: West	♠ K 9 8 3										
Vul: Both	♥ 7 2										
	♦ A Q 10										
	♣ 10 9 8 3										
♠ A 7 6 5 4	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 4 3		♥ K Q 10 9 8 6									
♦ 9 5 3		♦ 7 6 2									
♣ A K Q		♣ J 5 4									
	♠ Q J 10										
	♥ A J 5										
	♦ K J 8 4										
	♣ 7 6 2										

With what the students know, West is likely to pass 1NT. This deal is intended to illustrate one of the benefits of the use of 1NT forcing – responder’s ability to sign off in a long suit when opener has a minimum balanced hand. Let the students play in any contract they reach.

Suggested Play in Hearts: East's losers are two hearts and three diamonds. 2♥ makes easily. The problem is getting there. Some players will cheat with a hand like East's and respond 2♥. But that is a forcing bid and West must bid again, taking East-West too high.

Opener	Responder
1♣	1NT

Opener	Responder
1♦	1NT

How likely is responder's hand to be balanced now? Three bids – 1♥, 1♠ and 2♦ were available. This 1NT response is also likely to show balanced distribution. The only unbalanced hand responder might have is one with a long club suit. A minimum responder could not afford to respond 2♣. A new suit on the two level shows about 11 points.

Responder is usually comfortable with a 1NT response to a minor suit opening. Responder has minimum strength but often does have balanced distribution. The same is not true for the 1NT response to a major suit opening bid.

Opener	Responder
1♥	1NT

Can you picture some unbalanced responding hands that would be forced to use a 1NT response? With a hand in the 6 to 10 point range, responder must stay at the one level unless responder can raise to 2♥. Responder could have an unbalanced hand with length in either or both minors and only be able to afford a 1NT response.

Opener	Responder
1♠	1NT

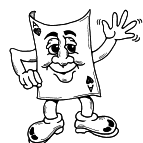
Now it's even worse. A minimum responding hand can't afford to show any long suit. Responder might easily be unbalanced with long clubs, diamonds or hearts but not have enough strength to bid a new suit on the two level.

In standard bidding, a balanced minimum opening hand will pass a 1NT response. When responder's hand is unbalanced, that contract could be quite uncomfortable to play. Unfortunately, standard bidding methods don't always allow you to reach your best spot.

Today we are going to look at a convention used by some duplicate players. This convention has several purposes but one thing it accomplishes is to allow a weak responder to sign off in a long suit more often. The name of the convention sounds like heresy – it's called 1NT Forcing. We've always known responder's 1NT to be a weak non-forcing bid and suddenly it's forcing! Why would we want a weak bid to be forcing?

First, let's see how using 1NT Forcing would help responder on the hand we just played. When 1NT is a forcing response, opener often makes a normal rebid – the same rebid opener made on the first three deals we played today. What is opener's normal action on this hand? Pass. When you use 1NT Forcing, opener rebids a three-card minor on the two level with a hand that would normally pass a weak 1NT response. With three cards in both minors, bid clubs. Opener rebids 2♣ on this deal. Responder is able to make a signoff bid of 2♥ and East-West stop safe and low in their best contract.

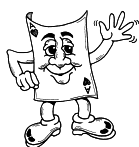
While 1NT Forcing is different, it isn't difficult. Let's look further at how opener rebids after responder uses 1NT Forcing. Most of the time, opener will make the very same rebid that opener would have made if 1NT were not forcing. Let's look at some examples: Suit the cards and let's put out a hand for South.



Lay out the following hand for South:

♠ A Q J 9 6 5 ♥ A 3 2 ♦ 7 5 ♣ 9 6.

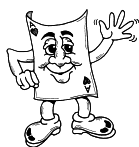
South opens 1♠. Partner responds 1NT. It doesn't matter if this is the normal minimum non-forcing 1NT response or the conventional 1NT Forcing bid. South's normal rebid is 2♠ to show a minimum opening hand with extra spade length.



Remove South's ♥ 3 2 and ♦ 7. Put in the ♥ J 10 and ♦ A.

South has: ♠ A Q J 9 6 5 ♥ A J 10 ♦ A 5 ♣ 9 6.

South opens 1♠. Partner responds 1NT. Again, it doesn't matter if this is the normal minimum non-forcing 1NT response or the conventional 1NT Forcing bid. South's normal rebid is 3♠ to show a medium opening hand with extra spade length.



Remove South's ♠ 5 and ♦ A. Put in the ♥ K and ♦ 7.

South has: ♠ A Q J 9 6 ♥ A K J 10 ♦ 7 5 ♣ 9 6.

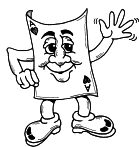
South opened 1♠. Partner responded 1NT. It doesn't matter if this is the normal minimum non-forcing 1NT response or the conventional 1NT Forcing bid. South's normal rebid is 2♥ to show an unbalanced opening hand of about 13 to 18 points. Opener's bid of a new suit is not forcing. At this point, responder will usually choose one of opener's suits.



Remove South's ♥ A J, ♦ 7 and ♣ 6. Put in the ♥ 7, ♦ A and ♣ K J.

South has: ♠ A Q J 9 6 ♥ K 10 7 ♦ A 5 ♣ K J 9.

South opened 1♠. Partner responded 1NT. Even if this is a standard weak response, there is a chance for game. Bid 2NT to show a hand that was a little too strong to open 1NT (18-19 points). This bid is invitational; partner can pass with around 6 points.



Remove South's ♥ K, ♦ A and ♣ K J. Put in the ♥ A Q and ♣ A Q.

South has: ♠ A Q J 9 6 ♥ A Q 10 7 ♦ 5 ♣ A Q 9.

South opened 1♠ and partner responded 1NT. South has about 20 points. Opposite partner's six or more points, South wants to be in game. An unbalanced hand uses the jump shift to show this interest. South jumps to 3♥, a game-forcing bid.

Our bidding was completely standard so far. The only time opener's rebid is different after 1NT Forcing is with a balanced minimum hand – a hand that would have passed a standard 1NT response.

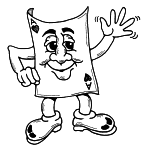


Remove South's ♠ J, ♥ Q and ♣ A Q. Put in the ♠ 5, ♦ K and ♣ 5 4.

South has: ♠ A Q 9 6 5 ♥ A 10 7 ♦ K 5 ♣ 9 5 4.

South opened 1♠. Partner responds with a Forcing 1NT. South would like to pass but this conventional bid is forcing and South is required to bid again. Partner could have 12 points, giving you enough for game. Partner could have a very unbalanced hand. With no good rebid, opener bids a three-card minor in this situation. Rebid 2♣. You absolutely cannot pass because 1NT is now a forcing bid. Partnership trust is destroyed when forcing bids are passed. A 2♠ rebid shows longer spades when your opening bid already showed five. 2NT shows more points and can get you too high when responder is very minimum. A 2♣ rebid is completely safe

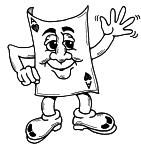
because it's part of the system. When you play 1NT as a forcing response, you agree that opener might rebid a three-card minor suit.



Remove South's ♣ 4 and put in the ♦ 4.

South has: ♠ A Q 9 6 5 ♥ A 10 7 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ 9 5.

South opens 1♠. Partner responds a Forcing 1NT. South would like to pass, but is required to bid again. Rebid 2♦, a three-card minor. Always choose a minor suit when you have to bid a three-card suit.



Now for the problem hand. Remove South's ♠ 5 and ♦ 4. Put in the ♥ 5 4.

South has: ♠ A Q 9 6 ♥ A 10 7 5 4 ♦ K 5 ♣ 9 5.

South opens 1♥. Partner gives a Forcing 1NT response. 2♠ would be a poor rebid for two reasons. Partner doesn't have four spades – partner would have bid 1♠ instead of 1NT. The second reason is that South's opening hand is minimum and partner's bid guaranteed no more than six points. When there is a chance that both partners are minimum, opener has to make a rebid at two of the original suit or lower. A 2♠ bid would be a reverse, showing more than minimum strength. South has two ugly choices. Bid 2♥, which will make partner think you have six hearts, or bid 2♣, which will make partner think you have three clubs. With this weak heart suit, my preference is to lie about a minor rather than a major. If you end up being dummy, mix a spade in with your clubs before you put your hand down. With stronger hearts, you can rebid the five-card suit in a pinch.

This last hand is the reason some players choose to use a conventional opening bid called Flannery. For them, an opening bid of 2♦ shows five hearts and four spades and 11 to 15 points. Most of you probably already use a 2♦ opening for a different hand – a weak two. Many experts don't like Flannery because you have to pass with hands that could have been opened with a weak 2♦. The experts want to bid whenever possible and using 2♦ as Flannery takes away their chance to get into the auction. Responder should not worry about the possibility that opener has bid a two-card suit after a 1NT Forcing response. Just assume opener bid a three-card or longer suit and bid accordingly. I just wanted to show you this hand because it could come up sometime.

When your partnership uses 1NT Forcing, opener must let the opponents know that the partnership has agreed to use this special convention. 1NT Forcing is in blue on the convention card – just like Jacoby Transfers.

We announce the meaning of bids written in blue. When responder bids a Forcing 1NT, opener immediately says one word – “forcing.” If the opponents need a further explanation, they can ask at their turn to bid. Since opener's rebid is generally a three-card or longer suit, the ACBL does not require any other announcements or alerts after 1NT Forcing.

Let's try some hands. Remember that opener announces “forcing” immediately after the 1NT Forcing response. If you're going to use a convention, you have to take responsibility for making the proper alerts and announcements.

Dealer: North
Vul: N-S

♠ Q J 10 9		♠ A K 6
♥ A 4		♥ J 9 7 6 5
♦ 7 4 2		♦ K Q 6
♣ J 10 9 2		♣ 7 4

W

N

E

S

♠ 8 7 4	♠ 5 3 2
♥ 3	♥ K Q 10 8 2
♦ J 10 9 3	♦ A 8 5
♣ A K 8 5 3	♣ Q 6

Using 1NT Forcing didn't give many pairs an advantage on this deal. Up to now we've seen that 1NT Forcing has the advantage of allowing responder to sign off in a long suit and the disadvantage of going past 1NT when responder really has a notrump hand. If this were all there was to 1NT Forcing, it might well not be worth playing. But there are other advantages.

Do you recall how we showed a limit raise of opener's major with only three trumps? We could not raise directly to the three level. We had to do the two-step. Sometimes responder's only suit is a bad suit that responder would rather not have mentioned. Even when responder does like the suit, both opener and responder give the opponents information on what to lead. Do you remember our discussion of how responder should continue in these two auctions? In each case, responder wants to show a limit raise with three trumps:

W	E	W	E
1♥	1♠	1♥	2♣
2♣		2♦	

In the first case, responder has to jump to 3♥ to make sure partner knows this isn't a weak hand with only two hearts. In the second case, responder has already shown strength, so the experts advise responder to simply rebid 2♥ to show the limit raise. But then opener may wonder if responder has only two hearts and nothing better to bid. There is no confusion when you use 1NT Forcing as step one of your two-step limit raise. You may be surprised to hear that a 1NT Forcing response can show more than minimum strength. The range of a 1NT Forcing response is about 6 to 12 points.

W	E
1♥	1NT
2♣	3♥

No question here – East is showing a limit raise with three trumps. Opener may or may not have clubs since 2♣ is a conventional rebid. You haven't told the opponents much about your hands.

Responder must jump raise opener's major when using 1NT Forcing as part of the two-step limit raise.

W	E
1♥	1NT
2♣	2♥

Responder would bid this way with a weak hand and only two trumps. 2♥ is a preference bid, showing a doubleton heart.

Let's practice with our next deal.

Dealer: East
Vul: E-W

♠ J 5 3		♠ 9 6 4		♠ K Q 8 7 2
♥ A 6 3 2		♥ K J 9 5		♥ 8 7 4
♦ A 6 3		♦ Q J 10 8		♦ 5
♣ Q 7 4		♣ 5 3		♣ A K 6 2

W

N

E

S

♠ A 10
♥ Q 10
♦ K 9 7 4 2
♣ J 10 9 8

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♠	Pass
	1NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
	3 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

East's hand is minimum, and with only an eight-card fit, East really shouldn't add extra for the singleton. East's best choice is to decline partner's game invitation.

After using 1NT Forcing, it is important for West to jump to 3♠ on the rebid. A 2♠ rebid here would be a weak preference bid with only two spades.

Suggested Play: East's losers are two hearts, one spade (on a 3-2 split) and one club. All of these tricks must be lost, so all that can be made is 3 ♠.

If you are running short of time, omit the next deal. On the deal we just played, suit all hands except West's. Replace West's ♠J with the ♦J. Now West's rebid would be 2NT to invite game.

Many players find that 1NT Forcing works so well for invitational hands that they have an agreement that a new suit response on the two level shows a game-going hand. This system is called Two-Over-One Game Forcing and is very common among today's expert players.

Imagine having an auction that goes 1♠ by opener – 2♥ by responder and knowing that you cannot stop short of game. Can you see any advantages to this? There's no need to jump while you are looking for a fit. And when you find a fit, you are committed to game. Opener can safely rebid 3♥ with a good hand. Why might bidding only 3♥ be helpful? You stay low to allow room to explore for slam. In fact, for players using Two-Over-One, opener's 3♥ rebid is stronger than a 4♥ rebid. That's because of the Principle of Fast Arrival that we discussed before. It says – when you are already forced to game, the faster you get there, the less interest you have in going to slam.

The 1NT Forcing convention that we are discussing today is an integral part of Two-Over-One. But even when you use the Two-Over-One system, 1NT Forcing applies only to auctions that begin with 1♥ or 1♠. The same is true for Jacoby 2NT. There is more to Two-Over-One than the little I've told you, so don't think you're ready quite yet. However, once you've mastered everything we learned so far, it's not such a big step until you are playing Two-Over-One.

Both Two-Over-One and 1NT Forcing are off in competition. If an opponent overcalls or doubles partner's opening bid, forget these two conventions!

Dealer: South
Vul: Both

♠ A 8 6 3		♠ K 2		♠ 9 5
♥ K J 8		♥ A 7 6 3		♥ Q 9 5 2
♦ J 10 9 8		♦ 7 5 4		♦ Q 3
♣ 10 4		♣ K J 8 5		♣ Q 9 6 3 2

W

N

E

S

♠ Q J 10 7 4
♥ 10 4
♦ A K 6 2
♣ A 7

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1 ♠
	Pass	1NT	Pass	2 ♦
	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

Suggested Lead: East's longest suit is clubs. East will probably lead the fourth best ♣3.

If North does not use 1NT Forcing, North will respond 2♣, a natural bid showing at least four clubs. South can rebid 2♦, another natural bid. North can invite game with 2NT and South will accept. East should listen to the bidding for help in choosing an opening lead. East may be afraid of giving declarer a cheap club trick knowing that declarer has length in the suit. East does have a four-card heart suit and may well decide to lead the ♥2 instead. This is a worse lead for declarer – not disastrous, but worse. Declarer shouldn't be afraid of hearts since the lead of a deuce generally indicates a four-card suit. Declarer still can afford to promote spades but should be held to nine tricks – no overtrick. Top scores go to the declarers whose bidding revealed only enough to help partner know what to do.

Dealer: West
Vul: None

♠ A Q 5 3		♠ 6 4 2
♥ 5 3		♥ A J 6 4 2
♦ Q J 5 4		♦ A K
♣ 10 5 4		♣ J 6 3

♠ 7		♠ K J 10 9 8
♥ K 9 8 7		♥ Q 10
♦ 10 7 3 2		♦ 9 8 6
♣ Q 9 8 7		♣ A K 2

N

W

E

S

South overcalls and West should want to compete with nine points. After an overcall, we no longer use 1NT Forcing. Also, West is a passed hand and a passed hand cannot make a forcing bid. However, 1NT is not just a weak denial bid. It says you have a minimum hand that wants to bid and it guarantees a stopper in the suit overcalled by your opponent (spades). West has two spade stoppers and a comfortable, non-forcing 1NT response.

Suggested Lead: North will probably lead the ♠7 – partner's bid suit.

Suggested Play: Winners are: four diamonds, one heart and two spades with a working finesse – either a free finesse on a spade opening lead or taken by declarer with a great deal of confidence in its success based on the bidding. With the suit blocked, declarer has to play diamonds carefully, saving one spade entry to use the ♦ Q J.

Let's take another look at the auction we just had. Write the auction on the board.

We mentioned two reasons why West's 1NT bid is not forcing. One is that we don't use 1NT Forcing after an overcall. The second reason is that West is a passed hand and a passed hand generally cannot make a forcing bid. If I replace South's overcall with a pass and West responds 1NT, do you think East is forced to bid again? Players who use 1NT Forcing need an agreement here. Some agree that 1NT is forcing unless opener has no interest in game opposite a passed hand, in which case opener may pass. They announce this 1NT bid as semi-forcing. Others say 1NT is absolutely not forcing, period. You and your partners will have to come to some agreement. It's not wise to treat a 1NT response by a passed hand as absolutely forcing because it risks getting too high. We'll talk more about passed hand bidding next time.

LESSON 4 – Passed Hand Bidding

The deals for this lesson are from Session 4 of the *Major Suit Raises II “Play” Course*. This lesson discusses light opening bids, passed hand bidding and introduces Reverse Drury. Teachers who prefer to teach regular Drury will have to adjust their discussion to suit that form of the convention. Since many students are likely to be unfamiliar with the inability of a passed hand to make a forcing bid, the first several hands deal with light opening bids and passed hand bidding.

Related deals from CUC: Lesson 4 – Deals 1 through 4.

Reference sections in CUC Teacher Manual: Lesson 3 – section entitled Opening Bids of 1♥ and 1♠; Lesson 4 – sections entitled Third and Fourth Position Openings, Drury, Reverse Drury and Handling Interference.

We begin with the first lesson deal where an easy game is reached provided dealer opens the bidding. This deal leads into a discussion of The Rule of Twenty and other factors that can influence a player’s decision to open in first or second seat.

Review how to construct the lesson deals using the ACBL E-Z Deal cards. Remind students of dealer and vulnerability on each lesson deal.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 4: Deal #1

Dealer: North
Vul: None

	♠ A Q 9 2	
	♥ 8	
	♦ 9 8 2	
	♣ Q 10 8 7 4	
♠ J 10 6 5		♠ 7
♥ A 9 3 2		♥ K Q 7 6 4
♦ Q 6 4		♦ A J 10 5 3
♣ K 5		♣ 6 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ K 8 4 3	
	♥ J 10 5	
	♦ K 7	
	♣ A J 9 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	1♥	Pass
	3♥	Pass	4♥!	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

When you open the bidding in first or second seat, you are expected to have a full opening hand. Partner will act as if you had opened with 13 points. East's hand is worth opening even though there are only 10 HCP plus two distribution points. Good players often open with only 11 or 12 points in first or second seat, but when they open light, it is because they feel their hand is worth opening. One test, popularized by Marty Bergen, is The Rule of Twenty, which tells us to add our HCP to the total number of cards in our two longest suits. If the total is 20 or more, open. 10 HCP plus 10 total cards equals 20. East's hand meets The Rule of Twenty.

Losing Trick Count is another guide that can help you decide whether to open light in situations where you will be expected to have a full opening. East's hand comes to only six losers. A normal, minimum, opening hand will have seven losers, so East is justified in opening.

We've also learned to appreciate our hand when our high cards are gathered together in our long suits. All of East's HCP are in the five-card suits. ACBL teacher-trainer Dee Berry has a cute saying that applies here – "Married high cards are worth more than divorced high cards." East's hand would not be as good if we spread those honor cards out among the four suits.

Once East opens, West makes an immediate limit raise showing four-card support and a good 10 to 12 points. Does East dare accept the invitation? We've learned that opener's distribution becomes more valuable when there is a bigger than eight-card fit. Most unbalanced opening hands do accept a limit raise, regardless of opener's point count. With only six losers, the losing trick equivalent of a medium opening hand, East accepts.

Suggested Lead: South will probably lead the ♠3.

Suggested Play: Losers are one spade, one diamond and two clubs. Declarer should draw trump and finesse in diamonds by leading the ♦Q from dummy. When the finesse loses, South may attack clubs. If South leads a low club, hoping to trick declarer, the only choice is to play dummy's king and it wins. If South stays away from clubs, both of dummy's clubs will be discarded on diamonds and declarer can ruff one club loser without worrying about the location of the ♣A (which was favorable anyway).

One topic we'll be covering today is light opening bids. Remember that there is only one opener per deal. Where you sit in relation to the dealer influences how light your hand can be to open. In first seat (as dealer) or in second seat (after dealer passes), you are expected to have full values for an opening hand. You may not have 13 total points, but you have to like a hand with fewer points the way East liked that hand on our first deal.

Light opening bids are much more common in third seat when dealer and the next player have both passed. When there are two passes to you, it becomes more likely that the points are evenly divided around the table. Either side might make a partscore, and it can be helpful to have the first word. Even when it turns out that the player in fourth seat has a good hand, a light third-seat opening can help partner find a good opening lead and may obstruct the opponents' communications.

One reason why we have more freedom in third seat is that partner is a passed hand – a known quantity in terms of strength. When you are considering opening light in third seat, do you expect there to be a game? No, two players with less than traditional opening strength don't expect to be able to make a game. That allows you to pass any response partner might make. In fact, your ability to feel comfortable passing any response partner might make is an influencing factor in whether you choose to open light in third seat.

When you are responding as a passed hand, keep in mind that partner may drop you like a hot potato. Be cautious of two-level responses – a passed hand should have a five-card suit when responding with two of any new suit. One-level responses are still made on four-card suits. A new suit by responder is no longer forcing. In fact, in standard bidding, no bid by a passed hand is forcing! Think about what you want to say and say it now, because you may not get another chance.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 4: Deal #2

Dealer: East
Vul: N-S

	♠ K 7 6 5	
	♥ Q 5 3	
	♦ A K 4	
	♣ K Q 4	
♠ A Q 10 9 8	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> NE </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WS </div> </div>	♠ J 3
♥ 10 8 4		♥ J 9 7 6
♦ 9 8 7		♦ J 10
♣ A 7		♣ 10 9 8 6 2
	♠ 4 2	
	♥ A K 2	
	♦ Q 6 5 3 2	
	♣ J 5 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♠	1NT	Pass	Pass
	Pass	Pass	Pass	3NT

West has only 11 points and might not open in first or second seat, but will definitely open in third seat. (With two and a half quick tricks, this hand might open anywhere.)

North would have opened 1NT, and with spades stopped, can overcall 1NT. South knows that there is strength for game and 3NT is the best contract. South counts on North to have the spades stopped.

Suggested Lead: East should lead partner's suit! East leads the ♠J – top of a doubleton. West wants spades continued. Good technique has West overtaking the ♠J with either the ♠A or ♠Q to cater to the possibility of East having started with a singleton spade.

Suggested Play: Winners are one spade on the lead, three hearts and five diamonds (as long as they split 3-2). With a spade lead, declarer cannot afford to lose the lead and must settle for those nine tricks. Declarer must be careful of the blocked diamond suit. Declarer cashes the ♦A K J and uses a heart as the entry to dummy's remaining diamonds.

Had West not opened, East would probably lead the ♣10, giving declarer time to build two club tricks to make an overtrick easily.

West's light opening bid was not much of a victory for social players, but duplicate players want to win every possible trick, and the defenders can get a good result by preventing overtricks.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 4: Deal #3

Dealer: South
Vul: E-W

	♠ K J 9 7 2	
	♥ A 9 4	
	♦ J 6	
	♣ Q 8 6	
♠ 10 5 3		♠ A Q 8 4
♥ Q 8		♥ J 7 3
♦ A Q 3 2		♦ 8 5 4
♣ 10 9 5 3		♣ A 7 2
	♠ 6	
	♥ K 10 6 5 2	
	♦ K 10 9 7	
	♣ K J 4	

	N	
W		E
	S	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	Pass
	Pass	Pass	Pass	2 ♥

North opens light in third seat. North is prepared to pass any response South might make including 2♦. A passed hand should not make a two-level response in a four-card suit, so North-South would have at least seven diamonds, a reasonable trump suit. When South makes an even better response of 2♥, there is a fit but still no game. North passes to give North-South their best chance for a plus score.

East won't have much desire to balance, so 2♥ is likely to be the final contract.

Suggested Lead: West doesn't have a wonderful lead and may choose either the ♣3 or ♣10. Both minors are unbid, but it's dangerous for West to lead from the diamond tenace.

Suggested Play: South's losers are one spade, two diamonds, one heart and one club. Without too many losers, declarer draws trump and gets to work on diamonds and clubs. Declarer can lead the ♦J to finesse for an overtrick, but West has both diamond honors and the finesse fails.

It was lucky that North was allowed to pass South's response. Otherwise, the light opening would have given North-South a minus score.

Light opening bids in third seat can be quite light – even if you go down, you may foul up your opponents' bidding. In fourth seat, we do open light but do it more cautiously. Why is fourth seat different? You cannot afford to go minus. If you pass, nobody gets a score. When you decide to open in fourth seat, you do so planning on going plus. If you think there is a good chance you could go minus, do not open. Pass the hand out.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 4: Deal #4

Dealer: West
Vul: Both

	♠ 8 7 3		
	♥ K Q J 8		
	♦ A 10 7		
	♣ 10 9 7		
♠ K Q 10 5 4			♠ A 9 6
♥ 5 4			♥ 9 3
♦ J 6 3			♦ 9 5 4 2
♣ A 8 5			♣ K Q 4 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>		
	♠ J 2		
	♥ A 10 7 6 2		
	♦ K Q 8		
	♣ J 6 3		

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

When my students played this deal, some opened. Some knew it should be passed out, but opened anyway. I let them play the deal, and I had the tables that did pass the deal out go back and see what might happen if South did open.

Neither West nor North has quite enough to justify a bid that shows a full opening hand. East, in third seat, is not able to pass a 1♥ response and should not open. A third seat opening has to be prepared to pass any bid by responder. Taking another bid risks getting too high.

So it's up to South. The question is whether South expects to go plus by opening 1♥. What might go wrong? The opponents could overcall in spades. That would put North-South in the uncomfortable position of deciding whether to compete to the three level or sell out to 2♠. At the top of the bidding ladder, spades rule! The shorter you are in spades, the more likely your opponents will have them and want to compete.

Many players use The Rule of Fifteen when deciding whether to open in fourth seat. Using this rule, you add your HCP to the number of spades you have in your hand. If you reach 15, open. If you total fewer than 15, pass the hand out. South has 11 HCP and two spades for a total of 13, which indicates that this deal should be passed out.

Suggested Play in Hearts: With five black suit losers, North-South can make 2♥ but not 3♥.

Suggested Play in Spades: West has an easy 1♠ overcall, which East will raise. West can make 2♠ (with an overtrick if North-South don't take all of their tricks). The pass-out is the best score North-South can achieve. Both sides can make eight tricks, but the side with spades is the side that can achieve the plus score. That's why The Rule of Fifteen is based on the spade suit.

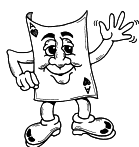
When partner opens in third or fourth seat, you don't know if the opening bid was light. You cannot underbid your hand to cater to the possibility that it was a light opening. You also cannot plan on more than one bid for sure in case partner's bid was light. So, no temporizing! Say what you think is most important immediately.

Is East's 1NT a normal 1NT with an upper limit of 10 points, or is it a semi-forcing 1NT with an upper limit of 12 points? The same question would apply if we erase North's pass and make East the dealer with West opening in third seat. Let's erase yet another pass, so that East is not a passed

hand and 1NT is forcing for any pairs who agree to use 1NT Forcing. Remember that 1NT Forcing is used only over a major suit opening bid. The same is true for 1NT semi-forcing by a passed hand. Don't get confused in this auction: (write this on the board)

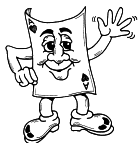
W	N	E	S
	Pass	Pass	1 ♦
Pass	1NT		

North is a passed hand. South may have opened light, but North cannot worry about it. North's 1NT response shows 6 to 10 points and denies a four-card major. What would North bid with a balanced 11 to 12? North would have to risk the jump to 2NT, since it would be a bad idea to lie about strength when partner may not have a light opening at all.



On the hand we just played, leave the East-West hands face up and make four piles in the middle of the table to suit the North-South cards. Now that you and partner have had time to think about an agreement, how would you bid these two hands? Would East respond 1NT or 2NT? Is 1NT by a passed hand semi-forcing or definitely weak? If you are in doubt, I recommend semi-forcing so you can stay low.

Let's change East's hand.



Remove the ♥J, the ♦5 and the ♣J 10. Put in the ♠Q and ♣7 4 3.

East:	♠ K Q 9	♥ 7 4 3	♦ Q J 10	♣ K 7 4 3
West:	♠ A J 7 6 2	♥ 6 5	♦ K 8 4	♣ Q 6 2

Again West opens 1♠ in fourth seat. What should East bid? East wants to show a limit raise with only three trumps. East is a passed hand and no longer has the luxury of the two-step response to show only three trumps. Why not? A passed hand can't make a forcing bid, so the first step of the two-step may be the only step.

Some players allow a passed hand to eliminate the requirement to have a fourth trump and jump directly to 3♠ with this hand. How would that work? 3♠ will probably go down one, losing two hearts, one diamond and two clubs. You don't want to open light in fourth seat and then go minus. There's even a chance that 1NT will go down on this hand if someone has five hearts to cash along with the minor suit aces. You really do want to play in spades, but how do you stop at 2♠ and still have East show the right strength?

The solution is another convention – Drury – named for Doug Drury, a player whose partner, Eric Murray, was famous for his very light opening bids. Drury got sick of jumping to three and getting doubled and going for a big number, so he came up with this idea. When partner opens a major in third or fourth seat where the bid could be light, use 2♣ as an artificial bid to show a limit raise. The limit raise could have either three or four trump. Here's our auction up to East's response.

N	E	S	W
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass			

How can East show the limit raise? With a 2♣ bid.

When interested in game, opener bids anything but two of the suit. A game bid is the easiest way to be sure you reach game. A jump to 3♠ would be invitational as would any new suit. Responder can go to game with a good limit raise and sign off in partscore with a minimum limit raise.

W	N	E	S
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass

Now West is going to tell whether the opening bid was light. The version of Drury I am going to suggest is actually called Reverse Drury. The first bid in Reverse Drury is a 2♣ response to a major suit opening to show a limit raise. With no interest in game opposite a limit raise, opener simply rebids two of the major. If opener wants to be in game opposite a limit raise, opener bids game. When not sure of the final contract, opener bids anything but two of the major.

Reverse Drury is an alertable convention. As soon as partner says 2♣, you say “alert.” When asked, tell the opponents that partner has shown a limit raise. Not only is 2♣ alertable, but opener’s rebids are too! Alert two of the major and explain (if asked) that this denies game interest opposite a limit raise. Alert other bids below game and explain that they show a full opener with doubt about level.

Reverse Drury is used only opposite a major suit opening bid in third or fourth seat, where players frequently open lighter than normal.

You may or may not want to add Reverse Drury to your bidding arsenal at this time. I would like you to practice using it today and then decide. If you do choose to use this convention, you must check the red Reverse Drury box on your convention card under Major Openings.

For those who ask, the Reverse part is because the original Drury had opener answer 2♦ when opener had no game interest. Reverse Drury is superior because it leaves less room for the opponents to enter the bidding on the two level and leaves opener’s side more room to explore for game.

Are you ready to see this convention in action? Don’t forget to alert.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 4: Deal #6

Dealer: East

Vul: E-W

	♠ 9 4	
	♥ 9 6 4 3	
	♦ Q 10 3 2	
	♣ K Q 7	
♠ A K 7 6 5	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <div style="text-align: center;">N</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WE </div> <div style="text-align: center;">S</div> </div>	♠ Q J 3
♥ 10 5		♥ A K 7 2
♦ A 7		♦ 6 5
♣ A J 10 9		♣ 8 5 4 2
	♠ 10 8 2	
	♥ Q J 8	
	♦ K J 9 8 4	
	♣ 6 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			Pass	Pass
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
	4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

East is a passed hand and cannot make a forcing bid, so it's best to show the spade fit immediately. If the partnership uses any form of Drury, East can bid a conventional 2♣; if they don't use a form of Drury, East must jump to 3♠.

West has a good opening hand and wants to be in game opposite a limit raise. Since slam is not likely opposite a passed hand, it's best for West to jump right to 4♠. A 3♣ bid showing a full opener isn't wrong, but why give away information about your hand when you already know where to play?

Suggested Lead: North is likely to choose the ♣K unless West bid clubs on the way to game. In that case, North can lead the ♦2 or a heart.

Suggested Play: West's losers are one diamond and two clubs. But one of the club losers disappears on the ♣K lead – a lead West would not have gotten if West bid clubs.

Some declarers will make an overtrick, but West players who play “show and tell” and bid clubs on the way to 4♠ guarantee making only four.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 4: Deal #7

Dealer: South

Vul: Both

	♠ A 7 3	
	♥ K J 9 6 2	
	♦ Q J 9	
	♣ 8 3	
♠ J 6 5 2		♠ 10 4
♥ 5 3		♥ Q 10 8
♦ K 8 4 2		♦ A 7 5 3
♣ A Q 6		♣ K 7 5 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ K Q 9 8	
	♥ A 7 4	
	♦ 10 6	
	♣ J 10 9 2	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				Pass
	Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2 ♥	Pass	Pass
	Pass?			

North opens a little light in third seat. Will this action pay off for North-South? It depends on whether or not they use a form of Drury. If they do, South will bid 2♣ to show the limit raise and North will sign off in 2♥. If North-South do not use Drury or Reverse Drury, South has to jump to 3♥ to describe the proper strength, and the partnership risks getting too high.

When North-South are able to stop in 2♥, West may balance with a takeout double. East will probably choose a minor suit. It's likely that East-West will end up in a 4-3 club fit. North-South do not have the distribution needed to compete to 3♥ and should sell out to three of a minor.

Note that the hand would have been passed out if North had not opened light. Since this is the case, opening light only benefits North-South when they end up getting a plus score (either making their own contract or setting the opponents).

Suggested Play in Hearts: East might lead the ♣4 or the ♠10. North's losers are one heart, two diamonds and two clubs. When the heart finesse fails, none of these losers can be avoided, and all that can be made is 2♥. Only pairs using some form of Drury can stop that low.

Suggested Play in Clubs: 3♣ will be a difficult contract. Declarer may be able to scramble for down two with three club tricks, two diamonds, one heart and one spade ruff. With the bad split, declarer should not keep drawing trump.

Suggested Play in Diamonds: This contract will be more comfortable. The last club can be ruffed in the West hand and 3♦ goes down only one.

We frequently balance when the opponents stop at the two level in their fit. This is most common when responder makes a weak raise. Responder's use of Drury indicates a better hand, and opener's side is likely to have the majority of strength. It's wise to be a little cautious about balancing, since the opener's side is in a good position to make a penalty double after Drury. But balancing with the right hand will sometimes pay off.

MAJOR SUIT RAISES II – SESSION 4: Deal #8

Dealer: West

Vul: None

	♠ 9 8 7 4	
	♥ K 7	
	♦ A Q 5	
	♣ J 10 4 2	
♠ J 3		♠ Q 10
♥ J 6 5 4		♥ A 10 9 2
♦ J 10 9 8		♦ 6 2
♣ A Q 8		♣ K 9 6 5 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A K 6 5 2	
	♥ Q 8 3	
	♦ K 7 4 3	
	♣ 7	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
	Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
	Pass			

The bidding comes all the way around to South in fourth seat. South has a full opener with no worry about opening light. North doesn't know whether or not South opened light and uses Reverse Drury to show a limit raise.

To accept or not to accept, that is the question. With a 13-point opener and a singleton, South is tempted. We've seen that knowing how many trumps partner has is an important factor in going to game without the full 26 points. If South knew North had four trump, South would accept. But the Drury 2 ♣ bid can be made on either three or four trumps. South might make a game try. Using Reverse Drury, 2 ♦ shows a full opener and game interest. North accepts the game try with good help in diamonds and a fourth trump.

Pairs using regular Drury cannot have opener rebid 2 ♦ because that is the conventional rebid that denies a full opener. Opener can rebid 3 ♦ to invite game and North accepts the game try.

Suggested Lead: West might lead either the ♦ J (a safe lead) or the ♥ 4.

Suggested Play: South's losers are two hearts, one diamond, one club and possibly one spade, depending on the split. A heart loser can be ruffed in dummy. There may not be a diamond loser (if the suit splits 3-3). There may not be a spade loser either. The best plan is to play hearts first, ruff a heart in dummy and then draw two rounds of trump. On this hand, the trumps fall and you get to ruff the diamond loser to make five. Had the trumps not split 2-2, declarer could have left the high spade out and played diamonds, ruffing the diamond loser with dummy's last trump. When trumps don't split, playing hearts first is important to prevent the opponents from getting the lead with the ♥ A and drawing a trump that dummy needs for ruffing.

Mention the following if it comes up. I saw no need to do so in my classes.

If you found yourself wishing there was a way to know right away whether responder had three or four trumps, you are probably ready for Two-Way Reverse Drury. In Two-Way Reverse Drury, there are two ways to show a limit raise. The 2 ♣ response that we have been using shows three-

card support and a 2♦ response shows four-card support. North would have bid 2♦ using Two-Way Reverse Drury and South would bid game based on an unbalanced opening hand and a big trump fit.

You’ve had a taste of Reverse Drury. This convention is played only by partnership agreement. You probably will not choose to use the two-way version of it at first. All forms of Drury are alertable as are opener’s rebids. Remember that Drury only applies after a third or fourth seat major suit opening bid.

While Drury helps us establish our major suit fits, it also has some disadvantages. Can you think of one? You can no longer bid 2♣ to show clubs when you are a passed hand responding to a major suit opening bid. With Two-Way Reverse Drury, you can’t bid 2♦ either.

Look at the auction I’ve written on the board. Suppose the 1♠ opening bid was made in either first or second seat.

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♣

Is 2♣ Drury? No, Drury is used only when the opening bid is in third or fourth seat – when responder is a passed hand. Responder’s 2♣ bid shows at least four clubs, and as a new suit by an unpassed responder, it is forcing. This 2♣ bid does not show spade support.

Now suppose the opening 1♠ bid was made in either third or fourth seat. If you choose to use any form of Drury, 2♣ no longer shows clubs. It is an artificial bid showing spade support and limit raise strength. How might you show a real club suit? It depends on partnership agreement. One way is to jump to the three level, but you need a good long suit to do that. Another is to use 1NT as a semi-forcing response, as we have already discussed. Your partnership must decide if the benefits of the convention outweigh the loss of those natural bids. Personally, I think Drury is worth giving up a natural 2♣ response.

Notice how the auctions change when responder is a passed hand. Players who use Drury must be careful to recognize where the opening bid occurred – in first or second seat, when Drury does not apply, or in third or fourth seat, when Drury does apply.

Something else you might consider to be a disadvantage is that you have to alert responder’s Drury bid as well as opener’s rebid. You’re not ready to use a convention if you keep forgetting to alert.

You have to know when a convention applies. We already know Drury is used only by a passed hand after a major suit opening bid. It is a partnership decision whether you use Drury when your opponents overcall or make a takeout double. What might be the advantage of using Drury in these auctions?

W	N	E	S	W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass	Pass	1♥	Dbl
2♣				2♣			

Using 2♣ as a limit raise keeps the bidding lower. In our first auction, West would have to either cuebid 2♠ or jump to 3♥ to show a limit raise when not using Drury. The partnership would be forced to the three level, which might be too high. In our second auction, West could redouble to show 10+ points or use Jordan to show a limit raise. Again the partnership might get too high. By partnership agreement, West’s 2♣ can be Drury. But both of these club bids could also be natural if your partnership agreement is that Drury is off in competition. My own preference is to save the

2♣ bid as natural after an overcall or double. You can't have everything all of the time. But this is definitely a situation that the partnership needs to discuss and agree upon, because things get ugly when one partner is using Drury and the other one isn't.

BONUS LESSON 1

LESSON 5 – Major Suit Raises Review Lesson

The remaining three lessons are bonus lessons and are not included in the *Major Suit Raises I and II “Play” Courses*. Teachers may use these lessons at their discretion. There are no E-Z Deal cards for the Bonus Lessons. While making boards is not a problem for a small class, it is far too time consuming to make up the lessons deals in advance for a large class. I use hand printouts in my classes where all four hands are printed in large bold type with one hand facing each player. While these printouts can be done by hand on your computer, the Dealmaster software is suggested for easy creation of these hand records (see www.dealmaster.com).

Lesson handouts for all three Bonus Lessons are provided in the Appendix of this manual. Copy and distribute them to your students.

This lesson gives the students a chance to put all the bids learned in previous lessons together. In a three-hour lesson, it is remotely possible that you could finish the eight hands early. If you think this might happen, bring along one or two extra deals – either deals unplayed in past lessons or deals from the ACBL textbooks. At this point, students should be able to play all deals in *Commonly Used Conventions* Lessons 3 and 4 as well as the deals in *More Commonly Used Conventions* Lesson 8. Deal #1 of that lesson employs Two-Over-One Game Forcing but it can provide an interesting discussion of that method.

Today’s lesson will provide a chance for you to review all possible major suit raises. It is one thing to recognize a convention when you are taking a lesson that focuses on that one particular convention. It’s a whole different ballgame when you are in the heat of battle as you will be today. It’s only when you can recognize the conventions as they come up that you are truly ready to use them. That’s why it might be a good idea to take the conventions we’ve learned in this course one at a time. Add Help Suit Game Tries and Jacoby 2NT first. Once you are comfortable recognizing and using those conventions, add Jordan, Splinter Bids and 1NT Forcing. And, finally, add Reverse Drury.

Do you have any questions about anything we’ve covered in our lessons? Are you ready for your test? We’ve learned several alertable conventions. I expect to hear a lot of alerting going on as you play today’s hands. Remember, giving the proper alerts and explanations is part of the correct use of a convention.

SESSION 5: Deal #1
(Bonus Lesson 1)

Dealer: North
Vul: None

♠ A K	♠ 10 2	♠ 7 6 5 3
♥ 8 6 5 2	♥ K Q 10	♥ J 9 7 4 3
♦ J 10 8 5	♦ K 9 7 4	♦ 6 2
♣ Q 10 7	♣ K 8 6 3	♣ A 9
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ Q J 9 8 4	
	♥ A	
	♦ A Q 3	
	♣ J 5 4 2	

Suggested Bidding: Auction 1 with 1NT Semi-forcing

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Suggested Bidding: Auction 2 with 1NT weak

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

North is a passed hand. Depending on partnership agreements, North will respond either 2NT or 1NT. Using standard methods, a 2NT response by a passed hand shows 11 to 12 points and is not forcing. South wants to be in game and raises to 3NT, the game most likely to make.

Many pairs who use 1NT Forcing by an unpassed responder use 1NT Semi-Forcing by a passed hand. Those pairs can afford to respond 1NT, keeping the bidding low in case South opened light. South, with 15 points, did not open light. South will carry on to 3NT even with a singleton. 3NT is the most likely game to make. After a semi-forcing 1NT response, any rebid by opener shows a full opening hand. North invites game with 2NT and South accepts.

Suggested Lead: East leads the fourth-best ♥4.

Suggested Play: Winners are three hearts and three diamonds. There are several possible ways of finding the three needed tricks. If diamonds split 3-3, an extra trick is available there. With an eight-card club fit, there is a chance of a 3-2 split and a finesse. Declarer has all the spades except the ace and king and can promote three tricks in spades. This requires losing the lead twice. With no worrisome suit, declarer can afford to do this and should take the sure way to make 3NT – promote spades immediately.

SESSION 5: Deal #2
(Bonus Lesson 1)

Dealer: East
Vul: N-S

	♠ 9 7 3	
	♥ K Q 10	
	♦ J 9 5 3	
	♣ A 10 4	
♠ A J 10 5 4		♠ K Q 8
♥ 7 3		♥ 9 5 4 2
♦ K Q 7		♦ A 6
♣ 7 6 2		♣ Q 9 8 3

	♠ 6 2	
	♥ A J 8 6	
	♦ 10 8 4 2	
	♣ K J 5	

	N	
W		E
	S	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			Pass	Pass
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
	2 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass?

East has an unremarkable 11 points and should not consider opening the bidding. Choosing not to open makes East a passed hand. When West opens in third seat, East can use Reverse Drury to show a limit raise of spades.

West rebids 2 ♠ to show no interest in game across from a limit raise, and that should end the auction for East-West. (Players using regular Drury have opener rebid 2 ♦ to deny game interest and East signs off in 2 ♠.)

If East-West do not use Drury, East will have to jump to 3 ♠ to show the proper strength. East can't be sure of another bid and a 2 ♣ "temporizing" bid by East should be passed by West. A passed hand cannot afford to temporize before supporting partner's suit – the second step of the two-step raise may never come.

Over a final contract of 2 ♠, South might balance with a takeout double, but the vulnerability makes doing so dangerous. If North-South do compete, East-West don't have the distribution to go higher and should sell out to any three-level contract (perhaps doubled).

Suggested Play in spades: West's losers are two hearts and three clubs. None of these losers can be avoided so declarer can make only 2 ♠. Drury helps East-West get a plus score.

If South balances with a takeout double, North will bid 3 ♦. West might double this based on good diamonds and partner's limit raise strength. By ruffing a spade in dummy, North should end up losing two spades and three diamonds. Down one isn't bad if East-West don't double. East-West can double to collect 200 points – more than any partscore they might make.

SESSION 5: Deal #3
(Bonus Lesson 1)

Dealer: South
Vul: E-W

	♠ A Q 9 4	
	♥ Q J 5 3 2	
	♦ A K 7	
	♣ 6	
♠ 6 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 7 3
♥ A K 7		♥ 10 9 6
♦ J 8 4 3		♦ Q 10 9
♣ 10 7 3 2		♣ Q 9 8 5 4
	♠ K J 10 8 5	
	♥ 8 4	
	♦ 6 5 2	
	♣ A K J	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1 ♠
	Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	5 ♦	Pass	5 ♠
	Pass	Pass		

North's 4♣ bid is a splinter bid showing a forcing spade raise and club shortness. South is not pleased by the way the hands fit. The ♣A is okay, but the king and jack would be better if they were in suits where partner had length. South signs off in 4♠.

North's hand is worth 19 points and merits another move toward slam. Blackwood won't help North know what to do. North can move toward slam by showing a control beyond game. North's 5♦ bid shows a diamond control and a very good hand. South has room to show a heart control but doesn't have one, and South signs off again in 5♠. Not holding a heart control either, North has to respect this decision.

Suggested Lead: West is likely to lead a high heart. It is a normal lead and the opponents' auction sounds like a heart control is lacking.

It may be too much to tell your students, but since the auction called for a heart opening lead and there is a danger that heart losers might disappear if the defenders wait to take their tricks, the lead of an unsupported ♥A is possible on this auction. Because the lead of an unsupported ace is more likely at high levels, many players lead the king from ace-king after the opponents' slam exploration has taken them to the five level and made the lead of that suit attractive. Many players would lead the ♥K here.

Suggested Play: South can lose two tricks. Losers are two hearts, one diamond and one club. The club loser can be ruffed in dummy later. Once the ♥A and ♥K are gone, dummy's ♥Q will provide a discard. On a diamond opening lead, declarer can discard a diamond from dummy on the second high club and then ruff a club and a diamond in dummy.

SESSION 5: Deal #5
(Bonus Lesson 1)

Dealer: North
Vul: N-S

♠ 8 2	♠ A K 4 3	♠ 10 5
♥ A Q J 6	♥ 10	♥ K 5 4 3 2
♦ Q J 10	♦ 8 7 4 2	♦ 9 5 3
♣ 10 5 4 2	♣ Q J 8 7	♣ A K 9
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ Q J 9 7 6	
	♥ 9 8 7	
	♦ A K 6	
	♣ 6 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	Pass	1 ♠
	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠
	Pass	3 ♠	Pass	Pass
	Pass			

North has only 10 HCP and will probably pass in first seat. South opens light in third seat. Once South bids spades, North's hand revalues to 13 points (adding three for the singleton).

If North-South use Drury, North can bid 2 ♣. South has no interest in game across from a passed hand and signs off in 2 ♠ using Reverse Drury. (Pairs using regular Drury will have South bid 2 ♦.) North's hand isn't a limit raise; it's better and is worth one more try. After South denies game interest, North should raise to 3 ♠. The only excuse the Drury bidder can have for not respecting opener's signoff bid is a hand that revalues to opening strength. But South still doesn't have any interest in game opposite a minimum opener and the pair stops in 3 ♠.

Without Drury, North would have no way to describe a hand that revalues to opening count, and North would probably go to 4 ♠. Drury allows North-South to stop low enough to get a plus score.

Suggested Lead: West might lead the ♦ Q from the three-card sequence.

Suggested Play: South's losers are three hearts, one diamond and two clubs. After losing one heart, two heart losers can be ruffed to make 3 ♠.

East could make a defensive slip to allow declarer to make an overtrick. The defenders have to take their minor suit tricks in the proper order. Once East wins both high clubs, declarer can discard a diamond loser on a good club in dummy – provided declarer still has the diamond loser. So the defenders have to take their diamond trick before clubs are established. However, with diamonds splitting 3-3, dummy's fourth diamond will also provide a discard – if declarer still has a club left to discard. The secret is for the defenders to get the diamond trick and then immediately cash any club tricks they still have coming. Sometimes you have to take your tricks in just the right sequence.

SESSION 5: Deal #6
(Bonus Lesson 1)

Dealer: East
Vul: E-W

	♠ Q 6 5 4 3	
	♥ A 9 2	
	♦ J 5	
	♣ J 9 8	
♠ J 10 8		♠ 9 2
♥ J 7 4		♥ K Q 10 6 3
♦ A 7 3		♦ K 9 4 2
♣ K Q 6 3		♣ A 5
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> NE </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WS </div> </div>	
	♠ A K 7	
	♥ 8 5	
	♦ Q 10 8 6	
	♣ 10 7 4 2	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♥	Pass
	1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
	3♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West has a limit raise with only three trumps. Pairs who use 1NT Forcing show this hand by bidding 1NT and jumping to 3♥ as shown in the auction above.

Pairs who do not use 1NT Forcing must bid a new suit and then raise hearts.

Once West shows a limit raise, it's up to East to decide whether to bid game. East has only 13 points and won't chance a thin game on only an eight-card fit.

Suggested Lead: South leads the ♠A.

Suggested Play: East's losers are two spades, one heart and two diamonds. One diamond loser can be discarded on the extra club in dummy. Declarer simply draws trump and takes a total of nine tricks.

SESSION 5: Deal #7
(Bonus Lesson 1)

Dealer: South
Vul: Both

	♠ Q J 10 7	
	♥ 8	
	♦ 9 8 7 4 2	
	♣ Q J 8	
♠ A 8 5		♠ K 6 4
♥ A J 9 7 5		♥ K Q 6 4
♦ Q J 10 3		♦ K
♣ 4		♣ A 6 5 3 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ 9 3 2	
	♥ 10 3 2	
	♦ A 6 5	
	♣ K 10 9 7	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				Pass
	1 ♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
	3 ♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
	5 ♥	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

Whether or not slam is reached depends on East's first response. Splinter bids shouldn't be made with a singleton ace or king. Partner will expect a small singleton and may be turned off with what seem to be wasted values in the suit. With a singleton ace or king, use Jacoby 2NT instead of a splinter bid.

On this hand, if East showed a singleton diamond, West would sign off in 4 ♥ thinking that there were wasted diamond cards. East's best choice is to treat the hand as balanced and use the Jacoby 2NT response. West shows a singleton club – a good singleton opposite several losers in East's hand. Blackwood will show that two aces aren't missing and East can bid slam.

Suggested Lead: North leads the ♠Q.

Suggested Play: West can lose one trick and it will be the ♦A. West also has a losing spade. Declarer should draw trump and play a diamond to the king. Declarer can immediately regain the lead and run the remaining diamonds, discarding one spade from dummy. Dummy still has a trump left to ruff the spade loser. Sometimes dummy's shortness isn't where declarer needs it – in the suit where declarer has losers. A discard from dummy can create the short suit declarer needs.

In the unlikely case that South refuses to win the ♦A on the first diamond lead, declarer can still make the contract the same way. Declarer wins the ♦K, ruffs a club back to the hand and plays the ♦Q, discarding a spade from dummy. Alternatively, some declarers might make dummy's fifth club good by ruffing clubs in their hand. The slam should make at all tables.

SESSION 5: Deal #8
(Bonus Lesson 1)

Dealer: West
Vul: None

	♠ K 7 6 3 2	
	♥ A 6 4 3	
	♦ K J 6	
	♣ A	
♠ 10 8		♠ J 9 4
♥ K 9 8 2		♥ Q J 10 7
♦ A 10 9 5		♦ 8 3
♣ 10 8 7		♣ Q J 9 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> NE</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WS</div> </div>	
	♠ A Q 5	
	♥ 5	
	♦ Q 7 4 2	
	♣ K 6 5 4 2	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

South has a spade fit and enough points to want to bid game. Unfortunately, South has only three trumps. The way to make a strong major suit raise with three trumps is to make a forcing bid first and then go to game on the next bid. South's 2 ♣ bid is forcing for at least one round. For those who use Two-Over-One, it's forcing all the way to game.

North doesn't know that there is a spade fit and continues to describe distribution with a 2 ♥ rebid. Unless North-South use Two-Over-One Game Forcing, South must jump in spades. A 2 ♠ bid would only show 11 or 12 points and North is permitted to pass. With no slam interest, South jumps to 4 ♠.

For those who use Two-Over-One Game Forcing, South can rebid only 2 ♠ since the 2 ♣ bid committed North-South to game. The difference between 4 ♠ and 2 ♠ is South's slam interest. A 4 ♠ bid is fast arrival, denying any interest in slam. South should still rebid 4 ♠ with this minimal game-going hand.

Suggested Lead: The only unbid suit is diamonds. East might choose to lead the ♦ 8. Even though North showed hearts, East has a strong sequence and the ♥ Q is also a possible lead. Even a trump lead is possible (the ♠ 4). Not all hands have a clear-cut lead.

Suggested Play: North's losers are one diamond and three hearts. Declarer can make one overtrick with careful play and could go down on careless play. One heart loser can be ruffed. Declarer cannot afford to ruff a second heart because it spends a high trump needed to draw trump. But a second heart loser can be discarded on dummy's ♣ K. Dummy has no entry outside of trumps. After drawing trump, declarer won't be able to get to dummy to use the ♣ K for a discard, so declarer must take this discard early.

BONUS LESSON 2

LESSON 6 – Two-Over-One Game Forcing

This lesson provides an introduction to Two-Over-One Game Forcing.

Related sections in More Commonly Used Conventions: Lesson 8, although our students have already been introduced to 1NT Forcing, which is discussed in the last several sections.

Related lesson deals in More Commonly Used Conventions: Lesson 8, Deals 1-4 (with the second two deals using 1NT Forcing).

The dealers do not rotate in the standard order in this lesson. This allows the lesson to flow in the best order and gives each player a turn to be declarer in each group of four deals. Make sure you announce the dealer and vulnerability before each hand is bid. You will have to set up the lesson deals using your chosen method (in boards, calling the cards or using Dealmaster printouts).

I've been teaching bridge for over twenty years and there is one topic I hate to discuss. It is two-over-one auctions. Suppose you and partner have the auction I am writing on the board with dealer opening the bidding:

Opener	Responder
1♥	2♦

In standard bidding, what does responder show? A medium responding hand or better and at least four diamonds. (Only 1♠-2♥ guarantees a five-card suit.) That part is easy enough, but do you have any idea what opener's rebids show?

What does a 2NT rebid mean?

Does 2♥ guarantee a six-card suit?

What about 3♣? Does that show extra values? What about 3♦ – is it forcing?

Does the 2♦ bidder have to bid again over any of these bids with only 11 points?

Unfortunately, there are no standard answers to these questions. Most books tell you that a two-over-one response promises at least one more bid, so the 2♦ bidder would have to bid again. But responder might be allowed to pass certain rebids by opener – perhaps 2NT – perhaps 2♥ or 3♦. It really doesn't matter what the books say. It only matters what your partner at the time thinks. One thing I think everyone can agree on is that this auction may get very confusing.

In the December 2005 ACBL Bulletin, expert player and columnist Jerry Helms said the following: "In 'standard' methods, when partner responds in a new suit at the two level, a new suit by opener is 100% forcing ... even if responder passed initially. Only if you rebid your original suit, raise partner's suit or bid 2NT can partner pass." This is what I have taught my social players, but some still expect responder to take another bid if opener simply rebids a suit.

With the bidding system we have been learning – Jacoby 2NT and 1NT Forcing – you have at your fingertips the beginning of a system that can make two-over-one auctions a lot more straightforward.

Don't make a two-over-one response unless you have an opening hand! Play the system known as Two-Over-One Game Forcing. Life would be quite simple in our auction if both partners knew that the auction could not stop short of game, wouldn't it? There could be a nice orderly conversation to determine the best contract.

Partnerships can give some complex meanings to two-over-one auctions, but we're going to keep it simple. A two-over-one response to an opening suit bid is game forcing. Nobody can pass until game is reached. Two-Over-One Game Forcing is marked under "general approach" on your convention card, but it is not alertable at this time.

A lot of the time that you are using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, you won't even notice that you are using it. Your auction would be the same using "standard" methods.

Let's try some hands and see how agreeing to play Two-Over-One Game Forcing affects your bidding.

SESSION 6: Deal #1
(Bonus Lesson 2)

Dealer: North
Vul: None

	♠ A Q J 7 4	
	♥ J 10 2	
	♦ K J 6 5	
	♣ A	
♠ 10 3		♠ 9 8 6
♥ Q 9 8 3		♥ A K 6
♦ 10 7 4		♦ 8 3 2
♣ 10 8 5 4		♣ Q 9 7 2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ K 5 2	
	♥ 7 5 4	
	♦ A Q 9	
	♣ K J 6 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

South cannot support spades immediately. With a good hand and three trumps, it takes two bids to show support.

In Two-Over-One Game Forcing, all bids below game are forcing after responder's first bid is a new suit on the two level. North has enough to want to be in game opposite a medium responding hand, but doesn't have to jump. North can comfortably bid 2 ♦ because it's forcing. If North-South were not using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, North's 2 ♦ bid would still be forcing. In "standard" bidding, a new suit by opener is forcing for one round after a two-over-one response.

Now South supports spades. Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, South does not have to jump to 4 ♠. A mere 2 ♠ bid would be forcing. But 4 ♠ is South's best bid to discourage North from exploring for slam. South had enough for a two-over-one response, but has an eight-loser hand. When you are in a game-forcing auction and know what should be trump, the faster you get to game, the less interest you have in slam. This is known as Fast Arrival. South's 4 ♠ bid warns North that there is not a slam unless North has a very good hand.

Fast Arrival applies only when you are forced to game. North-South were playing Two-Over-One Game Forcing and South's first response forced them to game. North's singleton is not a big asset when there are only eight trumps. Besides, the singleton is in partner's bid suit, where some strength is likely to be wasted.

The bidding would go the same way if North-South did not play Two-Over-One Game Forcing.

Suggested Lead: East leads the ♥ A.

Suggested Play: The defense should take the first three heart tricks. West has to encourage a heart continuation. Unless the defenders cash three hearts off the top, declarer can discard a heart loser on dummy's ♣ K.

Dealer: East
Vul: N-S

♠ A J 9 4
 ♥ 9 3 2
 ♦ 10
 ♣ 9 8 6 4 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q 8 3
 ♥ A 6 4
 ♦ K Q 8 5 3
 ♣ A 2

♠ K 2
 ♥ K Q J 7 5
 ♦ A 9 7 4
 ♣ K 5

♠ 10 7 6 5
 ♥ 10 8
 ♦ J 6 2
 ♣ Q J 10 7

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♥	Pass
	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
	3 ♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
	5 ♥	Pass	6 ♥/6NT	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

East likes this hand with 17 points and only five losers – two fewer losers than a minimum opening hand. East-West is playing Two-Over-One Game Forcing, so East can afford to raise to 3 ♦ and await developments, certain that the bidding cannot stop short of game.

Based on Fast Arrival, West's 3♥ rebid is stronger than 4♥. East-West is in a game-forcing auction, so the slower they go once a fit is found, the more interest they have in slam. West is showing a good hand. Now East knows there is a double fit and partner has more than opening strength. East can use Blackwood to check for aces. Note that East has what it takes to use Blackwood – the belief that there is enough strength for slam plus the needed controls in all suits. Once East hears that an ace is missing, East places the contract in a small slam. Either 6♥ or 6NT is a reasonable choice. 6NT has the advantage of scoring ten points more – a big advantage to a duplicate player. 6NT also avoids any risk of a diamond ruff by a defender. On the other hand, it also precludes declarer getting an extra trick by ruffing.

Suggested Lead: South is likely to lead the ♣Q – top of a sequence in an unbid suit.

Suggested Play: Declarer has twelve top tricks. It's possible for a clever declarer to sneak by a spade trick to the king early to win all the tricks. Even in a slam, it can be good for a defender to follow the guideline 'second hand low' when holding the ace. But on this deal, North knows that East has the ♣K from partner's lead of the ♣Q. East should also have the ♦A, since East bid slam missing the ♠A. There is a very real risk that the diamond suit will run and North's spade trick will go away (as it does). North should grab the ♠A, given the chance.

SESSION 6: Deal #3
(Bonus Lesson 2)

Dealer: North
Vul: E-W

♠ A J 9 4	♠ K 8 6 5 3	♠ 10 2
♥ A Q 7 4	♥ 10	♥ K J 9 8 3
♦ 9 5	♦ A Q 10 6 2	♦ 8 7 4 3
♣ 8 5 2	♣ K 4	♣ 7 6
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ Q 7	
	♥ 6 5 2	
	♦ K J	
	♣ A Q J 10 9 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♣
	Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♠
	Pass	4 ♣	Pass	5 ♣
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

Two-Over-One Game Forcing lets each player bid the hand's distribution. South's 2♣ response forces the partnership to game, so they can go slowly until they discover the best place to play.

With two five-card suits, North starts with the higher-ranking spades and rebids the lower-ranking diamonds. South could never rebid 3♣ if the pair did not play Two-Over-One. It would not be forcing. When repeating the second suit, North has shown 5-5 in the two suits.

South now shows two-card spade support just in case North was 6-5. There is no way that North could think that South had three spades. With three spades, South would have supported them on the second bid.

North isn't anxious to play in a 5-2 spade fit with that weak suit. North cannot bid 3NT without a stopper in the only unbid suit. North's best choice is to show two-card club support. This bid should make South realize how short North must be in hearts. North has shown five spades, five diamonds and now has supported clubs. Heart losers can be ruffed in North, and South goes on to 5♣.

Every once in a while, you do end up in five of a minor instead of 3NT, but North-South had a very good reason for avoiding 3NT. They knew their opponents held at least nine hearts between them and neither North nor South had a heart stopper.

Suggested Lead: West can see two aces for the defense and would like to find a third trick. West might try a trump lead since everyone at the table knows there is heart shortness in dummy. Some might lead the unsupported ♥A. We usually avoid leading an unsupported ace, but it's logical to deduce that the opponents do not have a heart stopper because they shied away from 3NT.

Suggested Play: It turns out that cashing both aces is a good idea. Otherwise, declarer can discard losers on dummy's diamonds to make an overtrick. Declarer must be careful to overtake the second diamond to reach dummy.

Dealer: East
Vul: Both

♠ 6 2	♠ J 7	♠ K Q 8 5 4
♥ A Q 8 6 4	♥ K 10 9 5	♥ J 7 3
♦ K 8 4	♦ 7 6 3 2	♦ A 5
♣ A K 9	♣ 10 5 3	♣ Q J 4

W

N


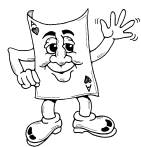
E

S

♠ A 10 9 3	♠ A 10 9 3
♥ 2	♥ 2
♦ Q J 10 9	♦ Q J 10 9
♣ 8 7 6 2	♣ 8 7 6 2

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♠	Pass
	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

West has a nice 17-point responding hand and wonders if there might be a slam. Playing Two-Over-One Game Forcing, there is no need to rush. West's 2♥ bid is a game force. It also promises five hearts. A two-level response in a minor might be made on a four-card suit, but a 2♥ bid over 1♠ guarantees five hearts.



Temporarily trade West's ♥Q for East's ♣Q. If East opens 1 ♠, can West respond 2 ♥ now? No, West doesn't have a five-card suit. What can West say? 2 ♣. Does that mean that E-W will miss their heart fit? No, it's up to opener to introduce the heart suit by bidding 2 ♥. The fit is found and the auction can proceed. West should raise to 3 ♥ to show interest in slam. Remember, 4 ♥ would be fast arrival since the two over one committed East-West to game. Trade the ♣Q and ♥Q back and let's continue our discussion of the actual hand.

Once West bids 2♥, the fit is found and East should raise hearts. How high? East, what do you think of your opening hand? It stinks, doesn't it? If you count losers, you come up with seven, but you must make a negative adjustment because you have more queens than aces. East doesn't want to encourage West to move toward slam and uses Fast Arrival, bidding 4♥ immediately. West cannot see slam opposite a very minimum opener and passes.

If East-West were not using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, East's rebid would be only 3♥, a non-forcing rebid that says East doesn't want to be in game opposite only 11 points. That information will be enough to discourage West from moving on toward slam.

Suggested Lead: North might lead either minor. Leading the doubleton spade isn't wise. The opponents have bid that suit, and it is usually best not to look for a ruff when you have trump length.

Suggested Play: Declarer's losers are one spade, one diamond and two hearts. Declarer makes 4♥ by ruffing the diamond loser in dummy.

SESSION 6: Deal #5
(Bonus Lesson 2)

Dealer: South
Vul: N-S

♠ Q 10 8 4	♠ 3	♠ J 9
♥ 9 7	♥ A K 6 5 3	♥ J 10 8 4 2
♦ J 10 9 6	♦ K 5	♦ A Q 8 2
♣ 8 7 3	♣ Q 10 6 4 2	♣ A 9
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A K 7 6 5 2	
	♥ Q	
	♦ 7 4 3	
	♣ K J 5	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1 ♠
	Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠
	Pass	3 ♣	Pass	??

North has two five-card suits and follows the guideline to respond in the higher-ranking suit first.

South's first rebid is easy – rebidding spades shows extra length. South's next rebid is difficult. Unable to support partner's hearts, South shouldn't rebid the six-card suit again. South could support clubs but 4♣ is past the preferred contract of 3NT. By the time your partnership has bid three suits, you really should have the remaining suit stopped to bid notrump. South has no diamond stopper. Without using any special conventions, South must choose one of these unattractive bids.

Enter Fourth Suit Forcing, a convention played by most good players. When your side has bid three suits, the bid of the fourth suit does not promise anything in that suit. It simply asks partner to do something intelligent. Fourth Suit Forcing can be used in a variety of auctions and is game forcing. In this particular auction, North-South are already forced to game by the two-over-one response, so that aspect is not important. Fourth Suit Forcing is an alertable convention since it does not promise length or strength in the bid suit.

North's job now is to do something intelligent. North might rebid clubs, but is 4♣ really so intelligent? What is the most likely game for North-South? North should bid 3NT. Very often, Fourth Suit Forcing is used to ask for a notrump stopper in the fourth suit. South bid 3♦ and North, holding a diamond stopper, bids 3NT.

Suggested Play: 3NT makes, but is scary for declarer since a 4-4 diamond split is needed if East leads a diamond on opening lead. Declarer might find comfort in the fact that East led the ♦2. If that is fourth best, East has only four diamonds and the suit isn't as scary as it could be. The only way to get enough tricks is to promote clubs, and declarer should make that the first priority.

It's interesting to note that 3NT by South will not make, because a diamond opening lead traps North's ♦K. 5♣ has play on a crossruff, but the opponents get to overruff. And a club lead would prevent the crossruff even if they couldn't overruff. 3NT by North is the best place to be.

You can use Fourth Suit Forcing even if you don't use Two-Over-One Game Forcing. Using this convention, the bid of the fourth suit sets up a game-forcing auction.

SESSION 6: Deal #6
(Bonus Lesson 2)Dealer: West
Vul: E-W

♠ 6 5	♠ K Q 7	♠ 10 8 3
♥ K J 10 9 7	♥ 8 6 5 2	♥ A Q
♦ A Q 10 6 5	♦ 8 4 3	♦ K J
♣ A	♣ J 9 8	♣ K 7 5 4 3 2

	♠ A J 9 4 2	
	♥ 4 3	
	♦ 9 7 2	
	♣ Q 10 6	

	W	N	E	S
--	---	---	---	---

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
	2♦	Pass	2♠/3♣	Pass
	3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
	4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

E-W are searching for a fit. West shows distribution starting with the higher-ranking suit. Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, East's 2♣ response is game forcing.

East should not support hearts on the first rebid; that would promise three of them. Any rebid is forcing. East might rebid 3♣ to show a six-card suit. Alternatively, East, who really doesn't want to make the club suit trump, could bid 2♠ as Fourth Suit Forcing to find out if West has a spade stopper for notrump. Even though East would like to get to 3NT, it's not wise to bid notrump without a stopper in the only unbid suit.

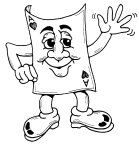
Whichever bid East chooses, West rebids 3♦ without a spade stopper. East has two good hearts and can finally show support without misleading partner into expecting more cards in the suit. Life doesn't always deal you eight-card fits. We occasionally have to play game with only a seven-card trump suit.

If East-West were not using Two-Over-One, they could still reach game by using Fourth Suit Forcing. East's first rebid would have to be 2♠. If East-West were using neither convention, this would be a very awkward hand to bid.

Suggested Lead: North leads the ♠K. Even without a natural spade lead, the auction calls for a spade lead. East-West seemed to struggle to find a place to play, and it appears that they avoided notrump because of the lack of a spade stopper.

Suggested Play: Declarer has more than enough tricks after gaining the lead. After losing two spades, declarer should draw trump, cash the ♦KJ and play a club to the ace to cash the remaining diamonds. On a non-spade lead, declarer can make six.

Two-Over-One Game Forcing can be very helpful, but it has its disadvantages. One big problem is what to do with an invitational hand. Remember, you now need opening strength to make a two-over-one response.



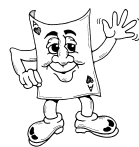
Take a suited deck and lay out for East: ♠2 ♥A Q J 6 5 3 ♦Q 10 7 ♣7 5 4

Partner opens 1♠. What do you want to respond? 2♥. You can certainly make that bid if you are not playing Two-Over-One Game Forcing. Is this an opening hand? If not, you cannot respond 2♥ when you are using Two-Over-One Game Forcing.

What can you do? Write the following auction on the board:

W	N	E	S
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	3♥	

You might start by using 1NT Forcing and then jump to 3♥ to show the top of your bid and six hearts. Why couldn't East rebid 2♥ without jumping? That is a weak signoff bid. What about invitational hands with only five hearts?



Change East's ♥Q to the ♠K.

East has: ♠K 2 ♥A J 6 5 3 ♦Q 10 7 ♣7 5 4

Write all of the following auctions on the board.

W	N	E	S
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2NT	

Again, start by using 1NT Forcing. You have to ignore those lovely hearts and invite game with 2NT. It is unfortunate, but you might miss an eight-card heart fit. You would not have that problem if you did not use Two-Over-One Game Forcing.

Same hand, different auction:

W	N	E	S
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	

Again, start by using 1NT Forcing. You need once again to ignore the hearts, but at least you have a spade fit now that opener has shown a six-card suit. The use of 1NT Forcing is a requirement for using Two-Over-One Game Forcing. Because a new suit on the two level promises opening count in this system, you have only one choice. You will have to use a forcing 1NT response on medium responding hands on which you used to be able to bid a new suit on the two level. Even though 1NT Forcing does not apply over a minor suit opening bid, East's two-over-one response is game forcing here, too.

W	N	E	S
1♦	Pass	2♣	

Does using Two-Over-One Game Forcing affect the meaning of East's 1♥ response in this auction?

W	N	E	S
1♦	Pass	1♥	

It does not. East can bid 1♥ or 1♠ with any strength hand. When holding a game-going hand, East will show it on a later bid. Don't make the mistake of thinking that Two-Over-One Game Forcing requires East to jump to 2♥ to show an opening hand. A 2♥ bid here would be a jump shift and would retain the normal meaning given to that bid by your partnership (suggested range 17 to 19 points).

SESSION 6: Deal #7
(Bonus Lesson 2)

Dealer: North
Vul: Both

♠ J 10 9 4	♠ K 8	♠ Q 6 5 3
♥ K 7 6 4 3	♥ A 5 2	♥ Q J 10 8
♦ J 10	♦ A 9 8 7 3	♦ Q 6 2
♣ 7 2	♣ Q 6 4	♣ 8 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A 7 2	
	♥ 9	
	♦ K 5 4	
	♣ A K J 10 9 5	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1 ♦	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2NT	Pass	3 ♣
	Pass	3 ♦	Pass	4NT
	Pass	5 ♥	Pass	6 ♣
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

South would like to invite slam if there is a club fit. North's 2NT shows balanced distribution. Also, since North had so much room to show a new suit on the two level, there probably is a club fit.

Since 2♣ is game forcing, South can go slowly. What is the purpose of South's 3♣ bid? If South is only interested in game, South should bid 3NT. 3♣ expresses interest in slam. Does North have the right hand for slam? It is minimum, but has three clubs to the queen and aces and a king – all good stuff for slam. 3NT by North would discourage slam. A control bid showing an ace or 4♣ encourages partner's slam hopes. North's 3♦ bid shows a control for slam and South takes charge with Blackwood.

While it's tempting to bid 6NT, it is very risky with South's singleton, so 6♣ is the best contract.

South had to think before using Blackwood. When your suit is a minor, ask yourself if partner's Blackwood answer could take you too high. North might bid 5♣ to show no aces, and that is safe since South can pass. South planned on bidding slam opposite any other answer, so the use of Blackwood was safe on this deal. With the partnership having all four aces, some players might have been tempted to bid 5NT to ask for kings. North's answer would be 6♦. Now South would be forced to bid 6NT, because the Blackwood answer took North-South beyond their best contract of 6♣. Before bidding Blackwood to ask for aces or kings, stop and think what you will do with partner's answer. If you foresee a problem, don't use Blackwood.

Suggested Lead: West is likely to lead a safe top of sequence ♠J.

Suggested Play: Declarer can ruff a spade loser before drawing trump. If declarer forgets to do that, dummy's diamond suit will set up for a spade discard.

6NT will make unless the opening lead is a heart. East will be on lead against 6NT and East has a natural heart lead. 6NT should go down one.

Pairs not using Two-Over-One Game Forcing can reach this slam if South makes a strong jump shift to 3♣. If you are one of the pairs missing slam, I hope you bid 3NT. 3NT makes 11 tricks – one trick less than 5♣ but 40 points more.

Please leave South's hand on the table. Pick up the remaining three hands and put them in the center of the table in four piles – one for each suit.

South's hand on the table is: ♠A 7 2 ♥9 ♦K 5 4 ♣A K J 10 9 5.

Write this auction on the board:

W	N	E	S
1♦	Pass	2♣	

We already discussed this auction. Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, South's 2♣ bid commits the partnership to game. That is the bid South chose with the hand on the table.

Take away South's ♠A and ♣KJ. Put in the ♥K and ♣8 7

South has: ♠7 2 ♥K 9 ♦K 5 4 ♣A 10 9 8 7 5.

Should South respond 2♣ now? I hope you don't want to force to game with this 12-point hand. I would want to invite game. Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, a jump to 3♣ is invitational and invites game. I'll write the auction on the board.

W	N	E	S
1♦	Pass	3♣	

Since 3♣ is not forcing, South needs a six-card suit to bid this way. Some players want the jump to 3♣ to be used as a weak preempt. You cannot do this if you play Two-Over-One because you need this bid to show a game invitation. What would South do with this hand if 3♣ was a weak bid?

Take away South's ♣A 5 and put in the ♠A and ♣J.

South has: ♠A 7 2 ♥K 9 ♦K 5 4 ♣J 10 9 8 7.

Again partner opens 1♦ and you are using Two-Over-One Game Forcing. This is a very difficult hand to bid. 2♣ is game forcing and you are not good enough to bid that. 3♣ is non-forcing and shows a six-card club suit. Your suit isn't long enough to make that bid. And 1NT is not forcing after a minor suit opening bid. There are two solutions. Some players only use Two-Over-One Game Forcing after a major suit opening bid. Those who like to use Two-Over-One Game Forcing all the time adjust the meaning of a 2NT response to a minor-suit opening bid. We are used to responding 2NT to show a balanced 13 to 15 points and to force to game. The change is to make that bid invitational to game and have it show a good 10 to 12 points instead.

If you are going to use Two-Over-One Game Forcing after a 1♦ opening bid, I suggest you make this adjustment in your range for a 2NT response. If you don't, you will sometimes find yourself stuck for a bid. You might decide to start using Two-Over-One Game Forcing only after major-suit openings to see how you like it. Don't make all of these changes after a minor suit opening in your system right now. Too much change can be very confusing.

Whatever decision you make, be sure you discuss it with any new partner. It is very important for both members of a partnership to agree on what conventions will be used and how and when they apply. One thing you should agree on is that a two-over-one response is not game forcing

when the opponents intervene or when used by a passed hand. Two-Over-One Game Forcing only applies after your side opens one of a suit in first or second seat and when only your side is in the bidding.

The reason why we don't use Two-Over-One Game Forcing in a competitive auction is that it is more important to be able to compete with 11-point hands.

Write these auctions on the board.

W	N	E	S
1♥	Pass	2♣	

East's 2♣ bid is game forcing (no competition).

W	N	E	S
1♥	1♠	2♣	

East's 2♣ bid is not game forcing. East should have a good 10+ points; 2♣ is forcing for one round but not game forcing. If you didn't play this way, East might have to pass an 11-point hand, and the opponents could steal the bid away from you.

There is a lot to Two-Over-One Game Forcing. Make sure you are ready before you add this convention to your bidding arsenal. While this system makes two-over-one auctions easier, it does complicate some other auctions.

Even if you decide not to use Two-Over-One Game Forcing right now, your opponents might use it. Suppose you hear this auction by the opponents with your side silent:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♥
3♥	4♥

It's easier to defend if you can picture your opponents' hands. What do you know about their hands if the opponents are using Two-Over-One Game Forcing? Opener bid slowly and was probably interested in slam. Opener's hand is coming down as dummy, so that information isn't too helpful. We'd rather know more about declarer's hand. Does responder have any extra strength? Not much, responder showed no interest in slam.

What if your opponents are not using Two-Over-One Game Forcing? Is opener strong now? No, 3♥ isn't even forcing for some players. How strong is responder? Opening strength but not enough to consider slam – maybe up to 18 points..

Even if you don't use it, knowing about bidding conventions like Two-Over-One Game Forcing will help you. Remember, it's not alertable, so you will have to check the opponents' convention card to see how they play.

Let's play our last deal.

SESSION 6: Deal #8
(Bonus Lesson 2)

Dealer: East
Vul: None

	♠ 5 3	
	♥ 9 2	
	♦ A 10 8 5 3	
	♣ 10 9 7 2	
♠ A K 8 6 4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> NE </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WS </div> </div>	♠ J 2
♥ A K 5		♥ Q J 8 7 3
♦ 6 2		♦ 7 4
♣ K J 3		♣ A Q 6 5
	♠ Q 10 9 7	
	♥ 10 6 4	
	♦ K Q J 9	
	♣ 8 4	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			Pass	Pass
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
	4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Did I catch you on this hand? East can respond 2♥ right away. East is a passed hand. A two-over-one response from a passed hand is not game forcing. 2♥ is not game forcing. It isn't even forcing!

West has to leap to game. East-West are not in a game-forcing auction, so 3♥ would be weaker than 4♥. West should not be thinking about slam. Opposite a passed hand, West's 19 points are not enough to bid slam. If East had bid 2♥ as an unpassed hand, it would show opening strength, and West would have a right to be interested in slam.

Suggested Lead: South leads the ♦K.

Suggested Play: Declarer will lose two diamonds and take the rest of the tricks as long as trumps are drawn early.

Now you've learned a little about the popular Two-Over-One Game Forcing system. One word of caution, if you do decide to give this system a try – don't cheat with those two-over-one responses. If you don't have an opening hand, don't bid a new suit on the two level on your first response. I wish you all lots of good responding hands to give you plenty of practice!

BONUS LESSON 3

LESSON 7 – Bergen Raises

This lesson provides an introduction to Bergen Raises, a system of raising opener's major that is popular in some regions. With the exception of the immediate jump raise as a limit raise, the material taught in previous lessons is compatible with Bergen Raises. Bergen Raises are based on The Law of Total Tricks and allow the partnership to reach their law level quickly with weak hands in an attempt to close out the opponents whenever possible. The inclusion of this lesson in the teacher manual is not a suggestion that you teach Bergen Raises as part of your course on major suit raises. Some teachers have indicated a desire for a lesson plan on the topic and it is presented to be used at your discretion.

Bergen Raises are mentioned in the Appendix of *Commonly Used Conventions*.

There are no E-Z Deal cards for this lesson. You will have to set up the lesson deals using your chosen method (in boards, calling the cards or using Dealmaster printouts). Make sure you announce the dealer and vulnerability before each hand is bid.

Earlier in our courses, we discussed preemptive raises in competition.

Write the following auction on the board.

W	N	E	S
1 ♠	2 ♣	3 ♠	

By partnership agreement, East's 3 ♠ bid could be a preemptive raise made on a very weak responding hand with four-card spade support. What is the advantage of playing that way? It makes it difficult for the opponents to communicate. North-South have not yet discovered how their hands fit or what their best trump suit might be. If they wish to continue talking about it, they must bid on the four level.

Is bidding high with a weak hand dangerous? It's not usually that dangerous when you have a big trump fit. The Law of Total Tricks guides us here. "The Law" says that we are usually safe to compete for as many tricks as our partnership has trumps. With a nine-card fit, the three level and bidding for nine tricks should be safe. What does safe mean? It does not mean that you will make your contract. It only means that the opponents are likely to score better if you give them room to discuss their hands and find a good spot to play. It's not bad to go down when you are stealing from the opponents and pay less than what they could have scored if you left them alone.

We usually follow "The Law" only in competitive auctions. When just you and partner are bidding, you don't wait until you have ten spades between you to bid 4 ♠. You base your bidding on the combined partnership strength. If you have the power to bid game, you can bid game with only eight trumps. When the opponents intervene and you don't have the power to bid game, you still can bid it provided you have lots of trumps – ten trumps for a major suit game.

We've seen that we don't always wait for the opponents to intervene.

Write the following auction on the board.

W	N	E	S
1♥	Pass	4♥	

What does East have? The weak freak. East is not bidding game on power. East's bid is based on The Law of Total Tricks, even though this was not a competitive auction. The truth is that you can apply "The Law" in a competitive auction or in an auction that you expect will be competitive if you bid more conservatively. Here responder is sitting with five hearts and a weak hand – probably no more than 7 points. What will happen if East either passes or raises to 2♥? Between them, North-South have only three hearts at most. Isn't it likely that South will find a bid? We can apply "The Law" in anticipation of what our opponents will do.

Do you like using The Law of Total Tricks? I do! It's fun to bid a lot with a little. If you like doing that, you're going to love today's lesson.

Bergen Raises are based on The Law of Total Tricks. The less you have, the more you bid – provided that you have enough trumps to afford to bid high.

The first part of Bergen Raises is that we get to use preemptive jump raises all the time!

The auction on the board doesn't change. It still shows the weak freak with five trumps.

Change the auction on the board to:

W	N	E	S
1♥	Pass	3♥	

Using Bergen Raises, East's 3♥ bid is also preemptive. How many trumps do you think East shows? Four. Again, East should be quite weak with 0-6 total points. Frequently, East would be too weak to respond if the partnership did not use Bergen Raises. Obviously, if you choose to treat this jump raise to 3♥ as a weak preemptive raise, you will need a new way to show a limit raise. I'll tell you how to do that a little later. First, we are going to practice using preemptive raises in some complete deals.

Even though preemptive raises in competition are not alertable, these preemptive raises without competition are alertable. Opener must immediately alert responder's 3♥ raise.

Let's try a hand. Personally, I don't concern myself too much with vulnerability when making a preemptive jump raise, but you might be a bit cautious at unfavorable vulnerability where your side is vulnerable and the opponents are not. I will tell you who is vulnerable on each deal (or a printed hand record sheet can give that information).

SESSION 7: Deal #1
(Bonus Lesson 3)

Dealer: North
Vul: None

	♠ 9 3	
	♥ K J 9 5 4	
	♦ K 8	
	♣ A K Q 3	
♠ A Q J 10 8		♠ K 7 6 4
♥ 10		♥ A 8 3
♦ A 9 4 2		♦ Q J 10
♣ 9 5 2		♣ 10 6 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ 5 2	
	♥ Q 7 6 2	
	♦ 7 6 5 3	
	♣ J 8 7	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
	?			

South uses a preemptive jump raise to show four trumps and 0-6 points. South is too weak to make a single raise and would have to pass if North-South had not agreed to use preemptive jump raises.

West wishes South had passed! It would be easy for West to overcall 1 ♠. But now West has to decide whether to overcall 3 ♠ or pass. Double would be for takeout, but overcalling this good major suit is a better choice than double. Unfortunately, either a double or an overcall shows a bit more strength than West has. To enter the bidding directly over a preempt, your hand should value to about 16 points. Because it is important for the player who is short in the opponents' suit to take action over a preempt, it's okay to include shortness points in that 16-point total. Even adding for the singleton heart, West cannot scrape up 16 points, so West might pass.

Suggested Play in Spades: 3 ♠ makes, losing three clubs and one diamond. Unfortunately, East-West should not be able to stop in 3 ♠ after South's preemptive jump raise. East has ten points and will raise a 3 ♠ overcall to 4 ♠.

Suggested Play in Hearts: North can make 3 ♥. Losers are two spades, one heart and one diamond with a working finesse.

East-West are headed for a minus score as soon as South makes the preemptive jump raise. At this vulnerability, East-West do better to go down one in 4 ♠ than they do to pass 3 ♥ out. If South passes or raises to 2 ♥, West can overcall. When East treats this very balanced 10-point hand as a single raise, East-West will be able to stop below game.

Bridge players use preemptive raises to make life difficult for their opponents. If you like doing that, it's time to learn Bergen Raises. Sometimes a preemptive raise shuts the opponents out of the bidding entirely. Sometimes the opponents bid but end up too high or too low. Sometimes a preemptive raise can lead to a good sacrifice. Let's try our next deal where East should think about sacrificing.

SESSION 7: Deal #2
(Bonus Lesson 3)

Dealer: East
Vul: N-S

	♠ 2	
	♥ A K Q 10	
	♦ A 9 8 4 2	
	♣ A K Q	
♠ J 8 4 3		♠ A K 10 9 6 5
♥ 9 4		♥ J
♦ 10 7 6		♦ K Q 5
♣ J 9 5 3		♣ 7 6 2
	♠ Q 7	
	♥ 8 7 6 5 3 2	
	♦ J 3	
	♣ 10 8 4	

	N	
W		E
	S	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	3 ♠	Dbl	1 ♠ 4 ♠	Pass ?

West uses a preemptive Bergen Raise to 3 ♠ in an attempt to shut out the opponents.

North has a very good hand and should not be shut out so easily. Double of weak Bergen Raises are for takeout. With a weak five-card minor and support for all unbid suits, a takeout double is a better choice than overcalling in diamonds.

As East, can you imagine that it would be quite easy for the opponents to make a game? East-West have ten spades between them and should plan on winning one spade trick at best. East might get a couple of diamond tricks but that's it, and West hasn't promised much strength. At this vulnerability, East should consider sacrificing in 4 ♠. What makes this sacrifice safe? The Law of Total Tricks. East knows there is a ten-card fit and can compete for ten tricks by bidding 4 ♠.

If forced to bid, South would be comfortable choosing hearts as trump. But will South bid over 4 ♠?

Suggested Play in Spades: Losers are three clubs, one heart and two diamonds. Declarer's best play is to test clubs before finessing in diamonds. When the clubs split 3-3, a diamond loser can be discarded, and it doesn't matter who has the ♦ A. 4 ♠ is down two. East-West are not vulnerable, so they give North-South either 100 or 300 points, depending on whether they are doubled for penalty.

Suggested Play in Hearts: Declarer can make 5 ♥ by ruffing a spade loser in dummy. Did North-South bid it?

Using Bergen Raises, a jump raise of opener's major to the three level is preemptive and very weak. With a good minimum, responder should not make a preemptive raise. There is a conventional bid in Bergen Raises to show four-card support and 7 to 10 points. Write the following auction on the board.

W	N	E	S
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♣	

Bergen Raises uses a bid of 3 ♣ to show four-card support for opener's major and 7 to 10 points. How is this bid useful? It still shuts the opponents out, but it also can help opener know what to do. With a shapely medium hand, opener will usually go on to game based on the nine-card fit. Responder's 3 ♣ Bergen bid is alertable. Opener alerts immediately.

SESSION 7: Deal #3
(Bonus Lesson 3)

Dealer: South
vul: E-W

♠ 5	♠ 10 8 7 6	♠ K 3 2
♥ J 10 9 3	♥ Q 8 7 2	♥ A K 6 4
♦ K J 9 8	♦ 7 6 3	♦ Q 10
♣ J 9 5 4	♣ A 2	♣ 10 8 6 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A Q J 9 4	
	♥ 5	
	♦ A 5 4 2	
	♣ K Q 7	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	3♣	Pass	1♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	4♠

Counting the doubleton, North has seven points. North's 3♣ Bergen Raise shows 7 to 10 points and four trumps. South has 17 points with nice distribution – a five-loser hand – and bids game.

Suggested Lead: West is likely to lead the ♥J – top of a sequence.

Suggested Play: South's losers are one heart, one spade and three diamonds. One diamond can surely be ruffed in dummy. The spade finesse avoids a trump loser, so declarer should make 4♠.

A better line of play that does not rely on the spade finesse working has declarer playing three rounds of clubs before trumps are drawn, discarding a diamond from dummy on the third club. Declarer can then play to ruff two diamond losers in dummy.

If North-South did not use Bergen Raises, North would raise to 2♠. South makes a game try with a help suit bid of 3♦. North likes the fourth trump and the ♣A, but North's diamond help is poor. North-South might not reach game. The Bergen raise let South know about the nine-card fit, and made South like the hand enough to bid game.

North has a total of seven points. Had South's hand been a weaker opening bid, it is possible that East-West could have the majority of strength. But East-West might have been shut out of the bidding, because the 3♣ Bergen Raise took the bidding too high.

SESSION 7: Deal #4
(Bonus Lesson 3)Dealer: West
Vul: Both

♠ K Q 10	♠ 5 4 2	♠ 7 6
♥ A 8 7 5 4	♥ Q 10	♥ K J 9 3
♦ A 6 2	♦ Q J 10 7	♦ 9 8 4 3
♣ 5 3	♣ 10 6 4 2	♣ A 9 7
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A J 9 8 3	
	♥ 6 2	
	♦ K 5	
	♣ K Q J 8	

Suggested Bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	Pass	3♣	3♠?
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East shows 7 to 10 points and four hearts with the Bergen 3♣ response.

West has a balanced minimum and should not be interested in game. Opener needs something extra to make game after a 3♣ raise. West plans on signing off in 3♥.

South has a fairly nice hand and would like to bid. South is likely to bid 3♠, which should win the bidding. East-West have communicated their strength – they do not have the power for game. And they have communicated their distribution – neither has the extra distribution needed to bid game competitively. East-West should pass and hope they have enough to defeat 3♠. Even though North has a spade fit, North doesn't have much strength and 3♠ is too high.

West might even make a matchpoint penalty double of 3♠. West can see four tricks in hand and hopes that partner's 7 to 10 points will produce the setting trick. If East-West can make 3♥ and 3♠ goes down only one, they have to double 3♠ to avoid getting a worse score. This is not such a big concern at IMPS or social bridge, but every point matters at matchpoint duplicate.

Suggested Play in Hearts: With nine trumps, we don't usually finesse for the missing queen, so West should not lose a heart. Declarer will lose one club, two diamonds and only one spade. 3♥ makes.

Suggested Play in Spades: South has to lose two spades, two hearts, one diamond and one club. Down two is not good at this vulnerability. East-West score 200 points, more than their partscore is worth. South players who bid 3♠ over East's Bergen Raise were unlucky to be playing against a pair that used Bergen Raises. Without Bergen raises, South would have been able to show this good hand with a 2♠ overcall. East would have competed to 3♥, but North-South would have stayed out of trouble and given up only 140 instead of 200 (or 500 if West doubled) points.

What do you think this auction shows? Write the following auction on the board.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♣	Dbl

There are two possible interpretations. 3 ♣ is an artificial bid, and we often use doubles of artificial bids as lead directional. But also consider this. West could have only 11 HCP for the opening bid. Responder could have a distributional raise with only 6 HCP. Do you see that opener's side could have the minority of points? In that case, North-South might want to compete. The other possible interpretation of this double is that it is a takeout double. What suits would doubler have? All but hearts, the only real suit bid. How should you play the double? First, you have to see what your partner thinks. My suggestion is to use "double" in this auction for takeout. Agree that your double of any weak raise of the opponents' suit is for takeout. Even if you and partner don't use Bergen Raises, your opponents might, so this is a discussion worth having with your favorite partners.

So, to review, the double in the auction I have on the board is for takeout. South's double in the next three auctions I am writing on the board are also for takeout.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Dbl

3 ♥ is a weak raise showing four hearts and no more than 6 points. Double of a weak raise is for takeout.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Dbl

4 ♥ is the weak freak raise. Double of a weak raise is for takeout. However, the higher we go, the more likely it is that partner will decide to convert a takeout double to a penalty double.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Dbl

2 ♥ is a weak raise, much like the raise we have always known. But now this raise is more specific. Since we have two ways to show a weak hand with four trumps, this raise to 2 ♥ shows exactly three trumps. With four trumps, responder would bid a preemptive 3 ♥ or 3 ♣, depending on how good the hand was. This 2 ♥ bid shows only 6 to 10 points and three trumps. Opener is warned to be a bit conservative, because there is only an eight-card fit.

SESSION 7: Deal #5
(Bonus Lesson 3)Dealer: North
Vul: N-S

♠ Q J 10 2	♠ A 9 3	♠ K 5
♥ 6	♥ A Q 10 9 4	♥ J 7 3
♦ A Q J 3	♦ K 7	♦ 10 8 6 5 4 2
♣ A 6 5 4	♣ 10 7 3	♣ K 8
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ 8 7 6 4	
	♥ K 8 5 2	
	♦ 9	
	♣ Q J 9 2	

Suggested Bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Pass	3♣
Dbl	3♥	?	

South should use a Bergen 3♣ raise rather than a preemptive 3♥ bid. 3♣ shows 7 to 10 points including distribution. South's hand is worth about nine points when you count for the singleton. Making the wrong four-card raise risks missing a game.

Over either raise, 3♥ or 3♣, West has a takeout double. Isn't it good that your partnership discussed what double would mean over the 3♣ Bergen bid? Even if you decide not to use Bergen Raises, you need to know how to bid when your opponents use them.

North has a minimum opener and is not interested in game. With or without a double from West, North should sign off in 3♥.

Over 3♥, East is off the hook and has to decide whether to bid or pass. A 4♦ bid should be construed as competitive and East does have about nine points. The diamond suit isn't very good but partner's double promised support. West should probably pass 4♦. West's double showed a pretty good hand, so bidding game would be punishing East for competing.

Suggested Play in Hearts: North loses two spades, two clubs and one diamond. 3♥ goes down one. Is it bad for North to go down? It depends on what the opponents can make.

Suggested Play in Diamonds: East loses one spade, one heart and one diamond. 4♦ makes with no overtricks.

If North-South did not use Bergen Raises, South would raise to 2♥ and West would make a takeout double. When East bids 3♦, there is no danger of East-West getting too high. When South competes to 3♥, East can compete to 4♦ without showing extra values. Whether or not it happened at your table, a Bergen Raise gives North-South the best shot at making East-West go wrong.

How do you like Bergen Raises so far? Using 3♣ to describe a 7 to 10 point hand with four trumps doesn't cost much. You seldom use a 3♣ jump shift, and for the hands on which you might wish to use 3♣ as strong, Two-Over-One Game Forcing offers an alternative.

The preemptive jump raise to the three level does steal a bid we have been using to show a limit raise with four trumps. In Bergen Raises, a jump raise shows four trump and a very weak hand of 0 to 6 points. The solution is to use another conventional bid – 3♦ – to show a limit raise.

Write the following auction on the board.

W	N	E	S
1♥	Pass	3♦	

3♦ is your old limit raise of 3♥. Responder shows a good 10 to 12 points with four trumps. Opener decides whether to sign off in 3♥ or to carry on to game in exactly the same way opener decided whether to pass a limit raise or carry on to game. If the partnership's point count total is 26, opener bids game. But opener also can bid game with a real minimum as long as it is a nice looking, unbalanced hand. The Bergen 3♦ bid is alertable. All three-level bids in Bergen Raises are alertable.

SESSION 7: Deal #6
(Bonus Lesson 3)

Dealer: East
Vul: E-W

	♠ 10	
	♥ J 10 3	
	♦ Q 6 5 4 2	
	♣ A Q 10 3	
♠ K 9 8 4		♠ A Q J 7 6 2
♥ 8 7 6 2		♥ K Q 5
♦ A K 8		♦ 3
♣ 7 2		♣ 9 8 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> NE</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> WS</div> </div>	
	♠ 5 3	
	♥ A 9 4	
	♦ J 10 9 7	
	♣ K J 6 5	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♠	Pass
	3 ♦	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

West has 11 total points and shows a limit raise with four trumps.

Now East has to decide whether to go on to game. Points are minimal, but East has distribution which is valuable once partner shows a big trump fit. East bids 4 ♠.

Does The Law of Total Tricks have anything to do with East's decision to bid game? NO! This is NOT a competitive auction. East has to make the decision whether East-West have enough power in either points or good-fitting distribution to make 4 ♠. A 3 ♠ bid says they don't and a 4 ♠ bid says they do.

Suggested Lead: South leads the ♦ J, top of a sequence.

Suggested Play: East's losers are three clubs and two hearts. Dummy has only two clubs and one club loser can be ruffed there. East might finesse in hearts, hoping that the ♥ A is with North, but there is a better solution. Dummy has an extra diamond winner. East should use it wisely. There is no point in discarding a club that can be ruffed. Discard a heart instead and it doesn't matter who has the ♥ A.

SESSION 7: Deal #7
(Bonus Lesson 3)

Dealer: South
Vul: Both

	♠ K Q 3 2	
	♥ A 9 7 3	
	♦ Q 8 5	
	♣ 7 2	
♠ J 10 8 5		♠ 9 7 4
♥ Q 2		♥ 10 4
♦ 10 6 3		♦ A K J 9
♣ K J 8 4		♣ Q 9 6 5
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A 6	
	♥ K J 8 6 5	
	♦ 7 4 2	
	♣ A 10 3	

<i>Suggested Bidding:</i>	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1♥
	Pass	3♦	Dbl	3♥
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

North shows a limit raise with four trumps. Aggressive as we like to be with a good trump fit, South can find no reason to go on to game with this balanced minimum hand.

East would dearly love a diamond opening lead and can get it by making a lead-directional double. What makes this double *lead-directional* and the double of 3♣ that we discussed before *takeout*? Doubles of weak raises are for takeout. North made a limit raise, not a weak raise, and we can go back to our usual policy where double of an artificial bid is lead-directional. Again, this is a useful agreement to have even if you and your partner choose not to use Bergen Raises.

Suggested Lead: When East makes a lead-directional double, West will lead the ♦3. Without the double, West will probably lead the ♠J.

Suggested Play: South's losers are three diamonds and two clubs. We don't usually plan on finessing for a missing queen with a nine-card trump fit, so South hopes that the ♥Q will fall and it does. One club loser can be ruffed in dummy to make 3♥.

An extra loser can be avoided on a spade opening lead. Declarer draws two rounds of trump and discards a diamond loser on dummy's ♠Q. Without a diamond lead, declarer can make 4♥. East's lead-directional double was certainly important.

To make this bid, East had to understand that 3♦ was an artificial bid. Your opponents will alert when they use Bergen Raises, and you can ask the meaning of their bid at your turn to bid. You should ask because your opponents might play some other convention, and 3♦ might not be a Bergen Raise at all. Also, your opponents might not use the Bergen Raises exactly as I have taught you. Some partnerships reverse the meaning of the 3♣ and 3♦ responses. For them, 3♦ shows a weak raise with 7 to 10 points and 3♣ is the limit raise. So your takeout double would apply over 3♦, but the lead-directional double would apply over 3♣.

The best explanation for why players reverse the meaning of these bids is to be consistent with Fast Arrival. The higher a three-level Bergen Raise is, the weaker it is.

SESSION 7: Deal #8
(Bonus Lesson 3)

Dealer: West
Vul: None

	♠ 8 5 2	
	♥ Q 10 8	
	♦ Q 9 4 3	
	♣ A Q 7	
♠ K Q 10 7 4	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> W S </div> </div>	♠ A J 9 3
♥ K 7 3		♥ A 6 4
♦ A 6 5 2		♦ 10 8
♣ 2		♣ J 10 5 3
	♠ 6	
	♥ J 9 5 2	
	♦ K J 7	
	♣ K 9 8 6 4	

Suggested Bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

East shows a limit raise with four trumps. West has only 13 total points (12 HCP plus one for length), but we've learned that an unbalanced opener usually accepts a limit raise with an unbalanced minimum hand, as long as the high cards don't appear to be wasted in short suits. West accepts partner's invitation to game.

Suggested Lead: North has no clear opening lead and might lead the ♥8 or the ♦3 or even a trump. Even though South has some strength in diamonds, South's diamonds are not strong enough to make a lead directional-double. Even though no harm is done this time, doubling with a diamond suit like this could draw a roadmap for declarer of how to avoid diamond losers.

Suggested Play: Declarer should delay drawing trump until two diamonds are ruffed in dummy. There is no danger of an overruff, because the trump suit is so good that declarer can afford to use high spades in dummy for ruffing.

If you find yourself with a limit raise and only three trumps, show it as we have already learned. The three-level Bergen Raise bids we learned today are for weak and invitational hands with four trumps.

Jacoby 2NT and splinter bids are used with Bergen Raises to show game-going hands with four-card support. We've discussed those conventions in other lessons and nothing is changed by using Bergen Raises.

Bergen Raises also fit well with the Two-Over-One Game Forcing system that we discussed last time.

If you and your partner decide to use Bergen Raises, there are some things you need to discuss.

Bergen Raises do not apply in competition whether the opponents overcall or double.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	1 ♠	3 ♣	

This auction does not show a Bergen Raise; it is a preemptive jump shift.

Most players use weak jump shifts in competition. South should have seven clubs and a pretty darn weak hand – no more than 5 HCP. Remember, East’s partner opened. With a better hand, East should not be preempting partner.

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	1 ♠	3 ♥	

Even though Bergen Raises are off in competition, we’ve already discussed using preemptive jump raises in competition, so this bid retains the same meaning – weak with four hearts. Do you remember how East would show a limit raise in this auction? East cuebids the opponent’s suit, 2 ♠, to show a limit raise or better.

W	N	E	S
1 ♠	Dbl	3 ♠	

This is not a Bergen Raise. It’s a weak preemptive raise with four spades.

In addition to discussing whether a convention applies in competition, you have to decide if it applies by a passed hand. My advice is that they do not, since we learned other ways to show these hands in our lesson on passed-hand bidding.

If you use Drury, there isn’t much reason to use the Bergen 3 ♦ limit raise.

W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♣			

This is Drury and takes the place of the 3 ♦ limit raise.

W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
3 ♣			

When we learned about Drury, we saw that 3 ♣ is used as an invitational bid with six clubs.

W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♠			

While 3 ♠ can still be a preemptive jump raise, it doesn’t make much sense to preempt opponents who have already chosen to pass.

When completing your convention card, you have to make some changes to accommodate Bergen Raises. Change “Double Raise” from limit to weak (0-6 points). Under “Other” add the 3 ♣ and 3 ♦ responses.

Just like Jacoby 2NT and 1NT Forcing, Bergen Raises have nothing to do with auctions that begin with a minor suit opening or with auctions where your side overcalls. All these conventions apply only when your side opens 1 ♥ or 1 ♠.

There is a lot to Bergen Raises – bids to memorize, alerts to give, mistakes that might be made. You might decide not to use Bergen Raises just yet. If that is your decision, have you wasted your time today? I don’t think so, because some of your opponents might be using Bergen Raises. It’s easier for you to bid and defend if you understand your opponents’ bidding.

Major Suit Raises Review Lesson

Deal 1

Dlr: North
Vul: None

♠ A K		♠ 7 6 5 3
♥ 8 6 5 2		♥ J 9 7 4 3
♦ J 10 8 5		♦ 6 2
♣ Q 10 7		♣ A 9
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	
	♠ Q J 9 8 4	
	♥ A	
	♦ A Q 3	
	♣ J 5 4 2	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	Pass	1 ♠
	Pass	1NT	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

- North is a passed hand. Using standard methods, a 2NT response from a passed hand shows 11 to 12 points and is not forcing. South wants to be in game and raises to 3NT, the game most likely to make.

- Many pairs who use 1NT Forcing by an unpassed responder use 1NT Semi-Forcing by a passed hand. Those pairs can afford to respond 1NT (as shown in the above auction), keeping the bidding low in case South opened light. South, with 15 points, did not open light. South will carry on to 3NT even with a singleton. 3NT is the most likely game to make. After a semi-forcing 1NT, any rebid by opener shows a full opening hand. North invites with 2NT and South accepts.

- East leads fourth-best, the ♥4.

- Winners are three hearts and three diamonds. Declarer should take the sure way of making 3NT – give up two spade tricks immediately to promote the three needed tricks.

Deal 2

Dlr: East
Vul: N-S

♠ 9 7 3		♠ K Q 8
♥ K Q 10		♥ 9 5 4 2
♦ J 9 5 3		♦ A 6
♣ A 10 4		♣ Q 9 8 3
♠ A J 10 5 4		
♥ 7 3		
♦ K Q 7		
♣ 7 6 2		
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	
	♠ 6 2	
	♥ A J 8 6	
	♦ 10 8 4 2	
	♣ K J 5	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			Pass	Pass
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
	2 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

- East has an unremarkable 11 points and should not consider opening the bidding. Choosing not to open makes East a *passed hand*. When West opens in third seat, East can use Reverse Drury to show a limit raise of spades.

- West rebids 2 ♠ to show no interest in game across from a limit raise and that should end the auction for East-West

- If East-West do not use Drury, East will have to jump to 3 ♠ to show the proper strength. East can't be sure of another bid, and a 2 ♣ “temporizing” bid by East should be passed by West. A passed hand cannot afford to temporize before supporting partner's suit because the second step of the two-step raise may never come.

- Over a final contract of 2 ♠, South might balance with a takeout double, but the vulnerability makes doing so dangerous. If North-South do compete, East-West don't have the distribution to go higher and should sell out to any three-level contract (perhaps doubled).

- In spades, West's losers are two hearts and three clubs. None of these losers can be avoided, so declarer can make only 2 ♠. Drury helps East-West get a plus score.

- If South balances with a takeout double, North will bid 3 ♦. West might double this based on good diamonds and partner's limit raise strength. By ruffing a spade in dummy, North should end up losing two spades and three diamonds. Down one isn't bad if East-West don't double, but East-West can double to collect 200 points – more than any partscore they might make.

Deal 3

Dlr: South
Vul: E-W

♠ 6 2	♠ A Q 9 4	♠ 7 3
♥ A K 7	♥ Q J 5 3 2	♥ 10 9 6
♦ J 8 4 3	♦ A K 7	♦ Q 10 9
♣ 10 7 3 2	♣ 6	♣ Q 9 8 5 4
	♠ K J 10 8 5	
	♥ 8 4	
	♦ 6 5 2	
	♣ A K J	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				1 ♠
	Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	5 ♦	Pass	5 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

• North's 4♣ bid is a splinter bid showing a forcing spade raise and club shortness. South is not pleased by the way the hands fit. The ♣A is okay, but the king and jack would be better if they were in suits where partner had length. South signs off in 4♠.

• North's hand totals to 19 points and is worth another move. Blackwood won't help North know what to do. North can move toward slam by showing a control beyond the game level. North's 5♦ bid shows a diamond control and a very good hand. South has room to show a heart control but doesn't have one, and South signs off again in 5♠. North has to respect this decision because North doesn't have a heart control either.

• West is likely to lead a high heart. It is a normal lead and the opponents' auction sounds like a heart control is lacking.

• South can lose two tricks. Losers are two hearts, one diamond and one club. The club loser can be ruffed in dummy later. Once the ♥A and ♥K are gone, dummy's ♥Q will provide a discard. On a diamond opening lead, declarer can discard a diamond from dummy on the second high club and then ruff a club and a diamond in dummy.

Deal 4

Dlr: West
Vul: Both

♠ A 9 4	♠ 8 6 3	♠ K 7 5
♥ K Q 10 5 2	♥ A J 8 4	♥ 7 3
♦ 9 3	♦ A 5	♦ Q J 10 8 7 4
♣ A 10 7	♣ Q 9 6 3	♣ 8 5
	♠ Q J 10 2	
	♥ 9 6	
	♦ K 6 2	
	♣ K J 4 2	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

• East would like to be able to respond 2♦, but that would show more strength. So East uses the 1NT Forcing convention. With a little luck, East will be able to sign off in diamonds next time.

• West may wish that 1NT wasn't forcing, but partnership trust is destroyed when you pass a forcing bid. A balanced opening hand must rebid a three-card minor, so West rebids 2♣. Now is East's big chance to bid 2♦ and improve the contract. You frequently do best by playing in the weak hand's long suit. West should realize that East is weak with long diamonds. West passes.

• North-South is likely to sell out to this low-level contract because East-West seem to have a misfit.

• South is likely to lead the ♠Q, top of a sequence in an unbid suit.

• East's losers are one spade, one heart, two diamonds and one club. Without too many losers, declarer can draw trump and then promote a heart trick.

• Other contracts by East-West should fail. At best a heart contract ends up down one and it could be far worse. Against a notrump contract, South will lead a spade and a continuation of spades will strand the long diamond suit.

Deal 5
Dlr: North
Vul: N-S

♠ 8 2	♠ A K 4 3	♠ 10 5
♥ A Q J 6	♥ 10	♥ K 5 4 3 2
♦ Q J 10	♦ 8 7 4 2	♦ 9 5 3
♣ 10 5 4 2	♣ Q J 8 7	♣ A K 9
	♠ Q J 9 7 6	
	♥ 9 8 7	
	♦ A K 6	
	♣ 6 3	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	Pass	1 ♠
	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠
	Pass	3 ♠	Pass	Pass
	Pass			

- North has only 10 HCP and will probably pass in first seat. South opens light in third seat. Once South bids spades, North's hand revalues to 13 points (adding three for the singleton).
- If North-South use Drury, North can bid 2 ♣. South has no interest in game across from a passed hand and signs off in 2 ♠. North's hand isn't a limit raise; it's better and is worth one more try. After South denies game interest, North should raise to 3 ♠. The only excuse the Drury bidder can have for not respecting opener's signoff bid is a hand that revalues to opening strength. But South still doesn't have any interest in game opposite a minimum opener, and the pair stops in 3 ♠.
- Without Drury, North would have no way to describe a hand that revalues to opening count and North would probably go to 4 ♠. Drury allows North-South to stop low enough to get a plus score.
- West might lead the ♦ Q from the three-card sequence.
- South's losers are three hearts, one diamond and two clubs. After losing one heart, two heart losers can be ruffed to make 3 ♠.
- East could make a defensive slip to allow declarer to make an overtrick. The defenders have to get their minor suit tricks in the proper order. Once East wins both high clubs, declarer can discard a diamond loser on a good club in dummy – provided declarer still has the diamond loser. So the defenders have to get their diamond trick before clubs are good. However, with diamonds splitting 3-3, dummy's fourth diamond will also provide a discard – if declarer still has a club left to discard. The secret is for the defenders to get the diamond trick and then immediately cash any club tricks they still have coming. Sometimes you have to take your tricks in just the right sequence.

Deal 6
Dlr: East
Vul: E-W

♠ J 10 8	♠ Q 6 5 4 3	♠ 9 2
♥ J 7 4	♥ A 9 2	♥ K Q 10 6 3
♦ A 7 3	♦ J 5	♦ K 9 4 2
♣ K Q 6 3	♣ J 9 8	♣ A 5
	♠ A K 7	
	♥ 8 5	
	♦ Q 10 8 6	
	♣ 10 7 4 2	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♥	Pass
	1NT	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
	3 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

- West has a limit raise with only three trumps. Pairs who use 1NT Forcing show this hand by bidding 1NT and jumping to 3 ♥ as shown in the auction above.
- Pairs who do not use 1NT Forcing must bid a new suit and then raise hearts.
- Once West shows a limit raise, it's up to East to decide whether to bid game. East has only 13 points and won't chance a thin game on only an eight-card fit.
- South leads the ♠ A.
- East's losers are two spades, one heart and two diamonds. One diamond loser can be discarded on the extra club in dummy. Declarer simply draws trump and takes tricks.

Deal 7
 Dlr: South
 Vul: Both

♠ A 8 5		♠ K 6 4
♥ A J 9 7 5		♥ K Q 6 4
♦ Q J 10 3		♦ K
♣ 4		♣ A 6 5 3 2
	♠ 9 3 2	
	♥ 10 3 2	
	♦ A 6 5	
	♣ K 10 9 7	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
				Pass
	1♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
	3♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
	5♥	Pass	6♥	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

- Whether or not slam is reached depends on East's first response. Splitter bids shouldn't be made with a singleton ace or king. Partner will expect a small singleton and may be turned off with what seem to be wasted values in the suit. With a singleton ace or king, use Jacoby 2NT instead of a splitter bid.
- On this hand, if East showed a singleton diamond, West would sign off in 4♥ thinking that there were wasted diamond cards. East's best choice is to treat the hand as balanced and use the Jacoby 2NT response. West shows a singleton club – a good singleton opposite several losers in East's hand. Blackwood will show that two aces aren't missing and East can bid slam.
- North leads the ♠Q.
- West can lose one trick and it will be the ♦A. But West also has a losing spade. Declarer should draw trump and play a diamond to the king. Declarer can immediately regain the lead and run the remaining diamonds, discarding one spade from dummy. Dummy still has a trump left to ruff the spade loser. Sometimes dummy doesn't have shortness in the suit where declarer has losers, but has shortness where declarer doesn't need it. A discard from dummy can create the short suit declarer needs.

Deal 8
 Dlr: West
 Vul: None

♠ 10 8		♠ J 9 4
♥ K 9 8 2		♥ Q J 10 7
♦ A 10 9 5		♦ 8 3
♣ 10 8 7		♣ Q J 9 3
	♠ A Q 5	
	♥ 5	
	♦ Q 7 4 2	
	♣ K 6 5 4 2	

THE BIDDING:	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
	Pass	2♥	Pass	4♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

- South has a spade fit and enough points to want to bid game. Unfortunately, South has only three trumps. The way to make a strong major suit raise with three trumps is to make a forcing bid first and then go to game on the next bid. South's 2♣ bid is forcing for at least one round. For those who use Two-Over-One, it's forcing all the way to game.
- North doesn't know that there is a spade fit and continues to describe the hand's distribution with a 2♥ rebid. Unless North-South use Two-Over-One Game Forcing, South must jump in spades. A 2♠ bid would only show 11 or 12 points, and North is permitted to pass. With no slam interest, South jumps to 4♠.
- For those who use Two-Over-One Game Forcing, South can rebid only 2♠ since the 2♣ bid committed North-South to game. The difference between 4♠ and 2♠ is South's slam interest. A 4♠ bid is *fast arrival*, denying any interest in slam. South should still rebid 4♠ with this minimal game-going hand.
- The only unbid suit is diamonds. East might choose to lead the ♦8. Even though North showed hearts, East has a strong sequence and the ♥Q also is a possible lead. Even a trump lead is possible (the ♠4). Not all hands have a clear-cut lead.
- North's losers are one diamond and three hearts. Declarer can make one overtrick with careful play and could go down on careless play. One heart loser can be ruffed. Declarer cannot afford to ruff a second heart because it spends a high trump needed to draw trump. But a second heart loser can be discarded on dummy's ♣K. Dummy has no entry outside of trumps. After drawing trump, declarer won't be able to get to dummy to use the ♣K for a discard, so declarer must take this discard early.

INTRODUCTION TO TWO-OVER-ONE GAME FORCING

Some players use a system called Two-Over-One Game Forcing (no alert needed). Immediately after a suit opening bid, any non-jump two-level bid of a new suit by responder is game forcing. (A single raise is a two-level bid but not in a new suit; it is not considered to be a two-over-one response – it's simply a raise.)

EXAMPLE 1:

Opener	Responder
1 ♠	2 ♥

Responder's 2♥ bid is a two-over-one response. Normally it would show five hearts and eleven or more points. In Two-Over-One Game Forcing, this bid shows five hearts and opening strength. The Two-Over-One Game Forcing system isn't possible without using 1NT Forcing. There would be too many hands that responder couldn't describe.

EXAMPLE 2:

Opener	Responder
1 ♥	2 ♣

If the partnership uses Two-Over-One Game Forcing, responder is showing an opening hand with a club suit in this auction. Responder could have three-card heart support, but would show four hearts by using Jacoby 2NT or a splinter bid. (Note that 2♣ is not Drury because responder is not a passed hand.)

EXAMPLE 3:

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	2 ♣

Even this auction can be played as game-forcing. However, a 1NT response is not forcing when the opening bid is in a minor suit. 1NT Forcing applies only over major suit opening bids. If you use Two-Over-One Game Forcing after a minor suit opening bid, you need some response for the invitational 11 to 12 point hands. See Examples 4-5.

EXAMPLE 4:

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	2NT

Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, you can agree that responder's jump response of 2NT is invitational showing a good 10 to 12 points and denying a four-card major. The standard meaning of this 2NT response is as a forcing bid showing an opening hand of 13 to 15 points.

EXAMPLE 5:

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	3 ♣

By partnership agreement, players using Two-Over-One Game Forcing make this bid to allow responder to show six clubs and a good 10 to 12 points. For them, 3♣ is not a forcing bid.

If you use Two-Over-One Game Forcing, a first response by an unpassed hand of a new suit on the two level says game must be reached – no matter how many more rounds of bidding it takes. What a wonderful thing to get off your chest early in the auction! You don't have to worry about whether the next bid you want to make is forcing or not once you have forced to game.

Two-Over-One Game Forcing is off when:

- The opponents intervene in the auction in any way (overcall or double).
- Responder is a passed hand.
- Partner has overcalled.
- Partner opens 1NT.

FOURTH SUIT FORCING

In many auctions, you have already shown your distribution and need a way to keep the bidding open until the best contract is decided. Many players agree when three suits have been bid that the bid of the fourth suit may be artificial and requests partner give more information about the hand.

EXAMPLE 1:	Opener	Responder
	1 ♥	1 ♠
	2 ♣	2 ♦

Diamonds was the fourth suit, the only unbid suit. Responder could actually have diamonds but may not. Responder might have five or more spades. No spade bid would be forcing at this point since bids of old suits are not forcing. Responder might wish to play in notrump but be unable to bid notrump without a diamond stopper. When your side has bid three suits, the opponents are likely to lead the fourth suit, so you must have it stopped to suggest playing in notrump.

Using Fourth Suit Forcing, after your partnership has bid three suits, the bid by either opener or responder of the fourth suit:

- Is game forcing.
- May be artificial.
- Asks partner to further clarify the hand.

In Example 1 above, opener can do several things. Opener should give high priority to showing three-card support for responder's spades. Without that, opener can bid notrump with a diamond stopper or rebid a suit.

Fourth Suit Forcing helps you accomplish many things. It is used to:

- Set up a game force in an auction that was not previously forcing to game.
- Express interest in slam on hands that are too strong to sign off in game.
- Search for secondary support for a major suit. Delayed support generally shows one less card than immediate support would show.
- Look for a notrump stopper in the fourth suit.

Since Fourth Suit Forcing is an artificial bid and does not guarantee length in the suit bid, it must be alerted.

TWO-OVER-ONE GAME FORCING

Deal 1

Dlr: North
Vul: None

♠ 10 3	♠ A Q J 7 4	♠ 9 8 6
♥ Q 9 8 3	♥ J 10 2	♥ A K 6
♦ 10 7 4	♦ K J 6 5	♦ 8 3 2
♣ 10 8 5 4	♣ A	♣ Q 9 7 2
	♠ K 5 2	
	♥ 7 5 4	
	♦ A Q 9	
	♣ K J 6 3	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
		1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

- South cannot support spades immediately. With a good hand and three trumps, it takes two bids to show support.

- In Two-Over-One Game Forcing, all bids below game are forcing after responder's first bid is a new suit on the two level. North has enough to want to be in game opposite a medium-responding hand but doesn't have to jump. North can comfortably bid 2 ♦ because it's forcing. If North-South were not using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, North's 2 ♦ bid would be forcing because in "standard" bidding, a new suit by opener is forcing for one round after a two-over-one response.

- Now South supports spades. Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, South does not have to jump to 4 ♠. A mere 2 ♠ bid would be forcing. But 4 ♠ is South's best bid to discourage North from exploring for slam. South had enough for a two-over-one response, but has an eight-loser hand. When you are in a game-forcing auction and know what should be trump, the faster you get to game, the less interest you have in slam. This is known as Fast Arrival. South's 4 ♠ bid warns North that there is not a slam unless North has a very good hand.

- Fast Arrival applies only when you are forced to game. North-South were playing Two-Over-One Game Forcing and South's first response forced them to game. North's singleton is not a big asset when there are only eight trumps. Besides, it is in partner's bid suit, where some strength is likely to be wasted.

- East leads the ♥A.

- The defense should take the first three heart tricks. West has to encourage a heart continuation. Unless the defenders cash three hearts off the top, declarer can discard a heart loser on dummy's ♣K.

Deal 2

Dlr: East
Vul: N-S

♠ Q 8 3	♠ A J 9 4	♠ K 2
♥ A 6 4	♥ 9 3 2	♥ K Q J 7 5
♦ K Q 8 5 3	♦ 10	♦ A 9 7 4
♣ A 2	♣ 9 8 6 4 3	♣ K 5
	♠ 10 7 6 5	
	♥ 10 8	
	♦ J 6 2	
	♣ Q J 10 7	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
			1 ♥	Pass
	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
	3 ♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
	5 ♥	Pass	6♥/6NT	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

- West fits opener's hearts but cannot use Jacoby 2NT with only three hearts. West makes a forcing bid in a new suit, planning on supporting hearts and showing strength next time.

- East likes this 17-point hand. East-West are playing Two-Over-One Game Forcing, so East can afford to raise to 3 ♦ and await developments, certain that the bidding cannot stop short of game.

- Based on Fast Arrival, West's 3 ♥ rebid is stronger than 4 ♥. East-West are in a game-forcing auction, so the slower they go once a fit is found, the more interest they have in slam. West is showing a good hand. Now East knows there is a double fit and partner has more than opening strength. East can use Blackwood to check for aces. Once East hears that an ace is missing, East places the contract in a small slam. Either 6♥ or 6NT is a reasonable choice. 6NT has the advantage of scoring ten points more – a big advantage to a duplicate player. 6NT also avoids any risk of a diamond ruff by a defender. On the other hand, it also precludes declarer getting an extra trick by ruffing.

- Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing gave East-West a big advantage on this deal. Without it, West's 3 ♥ bid would be only invitational and West would have to jump to 4 ♥. But 4 ♥ doesn't show the extra values that West has and slam might be missed.

- South is likely to lead the ♣Q – top of a sequence in an unbid suit.

- Declarer has twelve top tricks.

Deal 3

Dlr: North

Vul: E-W

♠ A J 9 4	♠ K 8 6 5 3	♠ 10 2
♥ A Q 7 4	♥ 10	♥ K J 9 8 3
♦ 9 5	♦ A Q 10 6 2	♦ 8 7 4 3
♣ 8 5 2	♣ K 4	♣ 7 6
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ Q 7	
	♥ 6 5 2	
	♦ K J	
	♣ A Q J 10 9 3	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
		1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♣
	Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♠
	Pass	4 ♣	Pass	5 ♣
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

• Two-Over-One Game Forcing lets each player show the hands distribution. South's 2♣ response forces the partnership to game, so they can go slowly until they discover the best place to play.

• With two five-card suits, North starts with the higher-ranking spades and rebids the lower-ranking diamonds. South could never rebid 3♣ if the pair did not play Two-Over-One. It would not be forcing. By repeating the second suit, North has shown 5-5 in the two suits.

• South now shows two-card spade support just in case North was 6-5. There is no way that North could think that South had three spades. With three spades, South would have supported on the second bid. North isn't anxious to play in a 5-2 spade fit with that weak suit. North cannot bid 3NT without a stopper in the only unbid suit. North's best choice is to show two-card club support. This bid should make South realize how short North is in hearts. North has shown five spades, five diamonds and now supported clubs. Heart losers can be ruffed in dummy so South bids 5♣.

• Every once in a while you do end up in five of a minor instead of 3NT, but North-South had a very good reason for avoiding 3NT. They knew their opponents held at least nine hearts between them, and neither North nor South had a heart stopper.

• West can see two aces for the defense and would like to find a third trick. West might try a trump lead since everyone at the table knows there is heart shortness in dummy. Some might lead the unsupported ♥A. We usually avoid leading an unsupported ace, but it's logical to deduce that the opponents do not have a heart stopper because they shied away from 3NT.

• It turns out that cashing both aces is a good idea. Otherwise, declarer can discard losers on dummy's diamonds to make an overtrick, but declarer must be careful to overtake the second diamond to reach dummy.

Deal 4

Dlr: East

Vul: Both

♠ 6 2	♠ J 7	♠ K Q 8 5 4
♥ A Q 8 6 4	♥ K 10 9 5	♥ J 7 3
♦ K 8 4	♦ 7 6 3 2	♦ A 5
♣ A K 9	♣ 10 5 3	♣ Q J 4
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A 10 9 3	
	♥ 2	
	♦ Q J 10 9	
	♣ 8 7 6 2	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
			1 ♠	Pass
	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

• West has a nice 17-point responding hand and wonders if there might be a slam. Playing Two-Over-One Game Forcing, there is no need to rush. West's 2♥ bid is a game force. It also promises five hearts. A two-level response in a minor might be made on a four-card suit but a 2♥ bid over 1♠ guarantees five hearts.

• Once West bids 2♥, the fit is found and East should raise hearts. East doesn't want to encourage West to move toward slam and uses Fast Arrival, bidding 4♥ immediately. West cannot see slam opposite a very minimum opener and passes.

• North might lead either minor. Leading the doubleton spade isn't wise. The opponents have bid that suit and it is usually best not to look for a ruff when you have trump length.

• Declarer's losers are one spade, one diamond and two hearts. Declarer makes 4♥ by ruffing the diamond loser in dummy.

Deal 5

Dlr: South
Vul: N-S

♠ Q 10 8 4	♠ 3	♠ J 9
♥ 9 7	♥ A K 6 5 3	♥ J 10 8 4 2
♦ J 10 9 6	♦ K 5	♦ A Q 8 2
♣ 8 7 3	♣ Q 10 6 4 2	♣ A 9
	♠ A K 7 6 5 2	
	♥ Q	
	♦ 7 4 3	
	♣ K J 5	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
				1 ♠
	Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠
	Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 ♦
	Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
	Pass			

- North has two five-card suits and follows the guideline to respond in the higher-ranking suit first.

- South's first rebid is easy – rebidding spades shows extra length. But South's next rebid is difficult. South cannot support partner's hearts and shouldn't rebid the six-card suit again. South could support clubs but 4♣ is past the preferred contract of 3NT. By the time your partnership has bid three suits, you really should have the remaining suit stopped to bid notrump. South has no diamond stopper. Without using any special conventions, South must choose one of several unattractive bids.

- Fourth Suit Forcing is the solution. When your side has bid three suits, the bid of the fourth suit does not promise anything in that suit; it simply asks partner to do something intelligent. Fourth Suit Forcing is game forcing.

- North's job now is to do something intelligent. North might rebid clubs; North should think about the best game contract. Very often, Fourth Suit Forcing is used to ask for a notrump stopper in the fourth suit. North has the diamond stopper and bids 3NT.

- 3NT makes, but it is scary for declarer since a 4-4 diamond split is needed on a diamond opening lead. Declarer might find some comfort in the fact that East led the ♦ 2. If that is fourth best, East has only four diamonds and the suit isn't as scary as it could be. The only way to get enough tricks is to promote clubs, and declarer should make that the first order of business.

- It's interesting to note that 3NT by South will not make because a diamond opening lead traps North's ♦ K. A 5♣ contract has play on a crossruff but the opponents get to overruff.

Deal 6

Dlr: West
Vul: E-W

♠ 6 5	♠ K Q 7	♠ 10 8 3
♥ K J 10 9 7	♥ 8 6 5 2	♥ A Q
♦ A Q 10 6 5	♦ 8 4 3	♦ K J
♣ A	♣ J 9 8	♣ K 7 5 4 3 2
	♠ A J 9 4 2	
	♥ 4 3	
	♦ 9 7 2	
	♣ Q 10 6	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠/3 ♣	Pass
	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
	4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

- E-W are searching for a fit. West bids showing the hand's distribution starting with the higher-ranking suit. Using Two-Over-One Game Forcing, East's 2♣ response is game forcing.

- East should not support hearts on the first rebid which would promise three of them. Any rebid is forcing. East might rebid 3♣ to show a six-card suit. Alternatively, East, who really doesn't want to make that club suit trump, could bid 2♠ as Fourth Suit Forcing to find out if West has a spade stopper for notrump. Even though East would like to get to 3NT, it's not wise to bid notrump without a stopper in the only unbid suit.

- Whichever bid East chooses, West rebids 3♦ without a spade stopper. East has two good hearts and can finally show that support without misleading partner into expecting more cards in the suit. Life doesn't always deal you eight-card fits. We occasionally have to play game with only a seven-card trump suit.

- North leads the ♠ K. Even without a natural spade lead, the auction calls for a spade lead. East-West seemed to struggle to find a place to play and it appears that they avoided notrump because of lack of a spade stopper.

- Declarer has more than enough tricks after gaining the lead. After losing two spades, declarer should draw trump, cash the ♦ K J and play a club to the ace to cash the remaining diamonds. On a non-spade lead, declarer can make six.

Deal 7
Dlr: North
Vul: Both

♠ J 10 9 4	♠ K 8	♠ Q 6 5 3
♥ K 7 6 4 3	♥ A 5 2	♥ Q J 10 8
♦ J 10	♦ A 9 8 7 3	♦ Q 6 2
♣ 7 2	♣ Q 6 4	♣ 8 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A 7 2	
	♥ 9	
	♦ K 5 4	
	♣ A K J 10 9 5	

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- South would like to invite slam if there is a club fit. North's 2NT shows balanced distribution. Since North had so much room to show a new suit on the two level, there probably is a club fit.

- Since 2♣ is game forcing, South can go slowly. If the only interest was in reaching game, South would simply bid 3NT. 3♣ expresses interest in slam. North's hand is minimum, but North has three clubs to the queen and aces and a king – all good stuff for slam. 3NT by North would discourage slam. A control bid showing an ace or 4♣ encourages partner's slam hopes. North's 3♦ bid shows a control for slam and South takes charge with Blackwood.

- While it's tempting to bid 6NT, it is very risky with South's singleton, so 6♣ is the best contract.

- West is likely to lead a safe top of sequence ♠J.

- Declarer can ruff a spade loser before pulling trump. If declarer forgets to do that, dummy's diamond suit will set up for a spade discard. 6NT will make unless the opening lead is a heart. East will be on lead against 6NT. East has a natural heart lead so 6NT should go down one.

Deal 8
Dlr: East
Vul: None

♠ A K 8 6 4	♠ 5 3	♠ J 2
♥ A K 5	♥ 9 2	♥ Q J 8 7 3
♦ 6 2	♦ A 10 8 5 3	♦ 7 4
♣ K J 3	♣ 10 9 7 2	♣ A Q 6 5
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ Q 10 9 7	
	♥ 10 6 4	
	♦ K Q J 9	
	♣ 8 4	

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
		Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

- East can respond 2♥ right away. East is a passed hand. A two-over-one response from a passed hand is not game forcing. 2♥ is not game forcing. It isn't even forcing!

- West has to leap to game because East-West are not in a game forcing auction, so 3♥ would be weaker than 4♥. West should not be thinking about slam. Opposite a passed hand, West's 19 points are not enough for slam. If East had bid 2♥ as an unpassed hand, it would show opening strength, and then West would have a right to be interested in slam.

- South leads the ♦K.

- Declarer will lose two diamonds and take the rest of the tricks as long as trumps are drawn early.

BERGEN RAISES

WHEN?

- After a 1♥ or 1♠ opening bid – major suit openings only.
- By an unpassed hand. Passed hands use Drury.
- Not after an overcall and not recommended after the opponents' takeout double.

WHO?

Responder uses Bergen Raises with a fit for opener's major.

- 2♥ (or 2♠) = 6 to 10 points and exactly three-card support.
- 3♥ (or 3♠) = 0 to 6 points and four-card support.
- 4♥ (or 4♠) = 0 to 6 or 7 points and five-card support (usually with other distribution like a singleton or void).
- 3♣ = 7 to 10 points and four-card support.*
- 3♦ = 10⁺ to 12 points and four-card (or longer) support – a limit raise.*
- 2NT = 13 or more points with four-card support and semi-balanced distribution. Use a splinter bid (jump one higher than a jump shift) with a singleton or void.

Jacoby 2NT and all of responder's three-level bids shown above are alertable.

*Note that 10 points can be treated as either a minimum or an invitational hand. If you have a good ten-point hand (10⁺; an eight-loser hand), treat it as a limit raise. With a bad ten-point hand, settle for the weaker raise. Also note that some players flip the meanings of these two bids. They use 3♣ to show the limit raise and 3♦ to show the 7 to 10 point raise.

WHY? – BENEFITS OF BERGEN RAISES

- Bergen Raises are preemptive and take up as much room as is reasonably safe with weak responding hands. You immediately bid to the level suggested by The Law of Total Tricks. This makes it difficult for the opponents to compete.
- Bergen Raises make it easy for partner to evaluate the hand in light of the size of your trump fit. Remember that we bid more aggressively with a big trump fit. When your hands fit well, you may make game on fewer than 26 points.

SHOWING GOOD HANDS WITH ONLY THREE-CARD SUPPORT

- Show a limit raise of 10⁺ to 12 points with only three trumps by making a forcing bid (often 1NT Forcing) first and then raising opener's major to the three level.
- Show a forcing raise with three-card support by making a forcing response and then raising partner's major on your rebid. (But, if you play Two-Over-One Game Forcing and your forcing bid was on the two level, you need not jump to game.)

DEFENDING AGAINST BERGEN RAISES

- Double the strong artificial limit raise (3♦) to direct a lead.
- Double a weak raise for takeout (raises to 3 of opener's major, 4 of opener's major or 3♣).

BERGEN RAISES

Deal 1

Dlr: North
Vul: None

♠ A Q J 10 8	♠ 9 3	♠ K 7 6 4
♥ 10	♥ K J 9 5 4	♥ A 8 3
♦ A 9 4 2	♦ K 8	♦ Q J 10
♣ 9 5 2	♣ A K Q 3	♣ 10 6 4
	♠ 5 2	
	♥ Q 7 6 2	
	♦ 7 6 5 3	
	♣ J 8 7	

The Bidding: W N E S

 ? 1♥ Pass 3♥

- South uses a preemptive jump raise to show four trumps and 0-6 points. South is too weak to make a single raise and would have to pass if North-South had not agreed to use preemptive jump raises.

- West wishes South had passed! It would be easy for West to overcall 1♠. But now West has to decide whether to overcall 3♠ or pass. Double would be for takeout, but overcalling this good major suit is a better choice than double. Unfortunately, either a double or an overcall shows a bit more strength than West has. To enter the bidding directly over a preempt, your hand should value to about 16 points. Because it is important for the player who is short in the opponents' suit to take action over a preempt, it's okay to include shortness points in that 16-point total. Even adding for the singleton heart, West cannot scrape up 16 points, so West might pass.

- 3♠ will make, losing three clubs and one diamond. But East-West should not be able to stop in 3♠ after South's preemptive jump raise. East has ten points and will raise a 3♠ overcall to 4♠.

- North can make 3♥. Losers are two spades, one heart and one diamond with a working finesse.

- East-West are headed for a minus score as soon as South makes the preemptive jump raise. If South passes or raises to 2♥, West can overcall. When East treats this very balanced 10-point hand as a single raise, East-West will be able to stop below game and get a plus score.

Deal 2

Dlr: East
Vul: N-S

♠ J 8 4 3	♠ 2	♠ A K 10 9 6 5
♥ 9 4	♥ A K Q 10	♥ J
♦ 10 7 6	♦ A 9 8 4 2	♦ K Q 5
♣ J 9 5 3	♣ A K Q	♣ 7 6 2
	♠ Q 7	
	♥ 8 7 6 5 3 2	
	♦ J 3	
	♣ 10 8 4	

The Bidding: W N E S

 3♠ Dbl 1♠ Pass

 4♠ Pass?

- West uses a preemptive Bergen Raise to 3♠ in an attempt to shut out the opponents.

- North has a very good hand and should not be shut out so easily. Doubles of weak Bergen Raises are for takeout. With a weak five-card minor and support for all unbid suits, a takeout double is a better choice than overcalling in diamonds.

- As East, can you imagine that it would be quite easy for the opponents to make a game? East-West have ten spades between them and should plan on winning one spade trick at best. East might get a couple of diamond tricks but that's it, and West hasn't promised much strength. At this vulnerability, East should consider sacrificing in 4♠. What makes this sacrifice safe? The Law of Total Tricks. East knows there is a ten-card fit and can compete for ten tricks by bidding 4♠.

- If forced to bid, South would be comfortable choosing hearts as trump, but will South bid over 4♠?

- In spades, losers are three clubs, one heart and two diamonds. Declarer's best play is to test clubs before finessing in diamonds. When the clubs split 3-3, a diamond loser can be discarded and it doesn't matter who has the ♦A. 4♠ is down two. East-West are not vulnerable, so they give North-South either 100 or 300 points, depending on whether they are doubled for penalty.

- In hearts, declarer can make 5♥ by ruffing a spade loser in dummy. Did East's sacrifice steal the hand?

Deal 3
Dlr: South
Vul: E-W

♠ 5	♠ 10 8 7 6	♠ K 3 2
♥ J 10 9 3	♥ Q 8 7 2	♥ A K 6 4
♦ K J 9 8	♦ 7 6 3	♦ Q 10
♣ J 9 5 4	♣ A 2	♣ 10 8 6 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A Q J 9 4	
	♥ 5	
	♦ A 5 4 2	
	♣ K Q 7	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
				1 ♠
	Pass	3 ♣	Pass	4 ♠
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

- Counting the doubleton, North has seven points. North's 3 ♣ Bergen Raise shows 7 to 10 points and four trumps. South has 17 points with nice distribution – a five-loser hand – and bids game.

- West is likely to lead the ♥J – top of a sequence.

- South's losers are one heart, one spade and three diamonds. One diamond can surely be ruffed in dummy. The spade finesse avoids a trump loser, so declarer should make 4 ♠. A better line of play that does not rely on the spade finesse working has declarer playing three rounds of clubs before trumps are drawn, discarding a diamond from dummy on the third club. Declarer can then play to ruff two diamond losers in dummy.

- If North-South did not use Bergen Raises, North would raise to 2 ♠. South makes a game try with a help suit bid of 3 ♦. North likes the fourth trump and the ♣A but North's diamond help is poor. North-South might not reach game. The Bergen raise let South know about the nine-card fit and made South like the hand enough to bid game.

Deal 4
Dlr: West
Vul: Both

♠ K Q 10	♠ 5 4 2	♠ 7 6
♥ A 8 7 5 4	♥ Q 10	♥ K J 9 3
♦ A 6 2	♦ Q J 10 7	♦ 9 8 4 3
♣ 5 3	♣ 10 6 4 2	♣ A 9 7
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A J 9 8 3	
	♥ 6 2	
	♦ K 5	
	♣ K Q J 8	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
	1 ♥	Pass	3 ♣	3 ♠?
	Pass	Pass	Pass	

- East shows 7 to 10 points and four hearts with the Bergen 3 ♣ response.

- West has a balanced minimum and should not be interested in game. Opener needs something extra to make game after a 3 ♣ raise. West plans on signing off in 3 ♥, but South might prevent that.

- South has a fairly nice hand and would like to bid. South is likely to bid 3 ♠, which should win the bidding.

- East-West have communicated their strength and distribution – they do not have the power for game or the extra distribution needed to bid game competitively. East-West should pass and hope to defeat 3 ♠. Even with a spade fit, North doesn't have much strength and 3 ♠ is too high. West might even make a matchpoint penalty double of 3 ♠. West can see four tricks in hand and hopes that partner's 7 to 10 points will produce the setting trick. If East-West can make 3 ♥ and 3 ♠ goes down only one, they have to double 3 ♠ to avoid getting a worse score. This is not such a big concern at IMPS or social bridge, but every point matters at duplicate.

- With nine trumps, we don't usually finesse for the missing queen, so West should not lose a heart. Declarer will lose one club, two diamonds and only one spade. 3 ♥ makes.

- South has to lose two spades, two hearts, one diamond and one club. Down two is not good at this vulnerability. East-West score 200 points, more than their partscore is worth. South players who bid 3 ♠ over East's Bergen Raise were unlucky to be playing against a pair that used Bergen Raises. Without Bergen raises, South would have been able to show this good hand with a 2 ♠ overcall. East would have competed to 3 ♥, but North-South would have stayed out of trouble and given up only 140 instead of 200 (or 500 if West doubled).

Deal 5

Dlr: North
Vul: N-S

♠ Q J 10 2	♠ A 9 3	♠ K 5
♥ 6	♥ A Q 10 9 4	♥ J 7 3
♦ A Q J 3	♦ K 7	♦ 10 8 6 5 4 2
♣ A 6 5 4	♣ 10 7 3	♣ K 8
	♠ 8 7 6 4	
	♥ K 8 5 2	
	♦ 9	
	♣ Q J 9 2	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
		1 ♥	Pass	3 ♣
	Dbl	3 ♥	?	

- South should use a Bergen 3 ♣ raise rather than a preemptive 3 ♥ raise. 3 ♣ shows 7 to 10 points including distribution. South's hand is worth about nine points when you count points for the singleton. Making the wrong four-card raise risks missing a game.
- Over either 3 ♥ or 3 ♣, West has a takeout double. Double of a weak raise is for takeout.
- North has a minimum opener and is not interested in game. With or without a double from West, North should sign off in 3 ♥.
- Over 3 ♥, East is off the hook and has to decide whether to bid or pass. A 4 ♦ bid should be construed as competitive and East should want to compete with nine points. The diamond suit isn't very good, but partner's double promised support.
- West should pass 4 ♦. West's double showed a pretty good hand, so bidding game would be up to partner. Bidding higher would be punishing East for competing.
- North loses two spades, two clubs and one diamond. 3 ♥ goes down one. Going down one isn't bad if North-South stole from the opponents.
- East loses one spade, one heart and one diamond. 4 ♦ makes with no overtricks.
- If North-South did not use Bergen Raises, South would raise to 2 ♥ and West would make a takeout double. When East bids 3 ♦, there is no danger of East-West getting too high. When South competes to 3 ♥, East can compete to 4 ♦ without showing extra values. Whether or not it happened at your table, a Bergen Raise gives North-South the best shot at making East-West go wrong.

Deal 6

Dlr: East
Vul: E-W

♠ K 9 8 4	♠ 10	♠ A Q J 7 6 2
♥ 8 7 6 2	♥ J 10 3	♥ K Q 5
♦ A K 8	♦ Q 6 5 4 2	♦ 3
♣ 7 2	♣ A Q 10 3	♣ 9 8 4
	♠ 5 3	
	♥ A 9 4	
	♦ J 10 9 7	
	♣ K J 6 5	

<i>The Bidding:</i>	W	N	E	S
			1 ♠	Pass
	3 ♦	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

- West has 11 total points and shows a limit raise with four trumps.
- Now East has to decide whether to go on to game. Points are minimal, but East has distribution which is valuable once partner shows a big trump fit. East bids 4 ♠.
- The Law of Total Tricks has nothing to do with East's decision to bid game. This is NOT a competitive auction. East has to make the decision whether East-West have enough power in either points or good-fitting distribution to make 4 ♠. A 3 ♠ bid says they don't and a 4 ♠ bid says they do.
- South leads the ♦ J, top of a sequence.
- East's losers are three clubs and two hearts. But dummy has only two clubs. One club loser can be ruffed there. East might finesse in hearts, hoping that the ♥ A is with North, but there is a better solution. Dummy has an extra diamond winner. East should use it wisely. There is no point in discarding a club that can be ruffed on it. Discard a heart instead and it doesn't matter who has the ♥ A.

Deal 7
 Dlr: South
 Vul: Both

♠ J 10 8 5		♠ 9 7 4
♥ Q 2		♥ 10 4
♦ 10 6 3		♦ A K J 9
♣ K J 8 4		♣ Q 9 6 5
	♠ A 6	
	♥ K J 8 6 5	
	♦ 7 4 2	
	♣ A 10 3	

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
			1 ♥
Pass	3 ♦	Dbl	3 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- North shows a limit raise with four trumps. Aggressive as we like to be with a good trump fit, South can find no reason to go on to game with this balanced minimum hand.
- East would dearly love a diamond opening lead and can get it by making a lead-directional double. Doubles of weak raises are for takeout, but North made a limit raise, not a weak raise, and we can go back to our usual policy where double of an artificial bid is lead-directional. This is a useful agreement to have even if you and your partner choose not to use Bergen Raises.
- When East makes a lead-directional double, West will lead the ♦3. Without the double, West will probably lead the ♠J.
- South's losers are three diamonds and two clubs. We don't usually plan on finessing for a missing queen with a nine-card trump fit, so South hopes that the ♥Q will fall and it does. One club loser can be ruffed in dummy to make 3 ♥.

Deal 8
 Dlr: West
 Vul: None

♠ 8 5 2		♠ A J 9 3
♥ Q 10 8		♥ A 6 4
♦ Q 9 4 3		♦ 10 8
♣ A Q 7		♣ J 10 5 3
	♠ 6	
	♥ J 9 5 2	
	♦ K J 7	
	♣ K 9 8 6 4	

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

- East shows a limit raise with four trumps. West has only 13 total points (12 HCP plus one for length), but opener usually accepts a four-card limit raise with an unbalanced minimum hand as long as the high cards don't appear to be wasted in short suits. West accepts partner's invitation to game.
- North has no clear opening lead and might lead the ♥8 or the ♦3 or even a trump.
- Declarer should delay drawing trump until two diamonds are ruffed in dummy. There is no danger of an overruff because the trump suit is so good that declarer can afford to use high spades in dummy for ruffing.
- An extra loser can be avoided on a spade opening lead. Declarer draws two rounds of trump and discards a diamond loser on dummy's ♠Q. Without a diamond lead, declarer can make 4 ♥. East's lead-directional double was certainly important. To make this bid, East had to understand that 3 ♦ was an artificial bid. Your opponents will alert when they use Bergen Raises, and you can ask the meaning of their bid at your turn to bid.