



Bidding Basics

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Opener's rebid after partner responds 1♦

After 20 months looking at opening bids and responses, we've now made it to the third bid of the auction. For now, we are examining only auctions where the opponents are silent (passing throughout).

This month, our auction starts:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
?	

Opener can't pass because the 1♦ bid is unlimited. (Responder could have 17 points if he's an unpassed hand. If responder had passed initially, the 1♦ response would be non-forcing.)

With his second bid, opener tries to show two things:

1. Strength – minimum, medium or maximum
2. Shape – balanced, a long suit, or multi-suited

Here is a run-through of what opener's rebids show:

1♥ or 1♠: Four cards in that major (with 4-4 in the majors, bid hearts first), but not a flat/notrump hand. In the modern style, after a 1♦ response, it is recommended that with a notrump (balanced) hand, opener skip over a four-card major. In other words, rebid 1NT with:

♠K J 7 6 ♥Q 10 3 2 ♦K J ♣A 6 4

or rebid 2NT with:

♠A J ♥K Q 8 7 ♦K 10 3 ♣A J 3 2.

Opener shows the four-card major only without notrump shape. For example, opener should bid 1♠ at his

second turn with:

♠A Q 3 2 ♥K 8 6 ♦4 ♣K 10 8 7 4,
or 1♥ holding:

♠8 ♥K Q 3 2 ♦8 7 ♣A Q 9 7 6 2.

1NT: Any balanced 12-14 HCP hand. Opener could easily have a four-card major(s). The 1NT rebid does not promise stoppers in all suits. It simply means: "I would have opened 1NT, but I don't have 15-17 points. I have 12-14."

Rebid 1NT with:

♠K Q 8 5 ♥A J 5 2 ♦K 2 ♣9 6 5

or

♠10 7 6 ♥8 5 2 ♦A K 2 ♣A Q 7 6.

This is all based on the assumption that the player who responded 1♦ won't have a four-card major (or will be strong enough to take another bid and show it later in the auction).

2♣: Six or more clubs and a minimum hand (roughly 11-15 counting useful distribution). No four-card major. Rebid 2♣ with:

♠K 9 6 ♥4 ♦Q 8 5 ♣A Q J 7 5 2

or

♠A J 2 ♥K Q 3 ♦3 ♣K 10 9 7 6 5.

Do not make the common error of repeating a five-card club suit. With:

♠K J 2 ♥Q 7 6 ♦J 2 ♣A J 10 8 7,

rebid 1NT.

2♦: Four-card diamond support and a minimum (this rarely occurs).

Maybe something like:

♠9 8 ♥A 2 ♦K 10 7 6 ♣A J 10 3 2.

2♥/2♠: Four-card suit and a very strong hand (roughly 19-plus counting useful distribution). This promises an unbalanced hand (with a balanced strong hand, the rebid would be 2NT as below) and is forcing to game.

For example, bid 2♠ with:

♠A Q 6 5 ♥2 ♦A 5 ♣A K J 8 7 6
or 2♥ with:

♠— ♥A Q J 2 ♦A 9 8 ♣A Q 10 7 6 2.

This rebid is called a "jumpshift." When opener skips a level and changes to a new suit, it is forcing to game.

2NT: 18-19 balanced (says nothing about stoppers and could have four-card majors). This just means you would have opened 1NT if you had 15-17, but you have 18-19. It is not forcing (responder can pass with a dead minimum). Examples:

♠A Q 2 ♥K Q 4 ♦A K J ♣8 6 5 4

♠K J 4 2 ♥K 2 ♦K 8 6 ♣A K Q 2.

3♣: Six or more clubs and a medium hand (roughly 16-18 counting useful distribution). No four-card major. Rebid 3♣ with:

♠A 7 6 ♥3 ♦A 7 6 ♣A Q J 10 5 4

or

♠A 7 5 ♥A J ♦2 ♣A Q 10 9 7 6 3.

3♦: 4-card diamond support and a medium hand (this rarely occurs). Maybe something like:

♠A 7 6 ♥2 ♦A Q 5 4 ♣A K 7 6 2.

3♥/3♠: Don't make these bids. There is no need to jumpshift and ➤

reverse.

3NT: Because a 2NT rebid shows 18–19, and a 2NT opener shows 20–21, this bid doesn't make sense with a balanced hand. Therefore, it is defined as a very good trick-taking hand (long clubs and stoppers in the unbid suits), something like:

♠K 2 ♥A J ♦7 2 ♣A K Q 10 8 6 2.

In practice, it often means "I have 19 balanced, and I didn't trust my partner to know that 2NT shows such a hand."

4♣ or higher: Don't make these bids.

BIDDING BASICS QUIZ

What is opener's rebid on this auction:

<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>
1♣	1♦
?	

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

1. 1NT. A balanced 12–14 (don't rebid the five-card club suit).
2. 2♣. A minimum hand with six or more clubs.
3. 1♠. Four spades (not balanced, wide point range).
4. 2♦. Four-card support and a minimum.
5. 1♥. Show four-card majors up the line with an unbalanced hand.
6. 2NT. 18–19 balanced (with or without a four-card major).
7. 2♥. Game-forcing natural jumpshift (unbalanced hand).
8. 3NT. Strong hand with very good, long clubs and stoppers in the majors. ■

Handz

From the Center for Bridge Education

\$29.95 plus shipping, game set

Shortcut to fun

Bridge teachers have long known that too many potential players are lost to the game's steep learning curve, which can make beginning lessons seem like all work and no play. There are lots of ideas about how to make learning the game more fun, but the complexity of even basic bidding remains the elephant in the room. How do you get around it?

With the game of Handz, the Center for Bridge Education has a way. It's not bridge per se, but an easier-to-learn game that introduces the fun of bridge and many of its strategic concepts without the mess of bidding. Since a previous article about Handz (July 2016), the game has been refined and made available to order on the CBE website. An online version is still in the works.

The key to eliminating the hard parts of bridge for Handz is the game's fact sheets. Each player has an erasable information card with spaces for players to write their number of cards in each suit and number of high-card points (the lowest levels use a different evaluation method). These fact sheets are displayed on the table for the other players to see while the cards in their hands remain hidden.

With the hurdle of communicating one's strength and distribution gone, the challenge becomes how to make use of that information. A rudimentary auction is used to arrive quickly at a contract, a shortcut to starting the play – and starting the fun.

The early levels introduce one complexity at a time, mainly pertaining to scoring (game bonuses, majors vs. minors vs. notrump, vulnerability). With little to no instruction, players can decide for themselves when they want to progress to the next level. In later levels, the reliance on fact sheets is reduced as revealing them becomes optional, and further rule changes reward communicating through bidding over revealing. The process essentially incentivizes learning bridge while allowing players to self-select if and when they want to learn more.

CBE has had success with the game with adults and children as young as 7. A field test at ACBL Headquarters corroborated that the game is easy to pick up and begin playing without a lot of explanation.

Available at center4bridge.org.