

REBIDS BY RESPONDER

See section 4-5 for a discussion of splinter rebids.

Opener Has Rebid 1NT

A 2♣ rebid by responder is artificial, forcing. See section 4-9, Checkback Stayman by Responder.

Reverses by an unpassed hand are forcing for one round, but either partner can pass a discouraging bid on the next round:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
1NT	2♠ - forcing
2NT/3♣/3♥	- not forcing
3♦/3♠	- forcing
4♠	- good spades, good hand, heart fit

Responder may not pass a bid of the fourth suit (diamonds, above), or a raise of his suit. Responder's ruffing values in a 4-4 fit would automatically turn an invitational hand into a game-going hand. If opener makes an "unnecessary" jump raise to game in spades, he is implying very good spades, good clubs, and probably a heart fit. With high cards in the bid suits, he is probably weak in diamonds: ♠KQ32 ♥J94 ♦632 ♣AK6 Yes, the 1NT rebid is correct. A three-card club opener must rebid 1NT if he doesn't raise a one-level response. Responder can picture just this sort of hand for opener, since the only reason for not rebidding 1♠ with good spades is a 4-3-3-3 hand.

If responder raises opener after reversing, that is forcing:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
1NT	2♠
2NT	3♣ - forcing
	3♥ - not forcing (implying 4=6 in spades-hearts)

With only invitational strength for a club raise, responder must bid 2♣ (Checkback Stayman) over 1NT, then 2♠, and then make the invitation after bidding 2♠. If opener had rebid 2♣ instead of 1NT, responder's raise would also be forcing. He must therefore just bid 3♣ instead of 2♠ with a hand such as ♠A1054 ♥KJ763 ♦5 ♣Q86

Any other bid at the two level is weak, even in a new suit:

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
1NT	2♣ - Checkback Stayman
	2♦/2♥/2♠ - are weak bids

The 2♥ preference denies adequate trump support for hearts, promises five spades and usually includes a minor suit singleton. Opener can go back to spades with three spades and four hearts. With a good heart

raise, or only four spades, responder must not use this sequence. He must either raise hearts immediately or pass 1NT.

All jumps to three in a suit by an unpassed hand are forcing. To invite game, bid 2♣ (Checkback Stayman), then make the invitation.

A raise of 1NT to 2NT shows 11-12 HCP, counting a good suit as a point, and upgrading any honor(s) in opener's suit.

Opener Has Rebid 2NT (Non-Jump)

-- Opener's 2NT rebid after a two-over-one response is not forcing. If responder rebids his suit, that is a warning that his suit will not run unless opener has a fit (and that he had a weakish two-over-one response). Any other suit rebid by responder is forcing:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♦
2NT	3♦ - weak, long non-solid suit
	3♣/3♥/3♠/4♦ - forcing
	4♣ - Gerber
	4♥ - splinter, long diamonds, slam interest
	4♠ - strong spades, slam interest
	4NT - natural, invitational

See section 4-5, Splinter Bids by Responder. The 4♠ bid implies good diamonds and spades, with weakness in clubs and hearts. The 4♥ bid implies a hand that was not quite good enough for a 3♦ response on the first round: ♠Q2 ♥7 ♦KQJ7642 ♣A65. Opener signs off with 4NT when holding secondary strength in hearts

-- When opener bids 2NT after a raise, responder can pass with a minimum hand and a tolerance for notrump, or can raise to 3NT. With four-card support for opener's major he will generally sign off at the three level with a minimum hand, or bid game with a maximum. With four-card support for opener's minor, he may choose to remain in notrump with a balanced hand, either passing 2NT or raising to 3NT. A new suit at the three level is a weak signoff, usually showing six cards if it's a minor, five cards if the suit is hearts.

When opener rebids 2NT after a spade raise, a jump to 4♥ is natural, not a splinter bid:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♠
2NT	Pass - weak raise, three spades
	3♣/3♦ - weak raise, three spades, 5 or 6-card suit
	3♥ - weak raise, three spades, 5 or 6 hearts
	3♠ - weak raise, four spades
	3NT - good raise, three spades
	4♥ - good raise, three spades, 5 or 6 hearts

A simple raise hand would hardly have strength for splinter bid over the 2NT rebid. Note that after raising, new suits by responder are not forcing.

Opener Has Jumped to 2NT

Responder should not pass unless he is ashamed of his first response and thinks 2NT is the safest spot. See Stoplight, section 4-12.

4NT is a natural raise, Boland (section 5-6) applies.

A jump to 5♣ is the Miller convention (section 5-7).

A jump rebid in a new suit other than clubs or spades is a splinter bid. See section 4-5, Splinter Rebids by Responder.

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
2NT	4♥ - splinter bid
	4♣ - Gerber
	4♠ - mild notrump invitation
	4NT - stronger notrump slam try

The 4♠ notrump slam try implies that responder needs a good three-card fit (Qxx or better) in his diamond suit to make it useful for a notrump slam. Otherwise responder would bid 4NT to try for slam.

Opener Has Jumped to 3NT

4NT is a natural raise, Boland (section 5-6) applies.

A jump to 5♣ is the Miller convention (section 5-7).

Responder has a weak hand in this auction:

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
3NT	4♥

This is the weak hand previously described: ♠Q8743 ♥986 ♦3 ♣K853. With a hand that was too good for a 2♥ raise, responder must find another bid at this point because slam would be possible. If opener has an unlikely 2=4=4=3 hand, he must pass or bid 4♠. The 4♥ bid is not forcing, of course, nor is this 4♥ bid:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♠
3NT	4♥ - natural, not Super Gerber
	4♦ - natural
	4♣ - Gerber

Although 4♥ is not forcing, responder should have a hand at least as good as ♠AJ763 ♥K9873 ♦42 ♣3, because opener is allowed to bid higher with a good fit. With a weaker hand, responder should just pass 3NT and hope for the best. This auction is an exception to the general rules that (1) a bid of the lowest unbid suit other than clubs is Super Gerber (see section 6-10), and (2) a non-jump 4♣ bid is natural.

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
3NT	4♣/4♥ - natural
	4♦ - Super Gerber
	4♠ - artificial notrump raise
	4NT - notrump raise

The 4♠ notrump raise implies that responder's hearts need a good fit to be useful for slam (e.g., five cards to only one of the top four honors). This may help opener in deciding whether to go past 4NT.

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♥
3NT	4♣/4♦ - natural, forcing
	4♥ - natural, weak, long suit
	4♠ - super Gerber

Super Gerber takes preference over the artificial 4♠ notrump raise.

Opener Has Raised

A return to opener's first suit is forcing for one round, unless the raise was made over a double:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
2♠	3♣ - forcing, game try at least

Don't make a 1♥ or 1♠ response with a weak major and a limit raise sort of hand. Just respond 3♣ originally or you may find yourself in a bad 4-3 spade contract. Also see section 3-15, Two-For-One Responses. In one bid they describe a hand with a four-card major and a limit raise for opener's minor.

South	West	North	East
1♣	Dbl	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣ - not forcing, invitational	

The 3♣ bid does not indicate a spade psych, only that North has a four-card spade suit. North has a good hand, but not a game-going hand in view of the failure to redouble. South can pass with three spades and nothing extra. North could show this hand in one bid if using 2-for-1 responses.

Opener Has Changed Suits Minimally

-- When the original response was 1NT, a new suit by responder is a signoff if the suit is lower ranking than opener's first suit:

Opener	Responder
1♠	1NT
2♦	2♥/3♣ - signoff, long suit

If the new suit bid is higher ranking than opener's first suit, the bid shows strength in the suit and a raise of opener's second suit:

Opener	Responder
1♥	1NT
2♦	2♠ - good spade strength, good diamonds

Responder has values to raise opener's second suit. The 2♠ bid may change opener's mind about playing notrump.

Also see section 4-8, Checkback Stayman by Opener.

-- When the original response was a suit response and opener's rebid is a new suit at the one level, or a lower ranking suit at the two level (not a reverse), responder's rebid of the same suit is a weak signoff even after a two-over-one response:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♦
2♥	3♦ - weak, not encouraging

A jump preference is invitational, not forcing, even by a two-over-one responder:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♦
2♥	3♠ - invitational, not forcing

A 2♠ bid would be a preference, not a raise, equivalent to passing 2♥. Accordingly, the 3♠ bid is simply a raise, not forcing. If responder has three-card support and wants to force in spades, he must bid 3♣ (Fourth Suit Artificial, see section 4-10) and then raise. With four-card support he must jump to 4♠, a sequence that implies 5-4-2-2 with strength concentrated in the two suits: ♠KQ42 ♥95 ♦AQJ76 ♣32. With scattered strength responder would raise spades immediately instead of bidding 2♦.

As said before, a simple preference in a major denies adequate trump support:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♣
2♥	2♠ - weak preference

The 2♠ preference is equivalent to passing 2♥ when hearts are preferred but cannot be raised. Responder has ♠J3 ♥4 ♦Q1087 ♣AJ7632. With adequate trump support for spades and a weak hand, the response is 2♠, not 2♣. With an invitational hand, the rebid is 3♠, not 2♠. A bid of the fourth suit is Fourth Suit Artificial (section 4-10).

A raise of opener's second suit from one to two shows 7-10 points, counting distribution. Pass with less. A jump to three is invitational:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
1♠	2♠ - 7 to 10 points
	3♠ - invitational, 11-12 points

-- When the original response was a raise, opener's new suit bid is forcing. Responder is expected to clarify his raise in some way. If the raised suit is a major, bidding something else tends to show an original three-card raise. Responder must not go beyond three of the raised suit without extra values:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♠
3♣	3♦/3♥ - five or six cards, minimum spade raise, not forcing
	3♠ - signoff, weak
	3NT - good raise, red strength
	4♠ - good raise

In this case responder can feel free to jump to 4♠ with only three-card support, since opener must have five spades in view of the club rebid.. The 3NT bid is unlikely, perhaps based on a hand like ♠Q87 ♥QJ108 ♦QJ108 ♣J2. Splinter rebids by responder are discussed in section 4-5.

Opener Has Rebid a Suit Minimally

Responder's rebid of the same suit is a weak signoff at matchpoint scoring. In a IMP match it is better to pass a hopeless hand than to "rescue" partner, so responder's rebid of the same suit is mildly encouraging. ("Mildly," since a jump rebid in the same suit is not forcing.)

A reverse by responder is forcing unless she is a passed hand. Other new suit rebids are also forcing by an unpassed hand, except for 2♥:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
2♣	2♦ - forcing
	2♥ - not forcing

At matchpoint scoring the 2♥ bid might be a stretch. At IMP scoring it has to be regarded as invitational, so responder must pass 2♣ with a weak 5-5 in the majors.

If responder raises opener's suit to the three level after reversing, that is not quite forcing if opener has failed to support one of responder's suits:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♥
2♦	2♠
2NT	3♦ - semi-forcing - ♠AJ76 ♥KJ532 ♦Q76 ♣4
	4♦ - forcing

However:

Opener	Responder
1♦	2♣
2♦	2♠
3♣	3♦ - forcing, in view of the two-over-one response

Opener Has Jumped in the Same Suit

A jump rebid in the same suit is not forcing, even after a two-over-one response. Responder bids again, however, unless she is ashamed of her first bid and is short in opener's suit.

If responder does not pass this jump, the partnership is usually committed to game, although responder might pass a third bid in the same suit:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
3♣	3♠ - forcing!
4♣	Pass is permitted

Responder has ♠KJ976 ♥5432 ♦Q87 ♣6 and elects to pass 4♣. He rightly bid 3♠ after his legitimate 1♠ response, because opener could have spade support. When this doesn't eventuate, he gives up.

Opener Has Reversed

-- After a 1NT response, reverses are not forcing, nor do they promise another bid, and responder's preference bid of opener's first suit is weak. "A preference is not a raise," as is a 2NT bid, which is not forcing. However, a raise of opener's second suit is forcing and shows four-card support. With a weak hand responder can pass instead of raising.

Opener	Responder
1♣	1NT
2♥	2NT/3♣ - not forcing, weak
	2♠ - maximum, spades stopped but not diamonds
	3♦ - maximum, diamonds stopped but not spades
	3♥ - forcing (pass 2♥ with four hearts and a very weak hand)
	3NT - maximum, spades and diamonds stopped

-- After a one-over-one response, reverses are forcing only when responder has bid a five-card or longer suit. Opener can pass responder's discouraging rebid of 2NT or return to opener's first suit, both of which show weakness and deny five cards in the original response suit. Having responded 1♠ to 1♣ with 5-5 in the majors, responder must rebid 2♠, not 2♥ (which would deny five spades), when opener reverses with 2♦. A later bid in the fourth suit, hearts in this case, shows five cards in the suit.

A bid of the fourth suit denies five cards in the major and shows a good raise of opener's first suit. Simply bidding opener's first suit is therefore a weak signoff, as is a 2NT bid. However, a delayed bid in the fourth suit after showing five cards in the major shows five cards in that suit.

A raise of reverser's second suit is forcing, showing four-card support.

Responder's jump rebid in the same suit is forcing to game, showing a fairly solid six-card or longer suit. Opener might raise with a singleton honor if he has no better bid.

There are four possible reverse bids after a 1/1 response in a suit.

(1)	Opener	Responder
	1♣	1♠
	2♦	2♥ - good club raise, denies five spades
		2♠ - five spades
		2NT/3♣ - weak, not invitational, not forcing
		3♦ - forcing, 4+ card support (pass with a very weak hand)
		3NT - 8-10 HCP
		4NT - 11+ HCP

If opener rebids 3♣ after responder shows a good club raise, he has a minimum reverse and responder can pass. With more than a minimum he should find another bid. Responder, of course, can continue the bidding if he thinks game or slam is promising, and opener's response to 2♥ will help in that effort.

(2)	Opener	Responder
	1♣	1♥
	2♦	2♠ - good club raise, denies five hearts
		2NT/3♣ - weak, not invitational, not forcing
		3♦ - forcing
		3♥ - forcing

Lacking five cards in hearts and with no support for either of opener's suits, responder must have four spades when he bids 2NT. If opener has a little something in spades, maybe just a high singleton honor, notrump should be a good contract.

(3)	Opener	Responder
	1♣	1♠
	2♥	3♦ - good club raise, denies five spades

Since this means getting past 3♣, a "good raise" should be a little stronger and an immediate club preference may not be extremely weak.

(4)	Opener	Responder
	1♦	1♠
	2♥	3♣ - good diamond raise, denies five spades

Suppose responder, having rebid his suit, doesn't pass opener's third bid. Usually his next bid promises nothing extra:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
2♦	2♥ - five or more hearts
2♠	2NT/3♣ are both weak, not forcing
	3♦ is weak but promises four cards
	3♥ - long hearts, weak hand, not forcing
	3♠ asks opener to bid 3NT

The weak bids are not forcing. Opener's 2♠ bid implies a 3-1-4-5 shape with perhaps Axx in spades (wanting responder to bid notrump in case he has the queen or jack). Responder raises spades instead of bidding notrump when he likes notrump but has no desire to play the hand (e.g., with J109 in spades).

If opener has shown three-card support for responder's proclaimed five-card suit, then responder's bid in any other suit or notrump is forcing:

-- After a two-over-one response, reverses are forcing, but may not be as strong as a reverse following a one-over-one response. Opener will not pass responder's, 2NT rebid, rebid of his suit, or raise of opener's second suit, but may pass a preference for his first suit if it is diamonds. As always, a bid of the fourth suit shows a good raise of opener's first suit. Responder must rebid his suit if it has five cards or more.

Opener	Responder
1♦	2♣
2♥	2♠ - good diamond raise (fourth suit), only four clubs
	2NT - forcing
	3♣ - forcing, five or more clubs
	3♦ - weak preference, not forcing
	3♥ - forcing
	3♠ - spade suit, forcing
	4♣ - forcing

The 3♦ bid is a weak preference, despite the two-over-one response: ♠843 ♥5 ♦J83 ♣AQJ976.

A heart preference in the following auction is forcing, however.

Opener	Responder
1♥	2♣/2♦
2♠	3♥ - forcing
	4♥ - good hearts, good minor, maybe a spade honor

With a weak hand responder presumably would have raised hearts on the first round, so both heart rebids imply a hand that was too good for that action.

Opener Has Escalated

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♦
3♣ - forcing	

A new suit at the three level is not only forcing, but promises another bid if responder makes a minimum call (such as 3♠ or 3♦, in this auction). This is called an “escalation” because opener has gone to the three level. If the response was one-over-one, however, and the three-level bid arises because of an opposing bid, the new suit is forcing only if it is a reverse:

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♥
3♣ - not forcing			

South needs a fairly good hand to bid at the three level, but may have bid only 2♣ if East had passed. It is not treated as an escalation. Accordingly, a 3♠ bid by North at this point could be passed.

A reverse at the three level calls for the usual reverse understandings:

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♠	2♥
3♦ - forcing			

Presumably South would have reversed over the 1♠ bid, so the usual reverse understandings apply. North must bid 3♠ (forcing) with five or more, without which 4♣ is a weak preference, 3♥ (fourth suit) is a good club raise, and 4♦ is forcing (since responder could pass with four and a very weak hand).

Opener Has Made a Jump Shift

A jump shift (jump in a new suit) by opener is forcing to game.

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠/1NT
3♦ - game-forcing	

A 3♥ bid by responder may be a mark-time bid with aa

Opener Has Raised a Strong Jump Takeout

Opener	Responder
1♠	3♣
4♣	4♠

The 4♠ bid is not quite forcing. Responder has an absolute minimum for the jump takeout, or she would have found some other call. Her hand: ♠AQJ ♥K6 ♦976 ♣AQ983 Opener can pass with a minimum hand such as ♠K10876 ♥54 ♦AK ♣J1074. If the K♦ and J♣ were interchanged, however, she would have enough

of a fit to cue bid 5♦, whereupon responder can bid 6♣ (both to protect the king of hearts from the opening lead and to suggest a safer slam).

Opener Has Passed

When opener has passed over an intervening bid, a new suit bid at the one level is not forcing:

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♦	1♥
Pass	Pass	1♠	- not forcing

This is also true at the two level if responder has not reversed:

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♠	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♥	- not forcing
		3♥	- one-round force

After the jump rebid, if opener can only bid 3♠ or 4♣, responder might pass.

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♥	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♠	- one-round force (reverse)