



H S G T

Help Suit Game Try

Think about an auction where you open 1H and partner responds 2H. Or an auction that goes 1S --> 2S. You have an 8+ card trump fit.

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Responses by Opener

Minimum Opener	With 12-15 points, opener passes . Partner has 6-9 points so game is unlikely. (with 10+ points responder would make a different bid, and responder is unlikely to have four card support if you are playing any kind of Bergen)
Maximum Opener	If opener has 19-21 points, game is a high probability. Don't invite. Bid game .
Intermediate Hand:	Holding 16-18 points, opener traditionally invited game by bidding 3 of the agreed major. But...this option is not very sophisticated, cold games are missed and hands are overbid.

A Better System: HSGT

Help Suit Game Try is an advanced way of evaluating "tweener" hands. This system can use four bids that are bypassed in the simple rebidding of the agreed major. Because there are many types of HSGT (long suit, shortness, asking for shortness, etc) you need to have a clear partnership agreement of what system you are using.

Here is a simple approach I recommend:

- Bid any suit below 3 of the agreed major to ask partner if he can provide "help" in that suit. Help generally means honors to fill holes.
- Three of the agreed major asks responder to evaluate the quality (honors) of his trump suit holdings.
- 2 NT tells partner you have 18 points and a balanced hand (5-3-3-2 shape) without a clear suit that needs help.

Responder now has a judgement call. Is responder at the top of his range? With something like **K J x x** in the help suit and 8 points, responder bids game. Does responder have good trump honors?

1

K Q T x x x
K Q 8
A x x
x

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1S	Pass	2S
Pass	3D alert!	Pass	4S

x x x x
x x
K Q J x
x x x

I am throwing you a curve here. North does not have 16-18 HCPs but does have one extra trump and a singleton. With a little help from partner, North should be happy to be in game. Note, he needs help in Diamonds, not Hearts. **HSGT is alertable**. If opener just invited with the traditional 3H, responder would probably pass with this hand....which illustrates the value of HSGT.

# 2	J x x x x A K Q x A K x x	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
			1S	Pass	2S
		Pass	3S	Pass	4S

K Q x x
x x x
Q x x
x x x

North has 17 HCPs and his side suits are very good. But that trump suit is very ratty. In HSGT, by raising 3S, opener suggests the trump suit is shaky and asks if responder has quality honors. South can certainly say yes and bid game.

# 3	x x A K Q T x Q x A J T x	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
			1H	Pass	2H
		Pass	3C Alert!	Pass	3D
		Pass	?		

x x
J x x
A K T x x x
x x

North has 16 HCPs and can ask about help in clubs. South can't help in clubs, but should suggest that he has a good diamond suit and, even if partner does not go to game, might press on. For example, Diamonds might run with a safety play and the Jack of Hearts might be an entry. [no need for a safety play as the cards lie]

The bidding goes: 1H pass 2H pass. What can Opener do with these hands?

A	B	C	D
A Q 7 4	K 5	8 3	6 4
A Q J 4 3	K Q J 6 3	K J 9 7 4 3	Q T 8 6 4 2
8 3	Q J 2	A	A K
K 8	A Q 8	A J 4 2	K Q 8

After 1H--->2H, partner bids 3D. How do you respond?

E	F	G	H
Q J 6	J T 7 4	A T 8	9 3 2
K 8 4	Q T 5	K Q 5 2	J 8 4 2
9 5 2	K Q 8 6	T 9	4
Q 8 4 2	7 2	T 8 5 2	A K J T 8

- A You have 16 hcpts and if partner has honors in Spades, game might be attractive!
- B Bid 2NT, showing 18 points and no help suit. If partner is at the top of his range he should bid game.
- C Very distributional hand with an extra trump, does partner have some help. Ask him, bid 3C.
- D Here is a 5 LTC hand. If partner has trump honors, game might work. Bid 3H.
- E No help, minimal hand. Stop at 3H!
- F Great help in Diamonds. Bid game.
- G I guess you don't play Bergen...but with 9 pts, a doubleton, and good intermediates, bid game.
- H You forgot about Bergen, but that extra trump and a good five card suit says bid game.