

BIDDING CONVERSATIONS - WEEK 1
INTRODUCTION AND BASIC BIDDING REVIEW

LAST REVISED ON SEPTEMBER 24, 2021
COPYRIGHT (C) 2010-2021 BY DAVID L. MARCH

BIDDING CONVERSATIONS

Bidding is a conversation between partners in which each player's bid attempts to describe their hand to their partner (and their opponents) using just one or two words from the fifteen words in the bidding language:

*one, two, three, four, five, six, seven,
clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades, no-trump,
pass, double, redouble*

Because the bidding vocabulary is limited, the partnership must agree in advance on the meaning of each bid that is made during the conversation. For example, suppose your partnership has agreed to play Standard American with Five Card Majors. If your partner opens the bidding with a natural **1♥**, your partner is telling you:

"I have 13-21 declarer points, at least five hearts, and less than five spades. Since I have limited the strength of my hand, I invite you to continue this conversation if you have the strength and shape to respond."

Then by partnership agreement, if you respond a natural **2♦**, you are telling your partner:

"I have at least 10 declarer points, at least four diamonds and may or may not have support for your hearts. Since bidding a new suit does not limit the strength of my hand, I force you to continue this conversation."

Although bridge has rules that tell you how to bid, it does not have any rules that tell you what to bid or why you should make a specific bid. Each partnership must decide how to translate a one or two word bid into a description of the strength and shape of the hand. Fortunately experience has shown that there are *bidding guidelines* that a partnership can use which often, **but not always**, point the way to the best contract and the largest score.

A specific set of related bidding guidelines is called a *bidding system*. To have a successful bidding conversation:

**the partners must agree on a bidding system
and both partners
must understand the guidelines in their bidding system.**

COURSE BIDDING SYSTEM

The examples, exercises, and answers that you will see in this course are based on a variation of the *Standard American* bidding system that includes the following partnership agreements and conventions. The conventions that we will study in detail are highlighted in gray.

- ✓ *Opening Bids*: Better of Minors, Five Card Majors, **Strong Two Clubs**, **Weak Twos** and **Preemptive Threes**.
- ✓ *Responding to No Trump Opening Bids*: **Major Suit Stayman**, **Major Suit Transfers** and **Quantitative 4NT**.
- ✓ *Responding to Suit Opening Bids*: Strong Jump Shifts, **Limit Raise** and **Jacoby Two No Trump**.
- ✓ *Rebids by Opener*: **Reverses** and **Help Suit Game Try**.
- ✓ *Confirming a Slam*: **Gerber** and **Blackwood**.
- ✓ *Competitive Bids*: Simple Overcalls, **Weak Jump Overcalls**, Takeout Doubles and Negative Doubles

We will assume that your partnership and your opponents' partnership follows this variation of *Standard American*.

Bids in *Standard American* communicate information about the points in the hand (the hand's *strength*) and the length of one or more suits in the hand (the hand's *shape*).

Strength is evaluated by assigning points:

- **High Card Points (HCP)**: A = 4, K = 3, Q = 2, J = 1.
- **Long Suit Distribution Points (LSP)**: 5 Card = 1, 6 Card = 2, 7 Card = 3.
- **Short Suit Distribution Points (SSP)**: Doubleton = 1, Singleton = 3, Void = 5.

Use common sense when counting high card points. An Ace is always worth four high card points but a singleton King is not worth three high card points unless it is in partner's suit.

There are three combinations of these point values:

- **High Card Points**: Use when driving toward a no trump contract.
- **Declarer Points (high card + long suit)**: Use when driving toward a suit contract and you will be the declarer.
- **Dummy Points (high card + short suit)**: Use when you are driving toward a suit contract and you will be the dummy with at least three card support for partner's trump suit.

Use the point count system to start the evaluation of your hand but alter the evaluation with every bid, including passes.

BIDDING CONVENTIONS

Many bridge hands are difficult to describe using agreements based on natural bids. There are hands with a few points, hands with many points, hands with short suits, hands with long suits, and so on. Over the years, bridge experts have developed *bidding conventions* that specify agreements and guidelines for **a series of related bids** that provide a way for a partnership to bid some of these hands effectively.

A bidding convention usually starts with or incorporates at least one *artificial bid*. For example, if your partnership has agreed to incorporate the *Stayman Convention* into your bidding conversations, then if you open **1NT** and your partner responds **2♣**, your partner is telling you:

"I have at least 8 high card points and at least one four card major. Since we agreed to use *Stayman* my *artificial unlimited strength* response forces you to **either bid a four-card major or bid an artificial 2♦** if you do not have a four-card major."

Since it is usually easier to score a game bonus by bidding three no trump or four in a major suit, many conventions are designed to help a partnership explore for an eight-card major suit trump fit.

Some bidding conventions are rarely encountered, and therefore used only by very advanced players. However some conventions are quite commonly encountered, and should be in the repertoire of ordinary players. Knowing them makes playing bridge more satisfying as well as more challenging.

A good convention has three attributes:

✓ **Effective**

The convention greatly improves the partnership's bidding.

✓ **Cost-Effective**

The results are worth sacrificing the natural bid(s) the partnership must give up in order to use the convention.

✓ **Simple**

It is simple enough for both partners to remember in the heat of bridge competition.

The conventions we will use in this course have these attributes. We will concentrate on the basics of each convention — those which ordinary players can employ with benefit to their game. Most conventions have refinements which can be complex and difficult to remember. We will mention these refinements so your partnership will be aware that they exist and can incorporate them into your bidding system if you wish.

BIDDING CONCEPTS AND TERMS

There are a number of terms that can be used to describe the attributes of a bid.

NATURAL OR ARTIFICIAL SHAPE

- **Natural Bid** → Specifies a length for the suit that is mentioned in the bid or, in the case of no trump, the absence of a suit long enough to make a suit bid. All of the weak and medium strength opening bids are *natural* because each bid describes the length of a specific suit, or in the case of the no trump opening bids, the distribution of suits in the hand.
- **Artificial Bid** → Usually does not specify the length of the suit that is mentioned in the bid but it may specify the length(s) of one or more of the other suits. As we will see, a **2♣** response to a **1NT** opening bid is *artificial* because it does not describe a length for the club suit.

LIMITING OR UNLIMITED STRENGTH

- **Limiting Bid** → Specifies a minimum **and** a maximum point count for the strength of the hand. All of the weak and medium strength opening bids are *natural limiting* bids because the opening bid guidelines specify a minimum and maximum point count.
- **Unlimited Bid** → Specifies the minimum point count for the strength of the hand but it does not usually specify the maximum point count. As we will see, a **2♣** response to a **1NT** opening bid is an *artificial unlimited* bid that only specifies the minimum point count.

INVITATIONAL, FORCING, MARATHON, OR SIGN-OFF

- **Invitational Bid** → Invites partner to bid again but partner can pass after an invitational bid. A limiting bid is invitational because your partner can determine the maximum strength of the partnership which allows your partner to decide if a game (or slam) is still possible. All of the weak and medium strength opening bids are *natural limiting invitational* bids and partner can pass.
- **Forcing Bid** → Forces partner to make one more contract bids. Partner can not pass after a forcing bid. Artificial bids are forcing. An unlimited bid is forcing because your partner does not know the maximum strength of the partnership which means your partner can not decide to stop below the game or slam level. The strong **2♣** opening bid is an *artificial unlimited forcing* bid because it does not describe a length for the club suit and it does not specify a maximum point count for the hand.
- **Marathon Bid** → Forces partner to keep bidding until at least a game is reached. As we will see, a Jacoby **2NT** response to a **1♠** opening bid is an *artificial unlimited marathon* bid.
- **Sign-off Bid** → Directs partner to pass. Partner should not make another contract bid after a sign-off bid. Most sign-off bids occur at the game level.

OPENING BIDS			
NO TRUMP OPENING BIDS			
HIGH CARD POINTS			
15 ----- 17	18	20 - 21	25 ----- 27
4%		1%	0%
1NT		2NT	3NT
SUIT OPENING BIDS			
DECLARER POINTS			
0 ----- 6	7 ----- 12	13 ----- 21	22 -----> +
15%	50%	34%	1%
	WEAK	MEDIUM	STRONG
PASS	Weak Twos 2♦, 2♥, 2♠ 6+ Cards	Five Card Majors 1♥, 1♠ 5+ Cards	Strong 2♣ (Artificial, Forcing)
	Preemptive Threes 3♣, 3♦, 3♥, 3♠ 7+ Cards	Better of Minors 1♣, 1♦ 3+ Cards	
	PASS		

The table at the top summarizes the opening bids that are possible in our bidding system. The "cheat sheet" on the right shows these bids with their guideline point count (strength) and suit lengths (shape). Note that shaded points are high card points and the unshaded points are declarer points.

OPENING BID CHEAT SHEET
(Shaded Points are High Card Points)

BID	PTS	SHAPE OF HAND
3NT	25-27	Balanced. ² All 4 suits stopped.
3♠	7-12	7+♠, 0-3♥. <i>Preempt.</i> ⁴
3♥	7-12	7+♥, 0-3♠. <i>Preempt.</i> ⁴
3♦	7-12	7+♦, 0-3♥, 0-3♠. <i>Preempt.</i> ⁴
3♣	10-12	6+♣ (2+ honors). <i>Preempt/Weak Two.</i> ^{3,4}
2NT	20-21	Balanced. ² All 4 suits stopped.
2♠	7-12	6+♠ (2+ honors), 0-3♥. <i>Weak Two.</i> ³
2♥	7-12	6+♥ (2+ honors), 0-3♠. <i>Weak Two.</i> ³
2♦	7-12	6+♦ (2+ honors), 0-3Maj. <i>Weak Two.</i> ³
2♣	22-24	Balanced. ² <i>Rebid 2N. Strong. Artificial.</i>
	22+	5+ suit (2+ honors). <i>Rebid suit. Strong. Artificial.</i>
1NT	15-17	Balanced. ² 3+ suits stopped. <i>Announce.</i>
1♠	13-21 ¹	5+♠.
1♥	13-21 ¹	5+♥, 0-4♠.
1♦	13-21 ¹	(3)4+♦, 0-4Maj.
1♣	13-21 ¹	3+♣, 0-3♦, 0-4Maj.

MEDIUM STRENGTH OPENING BIDS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Open no trump if hand qualifies. ✓ With a five-card or longer suit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open highest ranking five-card or longer suit. ✓ Without a five-card or longer suit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open longest minor. • Open 1♦ with two four-card minors. • Open 1♣ with two three-card minors.

¹ *Third Seat:* Can open with 11-21.

² *Balanced:* May have a five card minor.

³ *Weak Two:* 5+ tricks. *If vul:* 6+ tricks (10-12 points).

⁴ *Preempt:* 6+ tricks. *If vul:* Open weak two.

REFINING OPENING BIDS

EVALUATING THE HAND

Counting declarer points is the first step in evaluating the strength of your hand. But a simple point count underrates Aces and Kings, overrates Queens and Jacks, and gives no credit for Tens and Nines which often take tricks. And the point count does not consider card combinations and sequences.

After counting the points, you should also consider the overall quality of the hand, especially if you are on the borderline of a bidding guideline. For example, honors in long suits are more valuable than honors in short suits.

Higher quality: ♠ A Q 7 5 3 ♥ 9 4 ♦ A Q 6 5 ♣ 6 2

Lower quality: ♠ 9 8 6 5 3 ♥ A Q ♦ 8 5 4 2 ♣ A Q

Honor cards are more valuable when combined with other honors. For example:

Higher quality: ♠ 7 3 ♥ K Q J 4 ♦ K Q J 6 ♣ 9 8 5

Lower quality: ♠ K 3 ♥ Q J 7 4 ♦ Q J 6 5 ♣ K 8 5

Tens and nines increase the quality of a hand. For example:

Higher quality: ♠ K 5 ♥ Q J T 9 ♦ K J T 9 ♣ A Q 6

Lower quality: ♠ K 5 ♥ Q J 4 3 ♦ K J 6 4 ♣ A Q 6

OPENING FIRST OR SECOND SEAT

Some partnerships prefer to use the *Guideline of 20* (often called the *Rule of 20*) instead of declarer points to determine if a hand should be opened in first or second seat:

In **first or second seat**, add the lengths of your two longest suits to the count of your high card points. Open the bidding if the total is 20 or more.

Open 1♦ with: ♠ A 9 7 2 ♥ K Q 8 3 ♦ K 9 8 4 ♣ 5
Only 12 declarer points but 12 HCP + 4 ♠ + 4 ♥ = 20

Pass with: ♠ A J 5 ♥ K Q 8 2 ♦ T 6 4 ♣ Q 8 3
Only 12 declarer points and 12 HCP + 4 ♥ + 3 ♠ = 19

Open 1♥ with: ♠ 9 7 ♥ K Q 8 3 2 ♦ A Q 9 8 ♣ 5 2
Only 12 declarer points but 11 HCP + 5 ♥ + 4 ♦ = 20

OPENING LIGHT IN THIRD SEAT

When you open the bidding in first seat you have no information about the strength of any other hand. When you open in second seat you know that your right hand opponent has less than 13 declarer points. In either case you have not heard from your partner so you should usually have at least 13 declarer points to open the bidding at the one level.

If you are opening in third seat your partner has passed which limits partner's hand to at most 12 points. If you have 11 or 12 points your partnership will have at most 23-24 total points which is not enough for a game. But it is enough for a part score.

There are several advantages to *opening light* in the third seat:

- ✓ Your partnership might win the contract to gain a part score.
- ✓ Your bid may make it more difficult for opponents to find the best contract.
- ✓ You give your partner a suggestion for an opening lead if opponents win the contract.

If you are opening in third seat you should have at least 11 declarer points and a good suit, preferably headed by an **AK** or **KQJ** for lead directing purposes.

OPENING IN FOURTH SEAT

If you are considering opening the bidding in fourth seat and you have a borderline hand, you can use the *Guideline of 15* (often called the *Rule of 15*) to guide your decision:

In the **fourth seat** open a **borderline hand** if the sum of your high card points plus the number of spades is 15 or more.

Why spades? With a borderline hand your partnership will compete with opponents for a part score. If you open the bidding and opponents compete in spades, they can outbid you without going to a higher level but you must go to a higher level to outbid their spades.

Open 1♣ with: ♠ K J 6 3 ♥ A 9 ♦ 8 4 2 ♣ K 6 5 3
11 HCP + 4♠ = 15

Pass with: ♠ K J 6 3 ♥ Q J 2 ♦ Q J 8 5 ♣ J 2
11 HCP + 4♠ = 15
BUT HAND QUALITY LOW

Open 1♠ with: ♠ A K 7 6 4 ♥ K 9 3 ♦ 8 7 4 ♣ 6 5
10 HCP + 5♠ = 15

Pass with: ♠ T ♥ A Q 4 3 ♦ Q 9 5 ♣ K 9 8 6 2
11 HCP + 1♠ = 12

Open 1♣ with: ♠ T 2 ♥ K Q 4 ♦ Q 9 5 ♣ A K 9 8 6
FULL OPENING BID - 15 DECLARER POINTS

OPENING A SHORT CLUB

If a partnership agrees to open the *Better Minor*, a **1♣** opening bid always describes a hand with at least three clubs and a **1♦** opening bid usually (97%) describes a hand with four or more diamonds but it might describe a hand with a 4♠-4♥-3♦-2♣ shape (3%).

Some partnerships prefer to adopt the *Short Club* convention so that a **1♦** opening bid **always** describes a hand with at least four diamonds. This makes the **1♣** opening bid somewhat artificial because it might describe a hand with as few as two clubs but it makes it easier to respond to a **1♦** opening bid. For example:

Better 1♣ or Short 1♣: ♠ K Q 4 ♥ A 9 7 2 ♦ A 6 3 ♣ 8 4 2

Better 1♦ or Short 1♦: ♠ K Q 4 ♥ A 9 ♦ T 9 6 4 ♣ A 8 4 2

Better 1♣ or Short 1♣: ♠ K Q ♥ A 9 ♦ J T 9 6 ♣ A T 8 4 2
Open longest suit.

Better 1♦ or Short 1♣: ♠ K Q 4 3 ♥ A 9 7 2 ♦ T 9 6 ♣ A T

*If your partnership uses the short club in a duplicate game,
you must say "may be short" if your partner opens 1♣.*

OPENING NO TRUMP WITH A FIVE CARD MAJOR

Many partnerships do not like to open no trump with a five card major because it is almost impossible to discover a 5-3 major suit trump fit after a no trump opening bid. But a **1NT** opening bid is a much better description of a balanced hand with 15-17 high card points than a bid of one in a major suit. Consequently your partnership might want to adopt the following guideline:

Open one in the major with a worthless doubleton.
Open **1NT** with stoppers in all four suits.

Here are some examples:

Open 1NT with: ♠ K T ♥ K 9 7 6 3 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ A Q 2
Stoppers in all four suits.

Open 1NT with: ♠ Q J 9 8 5 ♥ K 4 ♦ K Q 7 ♣ A T 6
Stoppers in all four suits.

Open 1♠ with: ♠ K Q J 7 6 ♥ A Q 3 ♦ 8 4 ♣ K 6 5
Worthless diamond doubleton.

RESPONDING TO MEDIUM STRENGTH OPENING BIDS

After opener makes a limiting medium strength opening bid, responder is the bidding captain because responder has the best information about the partnership's strength.

Because a no trump opening bid limits opener's strength to a narrow range of high card points, responder has the necessary information to determine the strength of the partnership and can direct the partnership to the appropriate contract level.

But the point range for an opening bid of one of a suit is very wide and can include both high card and long suit points. Responder needs more information about the strength of opener's hand before responder can determine the appropriate contract level.

RESPONDER'S STRENGTH

If responder has at least three cards in opener's major suit, responder can *support* the suit and the partnership has at least a golden eight-card trump fit. If the partnership wins a contract in the suit, opener will be the declarer and responder will be the dummy. Short suits are valuable in a dummy that has trump support because declarer will usually be able to ruff one or more tricks in the short suit. For this reason, a responder with trump support can use dummy points, the sum of high card plus short suit points, to evaluate the strength of the hand.

RESPONDER'S GOAL

About 34% of the hands that are dealt can be opened with a strength of 13-21 declarer points. But, as the table at the right indicates, if your partner does open the bidding there is a 73% chance that your partner only has 13-16 declarer points and a 90% chance that your partner only has 13-18 declarer points.

OPENER'S DECLARER POINTS	PERCENT OF OPENED HANDS
13-16	73 %
17-18	17 %
19-21	10 %

There is an inverse relationship between the points in the partnership hands. If the opener's point count is at the high end of the range, it is more likely that responder's point count is at the low end of the range. Likewise, if the responder's point count is high it is more likely the opener's point count is low. This suggests responder's goal should be:

Opener's Declarer Points	Responder's		Partnership Total Points	RESPONDER'S GOAL		Percent Opened Hands
	Dummy Points	Strength Attribute				
13-18+ (90%)	0-5		13-23+	Game Unlikely	Pass	10 %
	6-9	Weak	19-27+	Game Doubtful	Negative Response	30 %
	10-12	Medium	23-30+	Game Possible	Positive Response	28 %
	13-16	Strong	26-34+	Game Likely	Force Game	24 %
	17+		30-35+	Slam Possible	Confirm Slam	5 %

RESPONDING TO MEDIUM STRENGTH MAJOR SUIT OPENING BIDS				
OPENER OPENS 1♥ OR 1♠				
DECLARER POINTS				
13 ----- 18		19 ----- 21		
90%		10%		
RESPONDER RESPONDS IN PRIORITY ORDER				
DUMMY POINTS				
0 ----- 5	6 ----- 9	10 ----- 12	13 ----- 16	17 -----> +
10%	30%	28%	24%	5%
4MAJ		<i>Preemptive</i>	5+ card support	
<i>Marathon</i>	<i>Artificial</i>		Jacoby 2NT	4+ card support
<i>Invitational</i>	3MAJ		<i>Limit Raise</i>	
<i>Invitational</i>	2MAJ		3+ card support	
<i>Forcing</i> ¹	Cheap New 4+ Card Major (1♠ over 1♥)			
<i>Forcing</i> ¹	Cheap New 4+ Card Minor (2♣ or 2♦)			
<i>Forcing</i> ¹	Cheap New 5+ Card Major (2♥ over 1♠)			
<i>Marathon</i>	<i>Strong Jump Shift (slam interest)</i>		Jump New Suit (2♠, 3♣, 3♦, or 3♥)	
<i>Invitational</i>	1NT		No support	
<i>Sign-off</i>	3NT		No support, stoppers	
PASS		¹ Not forcing if responder is a passed hand		

The cheap new suit responses promise at least four cards with the following exceptions:

- ✓ 2♥ over 1♠ promises at least five hearts
- ✓ 2♣ over 1♠ usually promises four but might only be three clubs

The strong jump shift responses promise a good five-card or longer suit.

Responder can use these strategies for situations the bidding chart does not cover:

Dummy Points	MAJOR SUIT SUPPORT	
	3 CARDS	4+ CARDS
6-9	Respond opener's major at two-level	
10-12	Respond new suit forcing On next turn rebid opener's major at cheapest level	Respond opener's major at three-level (a limit raise)
13+	Respond new suit forcing On next turn rebid game in opener's major	Respond a Jacoby 2NT

RESPONDING TO MEDIUM STRENGTH MINOR SUIT OPENING BIDS

OPENER OPENS 1♣ OR 1♦

DECLARER POINTS	
13 ----- 18	19 ----- 21
90%	10%

RESPONDER RESPONDS IN PRIORITY ORDER

DUMMY POINTS				
0 ----- 5	6 ----- 9	10 ----- 12	13 ----- 16	17 ----- > +
10%	30%	28%	24%	5%

<i>Forcing</i>	Cheap New 4+ Card Major (1♥ or 1♠)		
<i>Invitational</i>	2NT	3NT	Balanced, stoppers
<i>Invitational</i>	2MIN	3MIN	5+ card support
<i>Forcing</i> ¹	Cheap New 4+ Card Minor (1♦ over 1♣)		
<i>Forcing</i> ¹	Cheap New 4+ Card Minor (2♣ over 1♦)		
<i>Sign-off</i>	5MIN		5+ card support
<i>Marathon</i>	<i>Strong Jump Shift (slam interest)</i>	Jump New Suit (2♦, 2♥, 2♠, 3♣)	
<i>Invitational</i>	1NT	Balanced	
PASS		¹ Not forcing if responder is a passed hand	

OPENER'S REBID

FORCED REBID

If responder made an unlimited new suit forcing response, responder continues to be the bidding captain because, although opener knows the partnership's minimum strength, opener does not know the partnership's maximum strength.

Opener's forced rebid goal is to narrow the strength of the hand and continue the search for an eight-card trump fit. Opener's choice of rebids, **in priority order**, depends on the strength of the hand:

- **Minimal Strength (13-16 points)**

Rebid as cheaply as possible.

- ✓ Raise partner's new suit one level with support to ensure an eight-card trump fit.
- ✓ Rebid your suit at the cheapest level with extra length in your suit.
- ✓ Rebid a new suit at the cheapest level with at least four cards in the new suit.
- ✓ Bid no trump at the cheapest level.

- **Medium Strength (17-18 points)**

Jump a level to show extra strength. If responder bid a new suit at the two level, opener can jump directly to game.

- **Maximum Strength (19-21 points)**

Jump directly to game.

INVITED REBID

If responder made a limiting invitational response, opener becomes the bidding captain because opener has the most information about the partnership's minimum **and** maximum strength. Opener's rebid goal will depend on the strength of the partnership:

Respond Points	LIMITING RESPONSES AFTER	
	Major Opening	Minor Opening
6-9	1NT, 2MAJ	1NT, 2MIN
10-12	3MAJ	2NT, 3MIN

Responder's Dummy Points	Opener's		Partnership Total Points	OPENER'S REBID GOAL AFTER A LIMITING WEAK RESPONSE		Percent Opened Hands
	Points	Strength Attribute				
6-9 (30%)	13-16	Minimal	19-25	Game Unlikely	Part Score	
	17-18	Medium	23-27	Game Possible	Invite Game	
	19-21	Maximum	25-30	Game Likely	Force Game	

Responder's Dummy Points	Opener's		Partnership Total Points	OPENER'S REBID GOAL AFTER A LIMITING MEDIUM RESPONSE		Percent Opened Hands
	Points	Strength Attribute				
10-12 (28%)	13-14	Minimal-	23-26	Game Unlikely	Part Score	
	15-16	Minimal+	25-28	Game Possible	Invite Game	
	17-18	Medium	27-30	Game Likely	Force Game	
	19-21	Maximum	29-33	Slam Possible	Confirm Slam	

Opener can:

- ✓ Pass if responder's bid is the best possible contract.
- ✓ Cheap rebid a lower ranking suit to invite responder to choose the best contract.
- ✓ Rebid short of game to invite responder to bid a game if responder is at the upper end of the limited strength range.
- ✓ Bid a game if the partnership has game strength.
- ✓ Begin to confirm a slam if the partnership has slam strength or unusual distribution.

RESPONDER'S REBID

• Responder forced opener to rebid.

If responder forced opener's rebid, responder is still the bidding captain. Opener's rebid narrowed the strength of the partnership which should allow responder to decide on the contract level. Responder should also have enough information about the partnership's suit fits and stopped suits to determine if the contract should be in a suit or in no trump. Responder can:

- ✓ Pass if opener's rebid is the best possible contract.
- ✓ Rebid short of game to invite opener to bid a game if opener is at the upper end of the limited strength range.
- ✓ Use a convention like *New Minor Forcing* or *Fourth Suit Forcing* to force opener to further describe the hand.
- ✓ Bid a game if the partnership has game strength.
- ✓ Begin to confirm a slam if the partnership has slam strength or unusual distribution.

• Responder invited opener to rebid.

If responder invited opener's rebid, opener is the bidding captain. If opener made a jump rebid short of game, opener must think a game is possible. Responder at the lower end of the limited strength range should pass. Responder at the upper end of the limited strength range should bid the game.

DUPLICATE ANNOUNCEMENTS

If your partnership is playing in a duplicate game, you must make an announcement for the following:

✓ Partner opens 1NT:

You must announce the point range for your partnership's no trump opening.

✓ Partner opens 1♣:

You must announce "may be short" if your partner can open a *short club*. You do not need to announce if your partnership opens *better of minors*.

✓ Partner responds 1NT.

You must announce "forcing one round" if your partnership uses a forcing no trump convention or bidding system like *Two-Over-One Game Force*. You do not need to announce if the 1NT is a standard invitational response.

✓ Partner responds 2♦ or 2♥ after a 1NT opening bid:

You must announce "transfer" if your partnership agreed to use *Jacoby Transfers*. You do not need to announce if your partnership agreed to treat the 2♦ and 2♥ as standard weak sign-off responses.

BIDDING CONVERSATION EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1			
North	East	South	West
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

EXAMPLE 2			
North	East	South	West
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

EXAMPLE 3			
North	East	South	West
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

EXAMPLE 1

- **North:** I have 13 to 21 declarer points, at least five hearts, and fewer spades.
- **South:** I have a weak hand with 6 to 9 dummy points but I do have at least three hearts to guarantee an eight-card heart fit.
- **North:** I actually have 17 to 18 declarer points and know we have 23 to 27 total points. I invite you to bid the game if you have 8 or 9 dummy points.
- **South:** Sorry partner, I only have 6 or 7 dummy points.

EXAMPLE 2

- **North:** I have 13 to 21 declarer points and at least five spades.
- **South:** I have at least 10 points (*two level bid*) and at least four diamonds. My new suit response forces you to rebid.
- **North:** My hand is limited to 13 to 16 declarer points (*cheap rebid*) but I have at least six spades.
- **South:** I have at least 13 points, enough to ensure a game, and at least two spades to guarantee an eight-card spade fit.

EXAMPLE 3

- **North:** I have 13 to 21 declarer points and probably at least four clubs (89%) but maybe only three (11%). I do not have a five-card or longer major.
- **South:** I have at least 6 points (*one level bid*) and at least four hearts. My new suit response forces you to rebid.
- **North:** My hand is limited to 13 to 16 declarer points (*cheap rebid*) with at least four spades. Because I limited my strength, my new suit rebid does not force you to rebid.
- **South:** My hand is limited to 10 to 12 dummy points with at least four spades in addition to my four hearts. Since the partnership has 23 to 28 (10+13 to 12+16) total points and an eight-card spade fit, I invite you to bid the game if you have extra strength.
- **North:** I have enough points to try for the game score bonus.

See the *Beginning Bridge Week 4 Lecture* and *Week 5 Lecture* documents for examples of natural responses and rebids after an opening bid of a suit at the one level.