

## LESSON 6: STUDENT NOTES

# Responder's New Suit Bids and Opener's Rebids

### Responder's new suit bids

If a limit bid is not possible or appropriate, responder can bid a new suit, looking for an alternative fit. A **major** suit fit is by far the best. Note that if opener starts with 1♣ or 1♦, responder must show a major suit even with a balanced hand – a response in notrump *denies* holding a 4+ major suit.

It is important to bid your suits in the correct order. Do you remember these rules about opening bids?

- Bid your longest suit first
- Bid the higher ranking of two 5-card suits

In addition to those two, responder needs to remember one more:

- Bid the lower ranking of two 4-card suits (*this is different to the approach recommended for opening when you have two 4-card minor suits!*)

Your goal is to keep the bidding as low as possible to give you room to find a **fit**, or else to play in notrumps. Note that opener can't pass your bid – in reply to opener's bid of a suit, a new suit by responder is a **forcing** bid. Such bids, which are **unlimited**, can have a wide range of high card points – in theory, from 6 up to say 28 HCP!

When opener has started with 1♥ or 1♠, a bid of a new suit by responder usually implies there is no fit – unless of course responder later jumps to game in opener's suit.

### What minimum strength does a new suit bid show?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Bid and change suit at 1-level                         | 6+ HCP, 4+ suit  |
| • Bid and change suit at 2-level                         | 10+ HCP, 4+ minor/5+ hearts over 1♠                              |
| • Bid and change suit with a jump<br>e.g. 1♣-2♠ or 1♥-3♦ | meaning depends on partnership agreements – often played as weak |

For the moment it's probably a good idea to completely avoid changing suit with a jump bid.

**Examples** (note the last two, which illustrate the use of 1NT to cover all sorts of 6-10 HCP hands where responder cannot bid her/his long suit at the 2-level)

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
♠ 95	♠ J8764	♠ 8	♠ AK54	♠ 8	♠ A43
♥ AQ854	♥ K2	♥ AQJ5	♥ 9876	♥ AQJ53	♥ 98
♦ A954	♦ KQJ32	♦ KJ542	♦ AQ3	♦ KJ52	♦ AQ643
♣ K8	♣ 6	♣ K87	♣ 54	♣ K87	♣ Q32
1♥	-	1♦	-	1♥	-
	1♠		1♥		2♦

<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>	<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>	<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>
♠ 85	♠ AK43	♠ 8	♠ J76	♠ 8	♠ A43
♥ AQ854	♥ K2	♥ AQJ5	♥ 98	♥ AQJ53	♥ 9
♦ A954	♦ 3	♦ KJ542	♦ AQ	♦ KJ52	♦ Q8643
♣ K8	♣ AJ9432	♣ K87	♣ J95432	♣ K87	♣ Q942
<b>1♥</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1♦</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1♥</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>2♣</b>		<b>1NT</b>		<b>1NT</b>

## Opener's rebids after a new suit response

Support partner's suit	4+ in that suit (3+ if responder has bid 2♥ over 1♠)
Bid NT	Balanced, no fit with responder's suit
Bid a new suit	4+ in the new suit
Rebid own suit	Usually 6+ cards

## Supporting responder's suit

It is important to support partner's suit if possible, particularly in a major. With 4-card support, you should re-assess your hand based on shortage in other suits – add 1 point for a doubleton, 2 for a singleton and 3 for a void, then rebid based on "total points".

After 1♦ – 1♠			
2♠	12-15 TP	4-card support	single raise
3♠	16-17 TP	4-card support	invitational raise
4♠	18-19 TP	4-card support	game raise

## Opener rebids a new suit – showing an unbalanced hand

After 1♥ – 1♠		
new suit below "the barrier"	12-15 HCP	
new suit above "the barrier"	16-19 HCP	
<i>("the barrier" is explained below)</i>		

## Opener rebids their own suit – showing an unbalanced hand

After 1♥ – 1♠		
2♥	12-15 HCP	6+ suit
3♥	16-17 HCP	6+ suit
4♥	18-19 HCP	6+ suit

## Opener rebids notrumps – showing a balanced hand

After 1♥ – 1♠		
1NT	12-14 HCP	
2NT	18-19 HCP	
After 1♥ – 2♣		
2NT	12-14 HCP	
3NT	18-19 HCP	

Note that while a rebid of notrumps denies support for responder's suit and denies extra length in opener's suit, it does not *guarantee* a balanced hand. Most bidding "rules" have exceptions!

## The concept of "the barrier"



The barrier applies to the opener and is their original suit at the 2-level. e.g. if the opener bids 1♣ the barrier is 2♣. If opener bids 1♥ the barrier is 2♥ etc. For the opener to **rebid a suit** above the barrier, they must have *at least* 16 HCP.

A few examples should help to illustrate the point:

- 1) You hold ♠A1052 ♥K7 ♦K10984 ♣K9 and open 1♦. Partner responds 1♥. Your barrier is 2♦. That means you can rebid 1♠ to show your second suit, as you are still below the barrier and are not promising more than 15 HCP.
- 2) You hold ♠52 ♥KQ ♦K10984 ♣AJ97 and open 1♦. Partner responds 1♠. Your barrier is 2♦. However, you can rebid 2♣ to show your second suit, as you are still below the barrier even though this rebid is at the 2-level.
- 3) Similarly if you hold ♠AQ1062 ♥K1098 ♦K4 ♣Q4, open 1♠ and see partner respond 2♣, you can rebid 2♥ to show your second suit, because you are below the barrier of 2♠.
- 4) You hold ♠K7 ♥A1052 ♦K10984 ♣K9 and open 1♦. Partner responds 1♠. Your barrier is 2♦. Now you cannot show your heart suit via your rebid, because you would be breaking the barrier. So you must rebid 2♦.
- 5) You hold ♠A7 ♥AQ52 ♦KJ1084 ♣K9 and open 1♦. Partner responds 1♠. Your barrier is 2♦. However, this time you have 17 HCP so you *can* break the barrier and show your second suit, via a rebid of 2♥. A 2-level rebid in a higher-ranking suit that forces the bidding to the 3-level is called a *reverse bid*.
- 6) You hold ♠AQ1062 ♥10 ♦KQ8 ♣AK109 and open 1♠. Partner responds 2♥. Your barrier is 2♠ but with 18 HCP you are able to bid 3♣ to show both your second suit and your strength. A 3-level bid in a lower ranking suit isn't a reverse bid but does show similar shape and strength, except that the *higher-ranking* suit is longer (or both are 5-card suits).

Note that while a rebid of 2NT is apparently past "the barrier" this restriction doesn't apply to notrump rebids, because of their known HCP range. So if you open 1♠ holding ♠AQ1074 ♥K62 ♦K4 ♣Q109 and see partner respond 2♦, you can safely rebid 2NT as you are only promising 12-14 HCP. The "barrier" applies to **suit rebids**.

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