

Hamilton Bridge Centre

Rebids

Simple tips for opener and responder.



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This article doesn't have a single theme, other than providing some examples of what to bid and when. It's meant to cover some common situations where errors are often made. Throughout this article, assume that your partner is not a passed hand.

1. When you open, you promise a rebid over your partner's response. However, don't rebid with a minimum flat hand when your partner's response is not forcing.

Example 1

♠ K Q 10 9 7
♥ A 8 6
♦ K J 6
♣ 8 3

You open 1♠, and your partner responds 1 NT. This response is not forcing, so you don't have to bid again. Don't bid again; your hand isn't worth it. Don't be concerned about not having a club stopper; odds are your partner will have some length in clubs, and besides, you're only at the one level.

2. You should rebid with minimum distributional hands. Here are some examples:

Example 2

♠ 8 3
♥ A Q 10 8 4 3
♦ K J 7
♣ A 6

Regardless of your partner's response, you should rebid 2♥. However, do not bid again unless your partner continues making forcing rebids (ie new suits).

Example 3

♠ K Q 10 8 7
♥ A J 9 5 4
♦ 8
♣ 7 3

This is a **Rule of 20** hand, which you open 1♠. Regardless of your partner's response, you should rebid 2♥ (if your partner responds 2♥, jump to 4♥). Unless you find a heart or spade fit, be cautious about bidding again after 2♥.

3. When responding with a minimum hand (6–9 points), only make one voluntary bid. Try to make it the most effective bid you can. Here's an example:

Example 4

♠ 10 8 7 3
♥ 10 7
♦ Q 9 8 2
♣ A 7

Your partner opens 1♣, and you have to respond with only 6 points. You only want to make one voluntary bid, so forget about the diamond suit. Respond 1♠ (looking for a major suit fit), then pass your partner's rebid unless it's forcing. If you respond 1♦, partner rebids 1♥, and you then bid 1♠, your partner will credit you for a better hand because you made two voluntary bids.

4. With two four-card suits, bid "up the line". With two five-card suits, bid the higher ranking suit first. With one four-card suit and one five-card suit, it depends.

Example 5

♠ A 8 7 3
♥ 10 7
♦ Q 9 8 2
♣ A 7

If partner opens 1♣, respond 1♦. If partner rebids 1♥, then bid 1♠. Contrast this with Example 4, where your hand was not strong enough for two voluntary bids. You can make two voluntary bids with 10 points or more.

Example 6

♠ A 10 8 7 3
♥ A 7
♦ Q 9 8 6 2
♣ 9

If partner opens 1♣ or 1♥, respond 1♠ first. If partner rebids clubs, bid 2♦. If partner rebids hearts, then raise to 4♥ (see the article on [counting short suits](#) for more details).

Example 7

♠ A 10 8 7 3
♥ 10 7
♦ Q 9 8 6
♣ A 2

If partner opens 1♣ or 1♥, respond 1♠ first. If partner rebids 1 NT, you can now bid 2♦ (since opener has rebid 1 NT, your 2♦ bid is not forcing). If partner rebids his suit, you should pass and forget about the diamond suit. Your hand isn't strong enough to continue.

Example 8

♠ A K 8 7
♥ Q 9 8 7 3
♦ 8 6
♣ J 2

If partner opens 1♣ or 1♦, respond 1♥. Do not bid the spade suit over partner's rebid; your hand is not strong enough. Of course, if partner bids 1♠ over your 1♥ response, raise to 3♠ (your two doubletons are enough extras; see the article on [counting short suits](#)).

Example 9

♠ A K 8 7
♥ K Q 9 8 3
♦ 8 6
♣ J 2

If partner opens 1♣ or 1♦, respond 1♥. In this case, your hand is strong enough to bid spades over partner's rebid. The general rule of thumb when responding is: with less than an opening bid of your own, do not bid a 4-card suit that partner has skipped (as in Example 8); with an opening bid or better, you can bid a 4-card suit that partner has skipped.

5. Reevaluate your distribution based on your partner's bidding. This applies to both opener and responder. Here's an example:

Example 10

♠ A J 7 4 2
♥ K 10 7
♦ 8
♣ Q 9 8 4

Your partner opens 1♥. Your hand is good enough for game (see the article on [counting for short suits](#) for more details). Don't make the mistake of jumping directly to 4♥, though. Start with 1♠ (this is a forcing response, so partner will bid again). Regardless of what partner rebids, jump to 4♥ the second time. Don't make a wimpy 3♥ rebid (or even worse, rebid your spades); your partner might pass and you'll miss what should be a game contract.

6. The one who knows, goes.

Example 11

♠ A K J 8
♥ K 7 3
♦ Q 8 4 2
♣ 7 3

Your partner opens 1♣. Your hand is good enough for game, but you don't know which one (either 3 NT or 4♠ is possible; 5♣ would be a long shot). Start with 1♠ (which is forcing). If partner supports spades, jump to 4♠. If partner rebids 1 NT or 2♣, jump to 3 NT. Don't make a wimpy 2 NT rebid; again, your partner might pass and you'll probably miss game. You know there's a game, so you it's your duty to get there.

7. Never rebid a minor suit unless you have no better alternative. You rarely score well at matchpoints if you play in minor suit contracts (in a team game, the minor suits are more favourable). Here are some examples of when to try and avoid minor suit contracts:

Example 12

♠ A K 3
 ♥ Q 7
 ♦ A J 9 8 7
 ♣ 10 6 2

You open 1♦, and your partner responds 1♥. Don't even think about bidding 2♦; rebidding a five card minor is a criminal offence. Rebid 1 NT.

Example 13

♠ A K 3
 ♥ Q 7
 ♦ A J 9 8 7 5
 ♣ 10 6

Almost the same hand, and you open 1♦. Partner again responds 1♥. Rebidding 2♦ here isn't quite so criminal, but consider rebidding 1 NT here as well. If your partner has a reasonable hand, you should be heading towards notrump rather than diamonds. In a team game, rebidding 2♦ would be more acceptable.

Example 14

♠ A 7 3
 ♥ 7 6
 ♦ A K 10 9 8 7
 ♣ 10 6

Finally, a hand where a 2♦ rebid makes the most sense. You've opened a [Rule of 20](#) hand based on distribution, which means that your rebids should be as conservative as possible.

8. With a bad responding hand, try and take preference to opener's first suit.

Example 15

♠ A 7 3
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ 9 7 4
 ♣ 10 8 3 2

Partner opens 1♥, you respond 1 NT, and partner rebids 2♦. You should take a preference and bid 2♥. This is a weak rebid, and partner should not bid again. Partner will probably have five hearts and four diamonds, but playing in the major suit is preferable to playing in a minor. You would pass 2♦ only if you had four card support for diamonds.

9. A raise of opener's second suit is forcing for one round.

Example 16

♠ A 7 3 2
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ Q 10 7 5 3
 ♣ K 8

Partner opens 1♥, you respond 1♠ (looking for a major suit fit in preference to a minor), and partner rebids 2♦. Your hand improves: with the diamond fit, your club doubleton is worth an extra point (see the article on [counting shortness](#)). You could bid 3 NT directly, but partner may have a distributional hand with hearts and diamonds, and notrump might not be the best spot. You can show this good hand without committing to notrump by raising to 3♦; partner must bid again. If partner now bids 3 NT you can pass; if partner bids 4♥ he should have six of them, so again you can pass.