



Bidding Basics

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Opener's rebid after 1♣ – 1♠

This month, we examine opener's rebid after this start:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
?	

With his second bid, opener tries to show two things: strength (minimum, medium or maximum) and shape (balanced, long clubs or clubs and another suit).

Here is a run-through of what opener's rebids mean:

Pass: Opener can't pass because 1♠ is unlimited. Responder could have, say, 17 points! (If responder was a passed hand and, therefore, limited, opener is allowed to pass if he has a minimum, balanced hand.)

1NT: A balanced 12–14 HCP, no four-card spade support (could easily have four hearts). Stoppers are not promised. Examples:

♠8 4 ♥Q 5 4 ♦K J 2 ♣A K 5 4 2
♠A 6 5 ♥K 10 3 2 ♦J 3 2 ♣K Q 7.

2♣: Six or more clubs and a minimum hand (roughly 11–15, counting useful distribution). No four-card spade support (but could have four hearts). Rebid 2♣ with:

♠A J ♥K 3 2 ♦Q 3 ♣K 10 9 7 6 5
♠4 ♥K 9 6 2 ♦Q 8 ♣A Q J 7 5 2.

Do not make the common error of rebidding a five-card club suit or “reversing” into hearts with a minimum hand.

2♦ or 2♥: A “reverse.” This is a tough topic for newer players, but there is no way to avoid the subject. You can't say, “I don't play reverses.” There will be many of them in this series – because they just come up. After a one-level response, when opener rebids two of a suit higher-ranking than the suit he opened, he has reversed. That previous sentence needs to be studied intensely! A reverse is a natural bid, so in these auctions (1♣–1♠; 2♦ or 1♣–1♠; 2♥), opener shows at least four cards in the second suit. A reverse implies five or more cards in the first-bid suit and an unbalanced hand. With a balanced hand, the opening or rebid would be in notrump. A reverse is forcing one round (but not to game). It shows approximately 17-plus, counting useful distribution. Examples:

♠A 3 2 ♥– ♦A Q J 2 ♣A Q 10 7 6 4
(1♣–1♠; 2♦),
♠2 ♥A Q J 2 ♦A K 2 ♣A 7 6 5 4
(1♣–1♠; 2♥).

2♠: Typically four-card support (occasionally three) with a minimum hand (up to about 15 points, counting useful distribution). Raise with three cards only if “stuck,” i.e., all other bids feel horrible. Example of a three-card raise:

♠K Q 10 ♥5 ♦A K 3 2 ♣J 7 6 5 4.

The alternatives of either 2♣ or 2♦ are less appealing. Responder will normally expect four-card support, a hand such as:

♠K J 7 6 ♥K 4 ♦A 3 ♣Q 10 7 3 2
♠K Q 5 4 ♥K J 7 6 ♦3 ♣K 8 6 5.

2NT: 18–19 balanced (says nothing about stoppers and could have four hearts). Don't make this bid with four-card spade support. This rebid means you would have opened 1NT if you had 15–17, but you have 18–19. It is not forcing (responder can pass with a dead minimum). Examples:

♠A Q 2 ♥K Q 4 ♦A K J ♣8 6 5 4
♠K 4 ♥K Q 5 2 ♦Q 6 5 ♣A K Q 2.

3♣: Six or more clubs and a medium hand (roughly 16–18, counting useful distribution). No four-card major. Rebid 3♣ with:

♠A 7 ♥5 3 ♦A 7 6 ♣A K J 10 5 4
♠A 5 ♥A J 5 ♦2 ♣A Q 10 9 7 6 3.

3♦ or 3♥: These are jumps *and* reverses. Don't make these bids unless you enjoy torturing your partner.

3♠: Four-card spade support and roughly 16–18 in support. Examples:

♠A Q 6 5 ♥K Q 10 7 ♦3 2 ♣A K 8
♠A K J 7 ♥5 2 ♦K 2 ♣A Q 7 6 5.

3NT: Because a 2NT rebid shows 18–19, and a 2NT opener shows 20–21, this bid isn't needed for a balanced hand. Therefore, it is defined as a very good trick-taking hand (long clubs and stoppers in the unbid suits), like:

♠5 4 ♥A J ♦K 2 ♣A K Q 10 8 6 2.

4♣: Don't make this bid (although, if you must know, it shows six clubs, four spades and a game-forcing hand).

4♦, 4♥: Don't make these bids (although, if you must know, they should be "splinter bids" showing game-forcing hands with four-card support and shortness in the suit jumped into).

4♠: Four-card spade support and roughly 19-plus in support. Examples:

♠KQJ7 ♥AK2 ♦A ♣Q10876

♠AQ106 ♥— ♦AJ3 ♣AJ10632.

This is a very strong bid, not a "close-out" bid.

BIDDING BASICS QUIZ

What is opener's rebid on this auction:

<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>
1♣	1♠
?	

- ♠432 ♥432 ♦QJ2 ♣AKQJ
- ♠AQ2 ♥2 ♦KJ87 ♣Q8532
- ♠J3 ♥2 ♦KJ76 ♣AQ10873
- ♠QJ7 ♥AQJ7 ♦— ♣AKJ1072
- ♠KQ108 ♥A2 ♦AJ7 ♣A765
- ♠KQ ♥KQJ ♦J32 ♣AQ765
- ♠AQ65 ♥— ♦AJ2 ♣AQ6542
- ♠KJ ♥KQ32 ♦Q2 ♣Q6543

- 1NT. 12–14 balanced, doesn't promise everything stopped.
- 2♠. The rare situation (everything else is worse) where you'd raise with only three.
- 2♣. Not strong enough to reverse into 2♦.
- 2♥. A natural reverse showing a very strong hand (planning to raise spades next in this case).
- 3♠. Strong four-card raise (invitational).
- 2NT. 18–19 balanced.
- 4♠. A very strong four-card raise. Not a "closeout." (4♥ acceptable if you are 100% sure partner will know it is a splinter raise).
- 1NT. The least of evils, though everything is a lie of sorts. ■