



Bidding Basics

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Opener's rebid after 1♦ -1♥

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

<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>
1♦	1♥
?	

Opener can't pass because 1♥ is unlimited. Responder could have, say, 17 points!

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

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

1♠: Four spades and up to about 17 or 18 HCP counting useful distribution. Opener can be balanced or unbalanced. He could be 4=2=4=3 or 4=0=7=2! Don't suppress a four-card spade suit here, because responder could easily be 4-4 in the majors. (He would respond 1♥ with, say:

♠Q 10 3 2 ♥K J 3 2 ♦3 2 ♣Q 3 2.)

If opener bypasses spades and rebids 1NT, a 4-4 spade fit is missed. However, some judgment is allowed. With poor spades and a really notrump-looking hand, say:

♠8 5 4 2 ♥Q J ♦K Q 9 8 ♣K Q 10,

it is OK to ignore the spades and rebid 1NT (still at the risk of missing a 4-4 spade fit). With 18-19 balanced, don't mention a four-card spade suit, but bid 2NT instead (see below).

1NT: Any balanced 12-14 HCP hand, no four-card major. This doesn't prom-

ise stoppers in both majors. Examples:

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

2♣: Both minors, typically 5-plus diamonds and 4-plus clubs. This could be a dead minimum, but could be quite a decent hand – up to about 17 or 18 points counting useful distribution. Occasionally, the clubs will be longer than the diamonds. This would be because 1♦ was opened for fear of a rebid problem. With, say:

♠4 ♥Q J 2 ♦K Q 10 6 ♣A 7 6 5 2,

many players would open the bidding 1♦, planning to rebid 2♣ after a likely 1♠ response because any other rebid would be a worse lie. However, 1♦ and then 2♣ is usually longer (or equal length) diamonds, something like these hands:

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

2♦: Six or more diamonds and a minimum hand (roughly 11-15 counting useful distribution). No four-card major. Rebid 2♦ with these hands:

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

Do not make the common error of repeating a five-card diamond suit.

2♥: Typically, four-card support (rarely three) with a minimum (up to about 15 counting useful distribution). The opener can be balanced or unbalanced. Examples:

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

When might opener support with only three cards? Picture this hand:

♠3 2 ♥K Q 4 ♦J 8 7 6 5 ♣A Q 2

after 1♦ -1♥. Although 1NT does show a balanced minimum, with the very weak spade doubleton and the good 3-card heart support, 2♥ feels like a better description. This does risk ending in a 4-3 fit.

2♠: A jump shift. When opener skips a level (he could have said 1♠) and changes suit, it is a natural game-forcing bid. This is the 800-pound gorilla of rebids. It denies a balanced hand because no opening or rebid in notrump was made. Here, the 2♠ bidder would typically have four spades and longer diamonds, something like these hands:

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

2NT: 18-19 balanced. This says nothing about stoppers, and the hand could have four spades. Don't make this bid with four-card heart support. 2NT is not forcing: Responder can pass with a dead minimum. Examples:

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

3♣: A jump shift, like the 2♠ bid shown above. Here, opener will be unbalanced with both minors (game-forcing). Examples:

♠A 3 2 ♥— ♦A K J 6 5 ♣A Q 10 6 3

♠K 2 ♥2 ♦AKJ 6 5 4 ♣AK 10 6.

3♦: Six or more diamonds and a medium hand (roughly 16–18 counting useful distribution). No four-card major. This bid is invitational: Responder can pass. Rebid 3♦ with these hands:

♠A 7 6 ♥3 ♦AQJ 10 5 4 ♣A 7 6

♠A 7 5 ♥A J ♦AQ 10 9 7 6 3 ♣2.

3♥: Four-card heart support and roughly 16–18 in support. This bid is invitational: Responder can pass. Examples:

♠AQ 6 5 ♥K Q 10 7 ♦AK 8 ♣3 2

♠2 ♥AK J 7 ♦AQ 7 6 5 ♣J 10 2.

3♠, 4♣: Don't make these bids. (Though, if you must know, 3♠ and

4♣ would be “splinter” bids showing game-forcing hands with four-card heart support and shortness in the suit jumped into – but would your “newbie” partner know this?)

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, i.e., long diamonds and stoppers in the unbid suits, something like:

♠A J ♥4 ♦AK Q 10 8 6 2 ♣K 3 2.

4♦: Don't make this bid. (Though if you must know, it shows six diamonds, four hearts and a game-forcing hand.)

4♥: Four-card heart support and roughly 19 or more in support. Don't think of this as a weak “closeout bid.” It shows a very strong hand! Examples:

♠AK 2 ♥K Q J 7 ♦Q 10 8 7 6 ♣A

♠— ♥AQ 10 6 ♦AJ 10 6 3 2 ♣AJ 3.

When responder is a passed hand: If the responder was a passed hand (therefore limited), opener is allowed to pass the 1♥ response (Pass–1♦; 1♥–Pass) with a hand such as:

♠8 6 3 ♥AQ 10 ♦9 4 3 ♣K Q J 8.

BIDDING BASICS QUIZ

What is opener's rebid after the auction begins 1♦–1♥?

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

Quiz answers

1. 2NT. 18–19 balanced. (It is responder's job to look for spades if he's 4–4 in the majors.)
2. 1♠. Responder could be 4–4 in the majors, so don't bypass spades here.
3. 2♥. Four-card raise with a minimum.
4. 1NT. 12–14 balanced (no four-card major). Don't repeat a five-card minor.
5. 2♦. Six or more diamonds, minimum.
6. 3♥. Invitational four-card heart raise.
7. 3♦. Six or more diamonds, invitational (more accurate than introducing the clubs).
8. 4♥ (or 4♣ if you are sure partner will know it is a splinter bid). Big, game-forcing heart raise. Don't think of this as a “closeout” bid; it shows a very strong hand.