



Bidding Basics

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Opener's rebid after 1♦ -1NT

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

Opener	Responder
1♦	1NT
?	

The 1NT response shows 6–10 HCP, no four-card major, and usually a balanced hand. With his rebid, opener tries to show two things: strength (minimum, medium, maximum) and shape (balanced, long diamonds, or diamonds and another suit).

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

Pass. Most minimum hands (certainly balanced ones) will pass. Without significant extras, opener cannot show a four-card major on the two level (see “reverses” below). With each of these hands, opener would pass:

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

With a flat hand, opener should not repeat a five-card diamond suit.

2♣: This shows both minors and up to about 18 points, counting useful distribution. Unfortunately, this bid has a wide range, because 3♣ (see below) is a very strong bid. At least nine cards in the minors are expected (opener could be only 4–4 in the minors if he is also 4–1 in the majors). The diamonds are usually longer, but occasionally, opener will have something like:

♠5 ♥A J 2 ♦K Q J 10 ♣J 7 6 5 4.

That hand might be opened 1♦ to avoid a potential rebid problem if 1♣ had been opened. Examples:

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

2♦: This shows six or more diamonds and a minimum hand (roughly 11–15, counting useful distribution). Could have a four-card major and not enough to reverse (see below). Rebid 2♦ with these:

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

Do not make the common error of rebidding a five-card diamond suit or “reversing” with a minimum hand. Note: It would be OK to “escape” from 1NT with something like:

♠2 ♥A Q 10 4 ♦K Q 10 3 2 ♣J 3 2

(a rare time you might repeat a five-card suit).

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 are many of them in this series because they just come up. By reversing, you are forcing your partner to the three level if he wants to go back to diamonds. Accordingly, you need extra values. When, after a one-level response, opener's rebid (not a jump) is two of a higher-ranking suit 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♦ -1NT; 2♥ or 1♦ -1NT; 2♠),

opener shows four cards in the suit he is reversing into. A reverse implies five or more cards in the first-bid suit (diamonds, in this case) 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:

♠3 ♥A Q J 2 ♦A K J 10 6 5 ♣K 2
 (1♦ -1NT; 2♥) or
 ♠K Q 10 9 ♥A 3 2 ♦A K Q 6 5 4 ♣—
 (1♦ -1NT; 2♠).

2NT: 18–19 balanced (says nothing about stoppers and could have a four-card major). Don't make this bid with a nice 14-count (just pass 1NT). With 15–17, the opening bid would have been 1NT. Don't bid 2♥ or 2♠ with a balanced hand. Examples of 1♦ -1NT; 2NT:

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

3♣: A jump shift, a game-forcing, natural rebid. This shows roughly 19-plus, counting useful distribution. The hand will not be balanced (would have opened or rebid in notrump). Opener will have both minors. Examples:

♠A 3 2 ♥— ♦A K J 6 5 ♣A Q 10 6 3
 ♠K 2 ♥2 ♦A K J 6 5 4 ♣A K 10 6

3♦: Invitational: six or more diamonds and a medium hand (roughly 16–18, counting useful distribution). No four-card major (because 3♦ and a

reverse both show good hands, opener would show a four-card major on the two level if he had one). Rebid 3♦ with:

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

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

3NT: This bid really is strange because with 18–19 balanced, you would rebid 2NT, and with 20–21, you would open 2NT. It really should be a trick-taking maximum with good diamonds, something like:

♠K 2 ♥Q 10 2 ♦A K Q 7 6 5 2 ♣K

This is too strong to invite with 3♦.

4♣ or higher: Don't make such a bid.

BIDDING BASICS QUIZ

What is opener's rebid on:

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

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

-
- 2♦. Not enough strength to reverse.
 - Pass. Not enough strength to reverse. Don't repeat a five-card minor.
 - 3♣. Natural, game-forcing jump shift.
 - 2NT. 18–19 balanced.
 - 3♦. Six-plus diamonds, inviting.
 - 2♥. A reverse: four hearts, five-plus diamonds, extra values.
 - Pass. Don't repeat the five-card minor.
 - 2♣. Not nearly strong enough for a game-forcing 3♣ jump shift.