



SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

A REVIEW OF THE SUMMER

NO – TRUMP AUCTIONS

1N

15 to 17

5-CARD MAJOR



SYS ON VS



STAYMAN: Should guarantee at least one major of exactly 4 cards.



TRANSFER: Shows 6+ diamonds



TRANSFER: Shows 5+ hearts.



TRANSFER: Shows 5+ spades.



TRANSFER: Shows 6+ clubs



NO NEED TO GET COMPLICATED 😊



INVITATIONAL

SMOLEN

TEXAS



NEG.

PEN.

OTHER _____

NOTE:



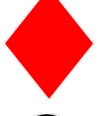

These are simply the minimum suggested agreements for our time together. If your partnership has more advanced methods, please maintain those methods.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

 **AT842** 1
 **AQ72**
 **64**
 **52**


 **KJT84** 2
 **9874**
 **742**
 **2**

 **A2** 3
 **T92**
 **AQT976**
 **72**

 **J95** 4
 **2**
 **J73**
 **QT9852**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
P	1N 2♦	P P	2♣ ??

 **AT842** 5
 **AQ72**
 **64**
 **52**

 **QT84** 6
 **J9763**
 **A**
 **K2**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

 **T2** 7
 **2**
 **AJT9642**
 **542**



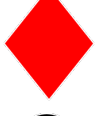

 **AKT4** 8
 **T84**
 **A98**
 **732**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

 **AT842** 1
 **AQ72**
 **64** 2♣
 **52**

 **KJT84** 2
 **9874**
 **742**
 **2** 2♥

 **A2** 3
 **T92** 3N
 **AQT976**
 **72**

 **J95** 4
 **2** 2♠
 **J73**
 **QT9852**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
P	1N 2♦	P P	2♣ ??

 **AT842** 5
 **AQ72**
 **64** 3♥
 **52**

 **QT84** 6
 **J9763**
 **A** 3♠
 **K2**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

 **T2** 7
 **2** 3♣*
 **AJT9642**
 **542** *Agreement based



 **AKT4** 8
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1N

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NO NEED TO GET COMPLICATED 😊

2N

INVITATIONAL

SMOLEN 

TEXAS 



NEG. 

PEN.

OTHER _____

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SYSTEMS ON AFTER



&



SYSTEMS ON

WEST

NORTH

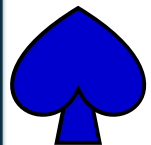
EAST

YOU

1N

X

??



AT96



KQ73



K86



42

I

SYSTEMS ON

WEST

NORTH

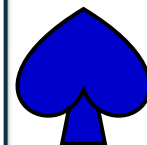
EAST

YOU

1N

2♣

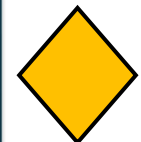
??



AT96



KQ73



K86



42

II

SYSTEMS ON

WEST

NORTH

EAST

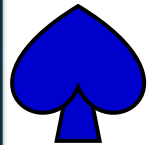
YOU

1N

X

2♣

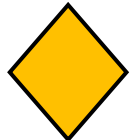
SYSTEMS STAY THE SAME



AT96



KQ73



K86



42

I

SYSTEMS ON

WEST

NORTH

EAST

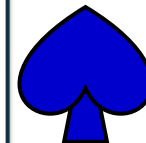
YOU

1N

2♣

X

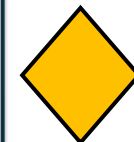
DOUBLE IS STAYMAN, OTHER SYSTEMS STAY THE SAME



AT96



KQ73







K86







42





II

 **Q9853**
 **J7**
 **874**
 **853**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

 **A74**
 **AJ97**
 **754**
 **QJ6**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

 **AQ972**
 **KJ94**
 **7**
 **853**





WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

DECLARING NO-TRUMP





1. Review the auction (did the opponents bid?)
2. What does the lead suggest?
3. Count your winners.
4. Look for extra tricks that you can develop.
5. Play the suit that will give the best chance for extra tricks safely.
6. **Don't be afraid** to give up the lead if it will lead to extra tricks for your contract.
7. The "**hold up play**" is a common way to help declarer disrupt the defenders communication when they have a long suit to run.

DEFENDING NO-TRUMP





1. **THE 4TH BEST LEAD** is king against NT contracts. (1+ honor)
2. **TOP OF NOTHING** is a nice passive lead. (no honors)
3. Top of touching honors is only ok when you have 3 touching honors. (With only 2, lead 4th best)
4. Returning partner's 4th best lead is almost always right, unless you have knowledge of a better strategy for your side.
5. **SIGNAL** when you are able to and watch for partner's signals.
6. This is the **most important** seat at the table **PAY ATTENTION** 😊

 **Q9853**
 **J7**
 **874**
 **853**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	2♥

 **A74**
 **AJ97**
 **754**
 **QJ6**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	3N

 **AQ972**
 **KJ94**
 **7**
 **853**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	2♣

DECLARING NO-TRUMP

1. Review the auction (did the opponents bid?)
2. What does the lead suggest?
3. Count your winners.
4. Look for extra tricks that you can develop.
5. Play the suit that will give the best chance for extra tricks safely.
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MAKE YOUR CALL

WEST

NORTH

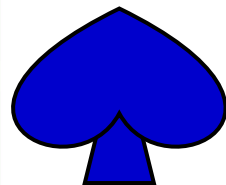
EAST

YOU

1N

P

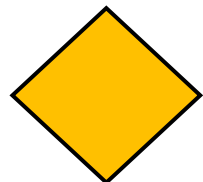
??



QJ87



K97



AQ7



853

MAKE YOUR CALL

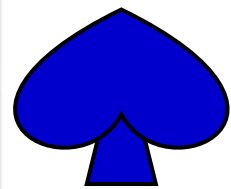

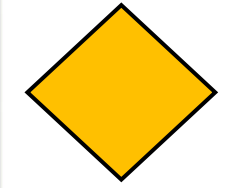
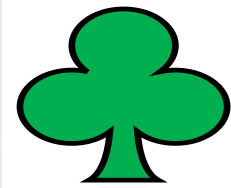
4 - 3 - 3 - 3

REMEMBER! DO NOT BID STAYMAN WITH THIS SHAPE.

Correct Bid:

3N

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1N	P	??

	QJ87
	K97
	AQ7
	853

DEFENSE TOPICS

OPENING LEADS

GUIDELINES FOR THE TOUGHEST POSITION OF CARD PLAY

NEXT STEPS AFTER STAYMAN

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

1N

P

2♣

2♥

P

??

 **QT92**

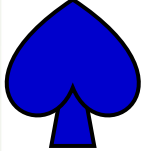
 **AT2**

 **K864**

 **Q7**

1

3N

 **85**

 **KJT9**

 **QT98**

 **AT2**

2

4♥

 **AK76**

 **543**

 **Q842**

 **85**

3

2N

Standard Leads

IT IS NICE WHEN WE HAVE ONE OF THESE STANDARD LEADS AVAILABLE IN OUR HAND.

UNFORTUNATELY, WE WON'T ALWAYS HAVE SUCH A CLEAR CHOICE AVAILABLE WHEN WE ARE THE OPENING LEADER.

THE CARDS IN BOLD ARE CONSIDERED STANDARD LEADS. (note the slight differences when we are defending vs. suits & no-trump.)

****This is from the old ACBL convention card. A new version is being released that will look very similar in this area.**

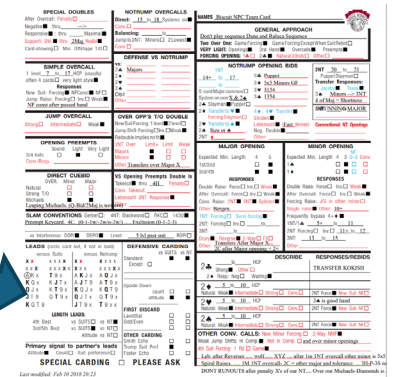
versus Suits

X X	X X X X
X X X	X X X X X
A K x	T 9 x
K Q x	K J T x
Q J x	K T 9 x
J T 9	Q T 9 x
K Q T 9	

versus Notrump

X X	X X X X
X X X	X X X X X
A K J x	A Q J x
A J T 9	A T 9 x
K Q J x	K Q T 9
Q J T x	Q T 9 x
J T 9 x	T 9 x x

The above picture might look familiar. It can be found on every ACBL convention card in the lower left hand corner 😊



PASSIVE LEADS

Passive opening leads are made when we fear giving up tricks to the other side with our lead.


 **Q72**

 **T92**

 **AQ7**

 **K632**

A passive lead comes from a weak suit in your hand.


 *A heart would be passive here*

 **A97**

 **K752**

 **973**

 **962**

 *A club or a diamond would be passive with this hand*

WHEN TO BE PASSIVE

LEVEL

The lower the level, the more likely a passive lead will work.

We almost always lead passively against Slams.

STRENGTH

The stronger declarer's hand is, the more passive you want to be.

AGGRESSIVE LEADS

Aggressive opening leads are made when we are in a rush to get our tricks. We fear they may go away if we don't hurry.

 **Q72**

 **T92**

 **AQ7**

 **K632**

An aggressive lead comes from a suit with strength.

A spade club or diamond would be aggressive here.

 **A97**

 **K752**

 **973**

 **962**

A spade or a heart would be aggressive with this hand

WHEN TO BE AGGRESSIVE

SIDE SUITS

If either dummy or declarer have shown a strong side suit, an aggressive lead is frequently best.

SHAPE

The more shape the declarer has, the more likely they will be able to pitch losers away quickly. Aggressive leads can help to establish our side's tricks prior to declarer pitching away those losers.

PASSIVE or AGGRESSIVE?

PASSIVE or AGGRESSIVE?

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		2N	P
3N	AP		

1

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
2♠	P	3♥	P
4♥	AP		

2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		3♠	P
4♠	AP		

3

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1♦	P
1♥	P	2N	P
4N	P	6N	AP

4

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
1♥	P	1♠	P
2♠	P	4♠	AP

5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1♥	P
1♠	P	4♥	AP

6

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1♦	P
1♥	P	2N	AP

7

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
1♠	P	2♥	P
3♥	P	4♥	AP

8

WEST	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1N	AP

9

PASSIVE or AGGRESSIVE?

P

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		2N	P
3N	AP		

1

A

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
2♠	P	3♥	P
4♥	AP		

2

A

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		3♠	P
4♠	AP		

3

P

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1♦	P
1♥	P	2N	P
4N	P	6N	AP

4

A

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
1♥	P	1♠	P
2♠	P	4♠	AP

5

A

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1♥	P
1♠	P	4♥	AP

6

P

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1♦	P
1♥	P	2N	AP

7

A

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
1♠	P	2♥	P
3♥	P	4♥	AP

8

P

	NORTH	EAST	LEADER
		1N	AP

9

NO – TRUMP LEADS

VS.

SUIT LEADS

NO – TRUMP LEADS

4th BEST FROM YOUR LONGEST & STRONGEST

LEADING AWAY FROM HONORS IS EXPECTED

SET UP YOUR LONG SUITS AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN

WE WANT TO SCORE TRICKS WITH OUR SMALL CARDS (LENGTH)

USUALLY STAY AWAY FROM OPPONENTS' SUITS

UNLESS WE CAN SEE A SOURCE OF TRICKS FOR OUR SIDE

PARTNER'S SUIT IS GOOD, BUT NOT ALWAYS RIGHT.

HOW MANY PTS. DOES PARTNER HAVE? DO THEY HAVE ENTRIES? IS THERE SOMETHING BETTER?

SUIT LEADS

WE USUALLY LEAD PASSIVELY HERE
EXCEPT WHEN THE AUCTION TELLS US THERE MAY BE URGENCY

LEAD SINGLETONS FOR RUFFS
EASY WAY TO GET EXTRA TRICKS AGAINST SUITS.

DON'T TRY TO BE A GENIUS ON THE LEAD
MAKING "NORMAL" LEADS IS A GOOD WAY TO STAY WITH THE FIELD

LEAD UNBID SUITS
WE CAN FREQUENTLY FIND/DEVELOP TRICKS IN THESE SUITS

LEADING TRUMP CAN BE RIGHT FOR MANY REASONS
DON'T LEAD SINGLETON TRUMPS

LEADING STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT CONTRACTS

NO – TRUMP LEADS

TYPICALLY AGGRESSIVE LEADS

TRY TO SET UP OUR LENGTH

TRICKS ARE NOT AS LIKELY TO GO AWAY

COMMON NO-TRUMP LEADS

4TH BEST FROM LONGEST
TOP OF NOTHING
TOP OF 3 TOUCHING HONORS

SUIT LEADS

TYPICALLY PASSIVE LEADS

TRY NOT TO GIVE UP TRICKS

TRICKS CAN DISAPPEAR QUICKLY

COMMON SUIT LEADS

SINGLETONS
DOUBLETONS*
TOP OF 2 TOUCHING HONORS

*When leading doubletons vs. suit contracts, we will usually need a trump entry in our hand also.

WHEN DEFENDING VS. A SUIT, DO NOT;

LEAD AWAY FROM ACES

LEAD UNSUPPORTED ACES

LEAD SINGLETON TRUMPS

LEAD THE OPPONENTS' OTHER SUITS

LEAD DOUBLETONS WITHOUT TRUMP ENTRY

STANDARD SIGNALS

ATTITUDE – COUNT – SUIT PREFERENCE

WEST **NORT** **EAST** **YOU**

1N P 2♥ P

2♠ P 2N P

4♠ AP



♠ **QJ654**

♥ **KQ5**

♦ **74**

♣ **J98**

♠ **82**

♥ **T432**

♦ **K985**

♣ **QT7**

WEST **NORTH** **EAST** **YOU**

1N	P	2♥	P
2♠	P	2N	P
4♠	AP		



♠	QJ654
♥	KQ5
♦	74
♣	J98

THE ATTITUDE SIGNAL

WHEN PARTNER LEADS AN HONOR

♠	82
♥	T432
♦	K985
♣	QT

HOW IT WORKS

LOW = "I DON'T LIKE THIS SUIT"

HIGH = "I LIKE THIS SUIT"



WEST

NORTH

EAST

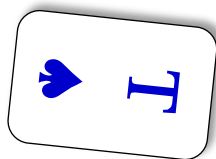
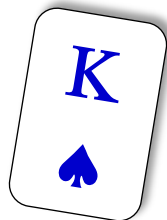
YOU

2♠

P

4♠

AP



♠ 54

♥ Q5

♦ K4

♣ J98

♠ ---

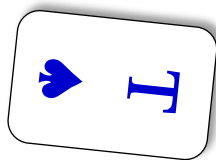
♥ 32

♦ AQ92

♣ T73

WEST **NORT** **EAST** **YOU**

2♠ P 4♠ AP



♠	54
♥	Q5
♦	K4
♣	J98

♠	---
♥	32
♦	AQ92
♣	T73

THE ATTITUDE SIGNAL

WHEN WE ARE DISCARDING

“I LIKE THIS SUIT”



WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	2♥	X	P
4♠	AP		



♠	QJ65
♥	5
♦	KJ74
♣	AQ94

SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNALS

WHEN BOTH DEFENDERS KNOW THE SUIT BEING LED (CURRENTLY) WILL NOT BE RETURNED

♠	982
♥	83
♦	AQT5
♣	T763

HOW IT WORKS

LOW = LOW RANK SUIT PREF.

HIGH = HIGH RANK SUIT PREF.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	2♥	X	P
4♠	AP		



♠	QJ65
♥	5
♦	KJ74
♣	AQ94

SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNALS

WHEN BOTH DEFENDERS KNOW THE SUIT BEING LED (CURRENTLY) WILL NOT BE RETURNED

♠	A872
♥	83
♦	9852
♣	KJT

HOW IT WORKS

LOW = LOW RANK SUIT PREF.

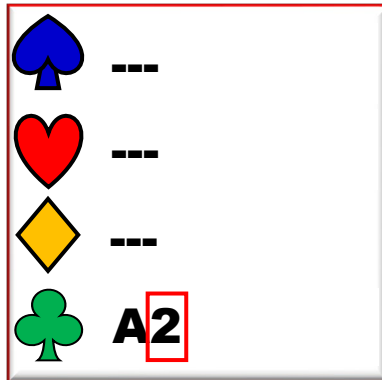
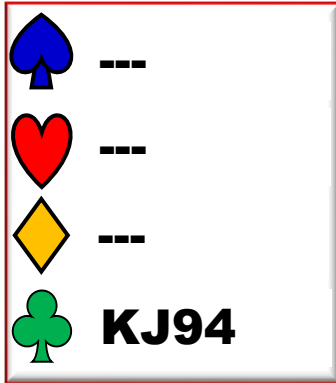
HIGH = HIGH RANK SUIT PREF.

BASIC DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES

GUIDELINES FOR BEST RESULTS

2ND HAND LOW

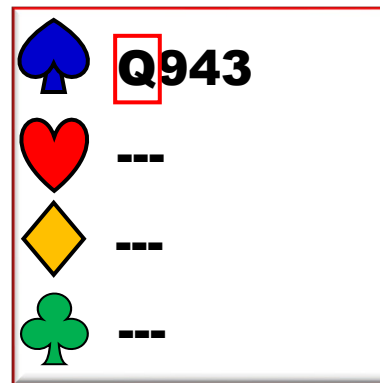
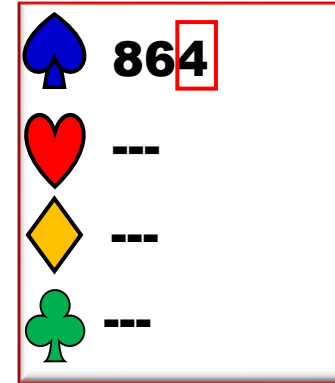
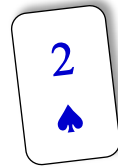
RARELY WRONG TO FOLLOW THIS
BASIC RULE OF BRIDGE.



3RD HAND HIGH

RARELY WRONG TO FOLLOW THIS
BASIC RULE.*

*When there is an honor in dummy, we might NOT
play 3rd hand high.



BEST PRACTICES

MAKE THESE THINGS PART OF YOUR
HABITS FOR EVERY HAND YOUR SIDE
IS DEFENDING FOREVER 😊

Figure out your partner's
range of high card points as
soon as dummy goes down.
(this is hard at first, but practice will
produce speed & accuracy)

Lead / Return partner's suit.

SIGNAL YOUR PARTNER

WATCH PARTNER'S SIGNALS





Make tough decisions early if
possible. (i.e. will you play 2nd hand
low when they lead towards the K in
dummy?)

Try your best to figure out
declarer's shape.

DUMMY ON LEFT?

LEAD THROUGH STRENGTH

“LEFT → THROUGH THE HEFT”

 J65
 T2
 KJ6
 972

Contract: 1NT





 A93
 Q94
 983
 63

DUMMY ON RIGHT?

LEAD TOWARDS WEAK SUITS

“RIGHT → TOWARDS LIGHT”





Contract: 3NT

 K6
 AT72
 K9
 J54

 A92
 85
 Q87
 872





WHEN YOU LEAD WITH HONOR CARDS

LEAD TOP OF TOUCHING HONORS

 **K**QJ8
 985
 J987
 T4

LED TO?

PLAY LOWER OF TOUCHING

 KQ**J**8
 985
 J987
 T4



2/1 GAME FORCING

OUR BIDDING “SYSTEM”

2/1 GAME FORCING

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1♥

P

2♣

YOU

♠ A92

♥ 42

♦ Q82

♣ AKJ73

AGREEMENT

A NON – JUMP RESPONSE OF A NEW SUIT AT THE TWO LEVEL WILL BE GAME FORCING (13+ points) WHEN;

OUR SIDE OPENS 1D – 1H – 1S

OUR SIDE HAS NOT PASSED

NEITHER OPPONENT HAS BID
(non-competitive auctions)

BASIC 2 over 1 GAME FORCING RESPONSES

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♠	P	2 ♣

- 13+ total points with 4+ ♣

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♠	P	2 ♦

- 13+ total points with 4+ ♦

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♠	P	2 ♥

- **13+ total points with 5+ ♥**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♥	P	2 ♣

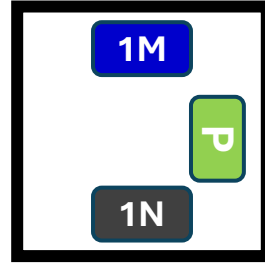
- 13+ total points with 4+ ♣

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♥	P	2 ♦

- 13+ total points with 4+ ♦

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♦	P	2 ♣

- 13+ total points with 4+ ♣



1NT SEMI - FORCING

AFTER OUR 1 LEVEL MAJOR SUIT OPENINGS

1NT SEMI – FORCING

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1 ♥

P

1N

YOU

♠ T92

♥ J2

♦ Q82

♣ AKJ73

AGREEMENT

A RESPONSE OF 1 NO - TRUMP TO A **MAJOR SUIT OPENING** WILL SHOW;

~6 – 12 TOTAL POINTS

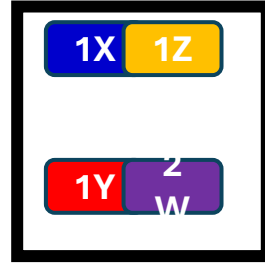
(~6 – 11 if passed hand)

ALMOST ANY SHAPE

(especially if unpassed hand)

“HIGHLY SUGGESTS” PARTNER BID

(but can be passed)



4TH SUIT FORCING

GAME FORCING LATER IN THE AUCTION

4TH SUIT FORCING

WEST	NORTH	EAST	YOU
	1 ♥	P	1 ♠
P	2 ♣	P	2 ♦

YOU

♠ **AQ975**

♥ **82**

♦ **K84**

♣ **KQ9**

4th SUIT FORCING

IN AUCTIONS THAT ARE NOT ALREADY GAME FORCING, THE BID OF THE 4TH SUIT BY RESPONDER WILL BE;

GAME FORCING

(13+ TOTAL POINTS)

ARTIFICIAL

(COULD BE ANY SHAPE)

SUGGESTING UNCERTAINTY

(ABOUT STRAIN and/or LEVEL)

4TH SUIT FORCING

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
------	-------	------	-------

	1♥	P	1♠
P	2♣	P	2♦

GAME FORCING

(13+ TOTAL POINTS)

ARTIFICIAL

(COULD BE ANY SHAPE)

SUGGESTING UNCERTAINTY

(ABOUT STRAIN and/or LEVEL)

ONLY IN NON-COMPETITIVE AUCTIONS

NO PASSED HANDS

ONLY WHEN NEEDED

(IF YOU KNOW WHERE YOU BELONG YOU DON'T USE THIS)

NOT WHEN GAME FORCED ALREADY

(2/1 AUCTIONS FOR EXAMPLE)

RESPONDING

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
------	-------	------	-------

			1♥
P	1♠	P	2♣
P	2♦	P	??

TWO PRIORITIES

IN ORDER:

SHOW 3 CARD SUPPORT

If you do not have 3 card support then

SHOW A STOPPER IN 4TH

(DO THIS BY BIDDING NO-TRUMP)

*note, this denies 3 card support

**Failing to do either of these should
always deny both support and stoppers.**



OPENER'S REBID

STANDARD STUFF

1X - 1Y ??

Opener's 2nd bid after one level responses

X = Lowest suit
Y = Middle suit
Z = Highest suit
N = No - Trump
A = Any (suit or NT)

opener	responder	sample auction	
1X	1Y	1♣	1♦
1N	12 - 14 Balanced	1N	
1X	1A	1♥	1N
2X	12 - 15 Non - Forcing	2♥	
1X	1Y	1♦	1♠
2Y	12 - 15 Non - Forcing	2♠	
1X	1Y	1♣	1♥
1Z	12 - 17 Non - Forcing	1♠	
1Y	1A	1♥	1♠
2X	12 - 17 Non - Forcing	2♦	

opener	responder	sample auction	
1X	1A	1♦	1♥
3X	16 - 18 Invitational	3♦	
1X	1Y	1♣	1♠
3Y	16 - 18 Invitational	3♠	
1X	1A	1♣	1♥
2N	18 - 19 Balanced	2N	
1X	1A	1♦	1♠
2Y	17+ Forcing	2♥	The Reverse ←
1Y	1A	1♥	1♠
3X	19+ Game Forcing	3♣	Jump Shift ←

MAKE YOUR CALL

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1 ♦

P

1 ♠

P

2 ♥

YOU



2



AJT9



AKJT2



AJ6

1X	1A	1 ♦	1 ♠
2Y	17+ Forcing	2 ♥	The Reverse ←

THE REVERSE

A good 17+ points

Natural and shows an unbalanced distribution

Forcing for one round minimum.

THE JUMP SHIFT

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1♥

P

1♠

P

3♣

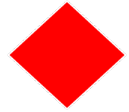
YOU



2



AQT92



AKJ



AQ84

1Y	1A	1♥	1♠
3X	19+ Game Forcing	3♣	Jump Shift ←

THE JUMP SHIFT

A good 19+ points

Natural(ish) and shows an unbalanced distribution

GAME FORCING