



# Gatlin/Cincinnati Lecture

*Basic Bidding and those problem hands*



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## Assumptions:

### (IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE)

Natural bidding = long suit first  
 Reverses show extra values; 1 round force  
 Openers jump shift rebids game forcing  
 5 card Majors  
 Strong Notrumps  
 Responders 2<sup>nd</sup> round jumps invitational  
 4<sup>th</sup> suit is forcing to game

Principle of Fast Arrival (When forced to a level, jumping to that level is the weakest bid)  
 2/1 Game Forcing (Not crucial to most of the bidding principles)  
 A flavour of new minor forcing would be a nice addition  
 Splinters (Crucial for good slam bidding)

**1) With two five-card suits: open with the higher ranking suit, respond in the higher ranking suit, and overcall in the higher ranking suit. Do not worry about which is the stronger suit.**

**2) You have to make a choice when your partner opens 1C, when do you respond 1D and do you ever skip over diamonds to bid a Major.**

## Controversial Auctions

1C-1D  
 1H-1S  
 This auction is controversial. **EVERYONE** plays it as forcing. The details depend on whether you bid up the line, have a modern laissez-faire (or loose approach) or are strict WALSH (Max Hardy 2/1) fan.

If you are a bid-up-the-line, this just shows 4S to go with four or more diamonds and could be as few as 6 HCP.

In WALSH, this is game forcing. If responder had a non game going hand with 4S, they would bypass a longer diamond suit and respond 1S.

Some modernists play this is a 1 round force with 4 Spades (They bid 2S with a game forcing hand without 4S).

### **How do I decide which way to play?**

What do you bid responding to 1C with the following hands:

- a) S Q964 H T76 D AQ86 C 85

- b) S Q964 H T76 D AK865 C 8
  - c) S QT53 H J2 D AKJ964 C 5
  - d) S QT53 H K2 D AQ762 C 54
  - e) S KJ76 H J2 D AKJ43 C Q2
- a) If you bid 1D you are a died in the wool bid-up-the-line person. Most players respond 1S.
  - b) This hand is a dividing line. The bid-up-the-liners have no problem, they bid 1D like in a). The WALSHers have no problem also. Not strong enough to bid 1D, they bid 1S. The rest of the world is in 2 camps, for many different reasons. I recommend 1S.
  - c) Similar to b), but here I recommend 1D, because of the slightly stronger hand and better diamonds.
  - d) Similar to b), again I recommend 1D, though this is closer to bidding 1S. The presence of a heart stopper suggests you can handle the later auction if you bid 1S. With H 54 and C K2, 1D is much more likely than 1S.
  - e) 1D – No second choice. **PRINCIPLE: WITH A GOOD HAND THERE IS NO REASON TO DISTORT YOUR SHAPE. BID LONGEST SUIT FIRST.**

## Reverses

There are a small number of auctions we are referring to:

1C-1M	1m-1S	1C-1NT	1m-1NT	1H-1NT
2D	2H	2D	2M	2S

We play a reverse is strong, usually at least 17 points, and forcing for one round. It is usually natural and **ALWAYS** guarantees that the 1<sup>st</sup> suit is longer than the 2<sup>nd</sup> suit. Even when the first suit is a minor, the reverse promises that the first suit is at least 5 cards in length. **THE TWO SUITS ARE NEVER EQUAL IN LENGTH.**

1C-1D-1M, 1C-1H-1S, 1D-2C-2M are not reverses.  
(Some play 1D-2C-2M is either extra values or even a full reverse)

## Problem hand shapes

1-4-4-4; 4-1-4-4; (4-4-1-4, 4-4-4-1 are both less of a problem)  
1-4-5-3; 1-4-3-5; 1-3-4-5: Note the recurring theme of the stiff spade  
2-4-5-2; 2-4-2-5;



**After you open 1♥ or 1♠ and partner responds 1NT denying support for your major, don't rebid your major unless you have a six-card suit.**

**After you open 1♣ or 1♦ and partner responds 1M, try and not rebid your minor unless you have a six-card suit.**

**If you respond a Major and then bid NT, you show the same number of points as directly bidding NT, but with the Major.**

1C-1H            This is identical in strength to 1C-1NT, except responder had to bid a  
1S-1NT            Major, if they had one. The 1NT bidder may have 4/5 hearts and probably  
Has the UBS, diamonds, stopped.

**When might responder not have a diamond stopper?**

S Q43 H K9854 D 943 C K6

1C-1H            This is another 6-9 HCP auction, that might be forced by other considerations:  
1S-2C            No rebiddable heart suit, no diamond stopper, possibly only 3 clubs!

**When might responder have a 3 card club suit?**

S J82 H Q9543 D 53 C KQ7

## Style Choices

<b>1S-2D</b>	<b>1S-2D</b>	<b>1S-2D</b>	<b>1S-2D</b>	<b>1S-2D</b>	<b>1S-2C</b>	<b>1S-2C</b>
<b>2S</b>	<b>2NT</b>	<b>3NT</b>	<b>3D</b>	<b>3C</b>	<b>2NT</b>	<b>3NT</b>
<b>Does this show 6S?</b>	<b>Minimum OR Extras?</b>	<b>Minimum OR 15-17 OR 18-19?</b>	<b>Minimum OR Extras?</b>	<b>Minimum OR Extras? (High Reverse)</b>	<b>Minimum OR Extras?</b>	<b>Minimum OR 15-17 OR 18-19?</b>

## Common Bids, Auctions and their meanings:

1S-2C            In standard bidding or some versions of 2/1 this is non-forcing, showing  
2S-3C            9-11 HCP. In 2/1, it is forcing, the most natural bid on responder's hand,  
likely denies a second suit, almost always 6+ clubs and NEVER has  
3 spades.

**When might it have a second suit?**

S 4 H J763 D A2 C AKQT86

In other words the clubs are great and the other suit is poor. Also,  
opener should not have 4H when they bid 2S.

### **When might the clubs be only 5 long?**

S 43 H AQ5 D 742 C AKJT8

1C-1H  
1S-2D This auction is not contentious. This is forcing and most play it as game forcing for simplicity. (It is technically better to play it as a one round force to cater to 2 problem hands, but then the follow-up is more complicated)

1H-4H This is preemptive, likely weak, usually with 5 or more trumps and some shape. Do not make this bid on 5332 pattern.

### **When might it only have 4 trumps?**

S 7 H K987 D QT7643 C 98

1S-2D  
2S This is again a matter of style. The meaning of most 2/1 sequences can be decided for a partnership based on defining this auction and the next seven. WALSH proponents may have S 65432, others promise a six card spade suit. **PRINCIPLE: THIS DOES NOT PROMISE 6 SPADES, IT MAY BE A BID OF CONVENIENCE.**

1S-2D  
2NT The perfect hand for this is 5-3-2-3 with both hearts and clubs stopped. The hand should also be in the 11-14 HCP range, just like a 1NT rebid.

1S-2D  
3NT This show extra values, i.e. 15-17 HCP. **PRINCIPLE: JUMPS IN NT IN FORCING AUCTIONS ARE NOT PRINCIPLE OF FAST ARRIVAL, THEY SHOW EXTRAS.**

1S-2D  
3D This is a matter of style. The questions are: What is the worst diamond holding, and what is the worst hand? I think this auction shows more than a dead minimum, and usually at least Qxx in diamonds. Since a 2S rebid is a catchall, you could have this auction guaranteeing extra values, but that is sometimes inconvenient, also, I like partner to raise me, so I should return the favour, whenever possible.

1S-2D  
3C This is also a controversial auction. The three choices are: 1) No extra values with 4+ clubs 2) No extra values, but promises 5+ clubs 3) Extra values with 4+ clubs. I prefer the extra value option. The toughest slams to bid are when opener and 2/1 responder both have a bit extra. There has to be a way for opener to show those extra values, so at least one partner know they are in the slam zone..

1H-2D  
2S Again, extras or not? Systemically, we play this shows no extras, the same as we play 1D-2C-2M. But, for the reasons stated in the previous hand, I do play with some people that this shows close to reverse values. With one person, it is a full reverse.

1S-2D  
3H Two possibilities: 1) Good 5 card heart suit 2) Splinter raise of diamonds.  
We pick Splinter. **PRINCIPLE: WHEN A SIMPLE BID IS FORCING A JUMP IS USUALLY A SPLINTER.** Here we are in a game force, so 2H would be forcing and unlimited, so the SPLINTER PRINCIPLE applies.

1S-2D  
3S Two possibilities: 1) Extra values, 6+ spades 2) Possibly close to minimum opener with 6+ solid spades. We pick the solid spade approach.

**What is the minimum hand for this bid?**

S AKQT976 H 85 D 76 C K2

S AKQJ87 H K53 D 3 C T54

1S-2D  
4D This is a super good raise of diamonds, with an unexpected number of trumps, usually 5 card support. (This has a different meaning playing the MINORWOOD ace-asking convention)

1S-2S  
2NT This is forcing and a game try. Some play it as a natural non-forcing invitation.

1S-2S  
3C This is 100% forcing and a game try. In standard meanings it shows length in clubs, and likely club honours in responder's hand would be useful. The modern standard meaning is a help suit game try (HSGT) showing at least 3 cards in clubs and specifically needing honours or shortness in clubs. Responder's weakest 2<sup>nd</sup> bid is 3S. The strong bids are 4C and 4S with 4D and 4H splinters also available. The in-between bids of 3D and 3H are non-committal. They initially show not enough to bid game, but with more than a minimum raise and values in the bid suit.

1S-2S  
3NT This is offering responder a choice of games. Opener should have apx 18-19 HCP and 5332 shape.

1S-2C  
2S-2NT The strength of this is nebulous. It could be a minimum or it could be extra values. It is possible it might even have a singleton spade!

**What hand would have a singleton spade?**

S 7 H KJ4 D QT83 C AKJ83

A 3D bid would suggest more strength or more distribution than 4-5 and also imply no heart stopper. A 3NT rebid is stronger (see below).

1S-2C  
2H-2NT Similar to the auction above.

1S-2C  
2S-3NT Like any jump in a forcing situation, this auction should have a specific meaning. It shows 15-17 HCP and precisely two spades.

1S-2C  
2H-3NT

Similarly, 15-17 HCP and precisely two spades. Some would play it also denies 3H..

## **KANTAR TIPS\***

**1. (1) When partner bids two suits and you have an equal number of cards in each suit, take partner back to the first suit even if it means increasing the level. Just do it!**

You hold: ♠ Axxx ♥ K10x ♦ Jxx ♣ xxx

Partner	You
1♦	1♠
2♥	?

Bid 3♦. Raising hearts (see next tip) or passing partner's reverse, a one-round force, puts you back in kindergarten.

**2. (2) A direct raise of a second suit promises four card support (in blood).**

You hold: ♠ xx ♥ A10x ♦ A10x ♣ K10xxx

Partner	You
1♠	2♣
2♥	?

Rebid 2NT showing 11-12 high-card points. Don't even thinking of raising hearts with only three.

**3. (3) With two five-card suits: open with the higher ranking suit, respond in the higher ranking suit, and overcall in the higher ranking suit. Do not worry about which is the stronger suit.**

You hold: ♠ x ♥ J10xxx ♦ AKQxx ♣ Kx

Open 1♥, not 1♦. Respond 1♥ to an opening 1♣ bid and overcall 1♥ if the opening bid to your right is 1♣.

**4. (4) When the bid to your right is strong, a jump by you is weak; when the bid to your right is weak, a jump by you is strong.**

If partner opens 1♣ and RHO doubles, a jump to 2♣ by you is weak. If RHO opens 2♥ (weak), a jump to 3♠ by you is strong.

**5. (5) After you open 1♥ or 1♠ and partner responds 1NT denying support for your major, don't rebid your major unless you have a six-card suit.**

**6. (12) If you play 'five-card majors', a short diamond should only be opened with 4-4 in the majors, three diamonds and two clubs.**

The incidence of a 1♦ opening bid with this exact distribution is less than 3%. Translation: When partner opens 1♦, assume partner has four or more diamonds.

**7. (13) After partner opens the bidding and second hand overcalls 1NT to show the strength of an opening 1NT bid, double for penalty if you have 9 or more HCP. Bidding a suit denies the strength to double.**

You hold: ♠ 10x ♥ KJxx ♦ AJxxx ♣ J10

North	East	South (you)	West
1♠	1NT	?	

Double. You have them outgunned. You should be able to defeat 1NT easily. If you bid 2♦, you are showing fewer than 9 HCP with at least five diamonds, usually six.

**8. (16) When responding to an opening bid with two four-card majors, respond 1♥ and give partner a chance to rebid 1♠. If partner doesn't rebid 1♠, assume partner does not have four spades and bid accordingly.**

You hold: ♠ AJxx ♥ KQxx ♦ Jx ♣ xxx

Partner	You
1♦	1♥
2♣	?

Rebid 2NT and limit your hand to 11-12 HCP. Do not rebid 2♠. Partner does not have four spades.

**9. (#57) After partner has described his hand and you know what the final contract should be, bid it! The one who knows, goes! Say partner opens 1NT (15-17) and you have 18 HCP points, balanced. There are least 33 points between the two hands so bid 6NT! If leaping so high scares you, go to a mirror and say 6NT out loud. Do it!**

**10. (#58) Best Bonus tip of all: DON'T BID THE SAME VALUES TWICE. DON'T PLAY WITH SOMEONE YOU DON'T LIKE. DON'T SCREAM AT YOUR PARTNER AND DON'T FORGET TO USE THESE TIPS UNLESS YOU WANT TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE STRUGGLING TO GET TO FIRST BASE....AMEN**

***\* Tips 1-10 are stolen from "52 FACTS OF BRIDGE LIFE":***

***Good Advice To Give Your Partner*** *By Eddie Kantar*

**All 58 available at [WWW.ACBL.org](http://WWW.ACBL.org) or <http://www.kantarbridge.com/index.htm>**

**or <http://www.reginabridge.com/index.php?topic=handouts>**

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