

REVERSE

ABOUT THE DEALS

You may be either Opener or Responder, but you will always be in the South position.

The first few pages of each Deal show only your hand. The initial bidding (if any) is given and you are asked to decide what you would bid, then click **BID**. The next page will then appear telling you what you should have bid and continuing the auction. On the final page of each Deal partner's hand will be shown.

REVERSE SUMMARY

One of the very first bidding rules we all learn is that when you have two suits you should bid the higher ranking one first, then bid the lower ranking one. This makes it easier for partner to choose between them at a low level.

But maybe the next bidding rule we learn is that when you have two suits you should bid the longer one first, then the shorter one.

Unfortunately, there are times when this rule conflicts with the first one.

Consider these two bidding sequences:

NORTH SOUTH

1♦ 1♠
2♣

NORTH SOUTH

1♣ 1♠
2♦

In the first sequence South can give a preference to North's first suit by saying 2♦, remaining at the 2-level.

But in the second sequence if South wants to return to North's first suit he must do so at the 3-level, by bidding 3♣.

In the second sequence North bid the two suits in the "Reverse" order, (lower ranking first), and in so doing has potentially forced South to the 3-level.

REVERSE

When a player opens 1 of a suit, then at his second turn bids a **higher-ranking** suit at the 2-level, that second bid is called a Reverse.

Since a Reverse forces the partnership to a higher level you should not make a Reverse bid without a fairly strong hand.

A REVERSE by Opener requires 17+ points.

For Opener to bid his suits in Reverse order the first suit should be longer than the second one.

In other words you should not distort your normal bidding practice just for the purpose of making a reverse.

A REVERSE by Opener shows at least 5-4 in the two suits, with the first suit longer. Do not Reverse with a balanced hand.

Look at some examples.

♠ NORTH SOUTH
♥ 1♣
♦ 1♠ 2♦
♣

♠ A 5
♥ Q 8
♦ K Q 10 9
♣ A J 8 7 4

This is the sequence shown above.

With 17 points (one extra for the fifth ♣) and two excellent suits, you have plenty of strength to make a Reverse. You describe a hand with longer ♣s than ♦s.

♠ NORTH SOUTH
♥ 1♦
♦ 1♠ 2♥
♣

♠ 6 5
♥ A K Q 7
♦ A K 9 6 4 2
♣ 8

This is also a Reverse.

Here you have 18 points and your ♦s are longer than your ♥s.

♠ NORTH SOUTH
♥ 1♥
♦ 1NT 2♠
♣

♠ A K J 5
♥ K Q 10 8 7
♦ A 6
♣ 4

Opener may also reverse after a 1NT response.

You have 18 points and cannot raise notrump with that singleton ♣. So you describe your hand as best you can by reversing into your ♠ suit even though you know partner would not have bid 1NT if he held four ♠s.

Responder's bid after Opener Reverses (weak hand):

A REVERSE by Opener is forcing on Responder for 1 round.

So even with a weak hand you may not pass.

We will call a weak hand one with 6-8 points since you must have had 6 for your original response.

Look at some examples where Responder is pretty weak.



NORTH SOUTH

1♣ 1♠
2♦ 3♣

♠ K Q J 5
♥ 8 7 6
♦ 10 9 6
♣ J 9 7

One bid you can make with a weak hand is to return to Opener's first suit.

You only have 7 points, but you do have a 3-card ♣ support.

And you know partner has a 5-card suit (more ♣s than ♦s).



NORTH SOUTH

1♣ 1♠
2♦ 3♦

♠ K Q J 5
♥ 8 7 6
♦ 10 9 6 3
♣ J 7

Another choice with a weak hand is to support Opener's second suit.

You only have 7 points, but with four ♦s you bid 3♦.



NORTH SOUTH

1♣ 1♥
2♦ 2NT

Another bid you can make with a weak hand is 2NT.

♠ J 10 9 5
♥ A Q 9 6
♦ 9 6 4
♣ 8 3

You don't have support for either of partner's suits, and you know he doesn't have ♣s.

The 2NT bid describes this hand perfectly. If partner has anything extra he can go on to game.



NORTH SOUTH

1♣ 1♥
2♦ 2♥

The final possibility for a weak hand is a rebid of your own 6-card suit.

♠ 7 2
♥ A J 9 6 5 3
♦ 9 6 4
♣ 8 3

You cannot support ♣s with only a doubleton, you cannot support ♦s with only three, and you don't want to bid Notrump without something in ♣s.

So you rebid your 6-card ♥s.

Responder's bid after Opener Reverses (strong hand):

After Opener has shown 17+ points with a Reverse bid, Responder will insist on reaching game when he has 9 or more points. We will call this a strong hand. The previous section outlined the possible bids for a weak hand, so it follows that when Responder has 9 or more points he makes **any other bid**. This other bid is forcing to game.

Look at some examples where Responder is has at least 9 points.

NORTH	SOUTH
1♣	1♠
2♦	4♣



♠ A K 9 5
♥ 7 6
♦ 9 8 6
♣ K 10 9 7

One bid you can make with a good hand is to jump in Opener's first suit.

You have 11 points plus 4-card ♣ support.

And you know partner has a 5-card suit (more ♣s than ♦s).

NORTH	SOUTH
1♣	1♠
2♥	4♥

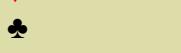


♠ A K 7 6 5
♥ Q 10 7 6
♦ 9 6 3
♣ 7

Another choice with a good hand is to jump raise Opener's second suit.

You only have 12 points in support of ♥s so you jump to game.

NORTH	SOUTH
1♣	1♥
2♦	3NT



♠ K J 9 5
♥ A Q 9 6
♦ 9 6 4
♣ 8 3

With 9 points and a stopper in the fourth suit you can bid 3NT.

You don't have support for either of partner's suits, and you know he doesn't have 4 ♠s.

You want to be in game and 3NT appears the best choice.

NORTH	SOUTH
1♣	1♥
2♦	3♥



♠ 7 2
♥ A Q J 9 5 3
♦ 9 6 4
♣ Q 3

You may jump-rebid your own 6-card suit.

You cannot support ♣s with only a doubleton, you cannot support ♦s with only three, and you don't want to bid Notrump without something in ♠s.

So you jump to 3♥s to show a 6-card suit and at least 9 points.

NORTH SOUTH

♠
♥
♦
♣

1♣ 1♥
2♦ 2♠

It may happen that you have the points to insist on game, but do not have a reasonable bid to make.

♠ 7 5 2
♥ A Q J 9 3
♦ 9 6 4
♣ K 3

With this hand you cannot support either of partner's suits, you cannot rebid your ♥s, and you dare not bid Notrump with no ♠ stopper.

So you use Fourth Suit Forcing and bid 2♠. This does not show a ♠ suit, but rather asks partner to describe his hand further. If he has 3 ♥s he should now support you, if he can stop ♠ he should bid 3NT. Otherwise he must rebid one of his suits.

Summarizing:

When Responder has fewer than 9 points his second bid may be any previously mentioned suit at the minimum level, or Notrump at the minimum level. When he makes any of these bids Opener is permitted to pass, but may be strong enough to bid on.

When Responder has 9 points or more he must make some bid other than those mentioned above. This would either be a jump bid or the fourth suit. Such a bid by Responder is Game Forcing.

Reverse after a 2-level response:

Since the response of a new suit at the 2-level promises 11+ points, (some say 10+), Opener may make a Reverse with a somewhat weaker hand, perhaps 15 points. This situation, 2-level Response followed by Opener's Reverse, creates a game-force since it is clear that the side holds 26 or more points.

NORTH SOUTH

♠
♥
♦
♣

1♦
2♣ 2♥

With 15 points and a good 4-card ♥ suit you are just strong enough to make the Reverse bid. You don't really expect partner to hold 4 ♥s, but showing the suit may make it easier for him to bid Notrump or support your ♦s.

♠ 9 5
♥ A Q J 6
♦ A K 9 6 4
♣ 8 3

Note that if partner's response had been 1♠ you would **NOT** have bid 2♥s since that would have shown at least 17 points.

IF YOU PLAY 2-OVER-1 GAME FORCE

When the first response is a 2-over-1 bid the partnership is automatically forced to game.
So Opener can make a Reverse bid with only a minimum strength hand.
In other words, the idea of a Reverse doesn't apply after 2-over-1 sequences.

How to NOT bid a Reverse:

That sounds like a peculiar topic but the big problem is not that players fail to make a Reverse bid when they should, but rather that they often Reverse when they shouldn't!

By looking ahead to the likely bidding you can often avoid the "Reverse Problem".

NORTH SOUTH

This is a perfectly good 5-card ♣ suit, and with 13 points many would open 1♣ without a moment's hesitation.

♠ 10 5
♥ 8 3
♦ AKJ 6
♣ A 9 8 6 4

The hesitation would come later, (probably more than a moment), after their partner bid a Major suit and they had to find a second bid. They are not strong enough to Reverse to 2♦, they cannot bid 1NT and they don't want to rebid a 5-card ♣ suit.

A better approach is to open the hand 1♦, then after partner's 1 of a Major, bid 2♣. In other words, treat the hand as if the ♣s were just 4-cards long.

You may just have to let a suit go unbid. It's hard to do, particularly when the suit is hearts, but you might not have a choice.

	NORTH	SOUTH
♠		
♥		1♣
♦		
♣	1♠	1NT

**♠ 5
♥ A Q J 3
♦ Q 10 6
♣ A 9 8 6 4**

It goes against the grain to keep that ❤️ suit hidden.

But you just are not strong enough to Reverse.

So bid 1NT and comfort yourself that partner probably doesn't have four hearts.

There will be times when you have to choose between two No-Noes. So you just have to pick the one you think will mislead partner the least.

NORTH SOUTH

♠
♥
♦
♣

1♣
1♠ ?

Here are the things you should not do.

♠ Q 10 5
♥ 3
♦ A Q 9 6
♣ A 9 8 6 4

Pass. Partner's new suit bid is forcing.
Bid 1NT. You have a singleton in an unbid suit.
Bid 2♦. You are too weak to Reverse.
Bid 2♣. You should not rebid the 5-card suit.
Bid 2♠. You should not support partner's response with just 3-cards.

Unfortunately there is nothing left to choose from so you must pick a No-No.
Probably the best is to support partner with just 3 trumps and bid 2♠.
At least this will come off as a weak bid.

14 examples will be worth more than another 14000 words.

Deal 1