

Second Edition



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO
PASSED HAND BIDDING

A MIKE LAWRENCE
BRIDGE CLASSIC



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INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION

DEVELOPING A PARTNERSHIP WITH MIKE LAWRENCE for the 1989 World Championships in Perth, Australia, gave me the pleasure and opportunity to study the thinking processes of one of the best bidders in the world.

Now, readers of this book have the same opportunity. Mike has written about the little explored area of passed hand bidding in great depth. All of his concepts are valuable to any level of player.

For example, he gives the following guidelines for a third seat opener's rebids:

- A 1NT rebid promises a full opening bid.
- A pass of a one-level response shows tolerance for partner's suit.
- A new suit rebid or rebid of original suit shows nearly a full opening bid.

Thus, if in third seat you pick up

♠ 6 ♥ K Q 10 8 7 ♦ K 5 4 2 ♣ J 5 3

it is clearly wrong to open 1♥, since a 1♠ response will leave you no reasonable follow-up. The correct opening bid is a weak 2♥ call, which Mike explains can be made on several hands that wouldn't be opened in the first or second seat. Without an understanding of these guidelines, many players would fall into the trap of opening 1♥ on this hand.

In addition to giving excellent principles for all stages of passed hand bidding, Mike examines the more scientific approaches available, such as the forcing notrump response by a passed hand, possible meanings of a jump shift, and Drury. I found these discussions especially interesting, since there has been virtually nothing written in this area.

Here is one favorite example on hand evaluation. West holds:

♠ A J 10 7 ♥ J 10 3 ♦ K J 4 ♣ 8 6 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣*	pass	4♣**	pass
?			

*Drury, promises heart support

**Splinter bid

To the average bridge player, this might look like a minimum Drury bid worth nothing more than a 4♥ call. Mike points out that this is really an excellent hand with nothing wasted in clubs. He recommends a 4♦ cuebid, followed by 4♠ if partner signs off at 4♥. This cuebid of the ♦K should help partner evaluate his hand for slam purposes.

All in all, Mike has made a major contribution to bidding theory. Many new important concepts are introduced, and many old concepts are clarified in a way that is easy to understand and fun to read at the same time. While *Passed Hand Bidding* is geared primarily for the average player, all players from novices to experts will find plenty to learn.

Kit Woolsey

PART ONE

OPENING THE BIDDING IN THIRD OR FOURTH SEAT

CHAPTER ONE

THIRD SEAT BIDDING

Experience has shown that active players get better results than passive players. The more aggressive players, within suitable limits, create more problems for their opponents and consequently reap better results when their opponents misjudge. Not all situations are suitable for aggressive behavior. But some situations practically scream for it.

One such situation occurs in third seat. A proven effective tactic is to open in third seat with hands not strong enough to open in first or second seat. There are quite a few reasons why opening light in third seat might work.

1. Game and slam bidding become more difficult for your opponents.
2. Partner may be directed to a good opening lead.
3. Your opponents may misjudge their values.
4. You may reach a contract that makes, or one that fails by a small amount.

Following are examples of these reasons.

REASON ONE:

A LIGHT THIRD SEAT OPENER CAN BE OBSTRUCTIVE

A light third seat opening bid, whatever it is, will force the opponents to use their defensive bidding structure rather than their opening bid structure. As far as game bidding goes, your opponents will not suffer too much, but their slam bidding will be very much impaired.

South deals, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable

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

For example, with the above hands, if East is allowed to open in fourth seat, a possible bidding sequence could be:

West	North	East	South
			pass
pass	pass	1♠	pass
1NT	pass	2♦	pass
3♦	pass	4♣	pass
5♦	pass	6♦	pass
pass	pass		

Here, 6♦ is an excellent contract. It is a hard slam to bid, but certainly one should reach 5♦.

Now try bidding the same hands with the opponents opening the bidding.

West	North	East	South
			pass
pass	1♥	?	

Should East bid 1♠ or double? Regardless of which bid he selects, how should the bidding continue? Whatever sequence you found, I predict it was not easy. If you just reached 5♦ you would have scored well. Success was not universal when this hand was played in a recent tournament. Typical unsuccessful sequences were:

West	North	East	South
			pass
pass	1♥	dbl	2♥
pass	pass	2♠	pass
3♦	pass	pass	pass

West	North	East	South
			pass
pass	1♥	1♠	2♥
pass	pass	dbl	pass
3♦	pass	pass	pass

West	North	East	South
			pass
pass	1♥	dbl	2♥
3♦	pass	3♠	pass
4♦	pass	pass	pass

East and West had a sensible auction up to East's final pass. He should at least have raised to 5♦. Given West had shown some values, East probably should have bid 4NT on the way to 6♦. As bad as these sequences were, these pairs at least got to a diamond contract. One pair failed to reach diamonds at all:

West	North	East	South
			pass
pass	1♥	1♠	pass
pass	pass		

All in all, not a good demonstration of bidding by East-West. For the record, on this sequence South did not raise hearts. West should have bid 2♦, which would get East's attention.

REASON TWO:

A LIGHT THIRD SEAT OPENER CAN HELP PARTNER'S OPENING LEAD

Another reason for opening light in third seat is to get partner off to a good lead that he might otherwise not find if you pass.

For example, as East, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 8 6 5 ♥ K Q 10 8 ♦ A J 3 ♣ 9 5 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	

East's 1♥ bid is not going to get his partnership to a good contract, but it will get West off to a good lead if South plays the hand.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	1♠
pass	2♠	pass	4♠
pass	pass	pass	

REASON THREE: A LIGHT THIRD SEAT OPENER MAY CAUSE THE OPPONENTS TO MISJUDGE

This type of result happens often:

[12] *Passed Hand Bidding*

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	2♦
2♠	3♦	pass	pass
pass			

West led a spade and declarer ended up making four. However, 3NT was cold. South had a good hand but was afraid North was pushing. If North raised on

♠ Q 8 ♥ 10 5 4 ♦ Q J 5 ♣ A 8 6 4 2

instead of

♠ Q 8 ♥ K 5 4 ♦ Q 7 5 ♣ A 8 6 4 2

3♦ would be high enough. Any game try by South would lead to a minus score.

North-South didn't do anything terrible. It just happened that 3NT would make and probably would have been bid without East's third seat opening bid.

REASON FOUR: SOMETIMES YOU FIND A FIT AND DISCOVER YOU CAN MAKE SOMETHING

This reason is sort of an afterthought that is an unexpected bonus. If you find a fit and are able to make something, you should consider yourself lucky. It is possible that you cannot make your contract but your bidding may succeed in pushing them too high or it may allow you to get away for a modest penalty. When you open a major with a 9 point hand and somehow end up with ten tricks, you really should file it away under luck and not good bridge.

WHY NOT OPEN LIGHT IN ALL SEATS?

Looking at the discussion above, you might get the idea that light opening bids are a good thing. If so, why not open light all the time? The reason you do not do so is that your constructive bidding will become impossible. If you open with a weak hand, there are tools you can use to keep you out of trouble if you have the bidding to yourselves. But if the opponents come into the bidding, your partner will make bids you do not want to hear. For instance, if you open 1♠ with a 9 count and they bid 2♥, you will not be happy if your partner bids 2NT or even 3NT.

You want to make life hard for your opponents without starting major wars with them. Some discretion will be needed.

CHAPTER TWO

FIVE RULES FOR PASSED HAND BIDDING

I would like to introduce five rules that will improve your passed hand bidding decisions and help keep your enthusiasm in line.

RULE ONE

When partner responds in a suit at the one-level

A pass of partner's new suit response at the one-level shows a tolerance for his suit.

If you open in third seat and then pass partner's one-level response in a new suit, you promise a tolerance for his suit. Ideally you would like to have three-card support, but you might (rarely) get away with a doubleton honor.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	?	

What should East rebid with these hands?

♠ 8 6 5 ♥ A Q 10 7 5 ♦ K 6 4 ♣ J 2

♠ Q 10 ♥ A K J 9 ♦ 7 6 5 4 ♣ J 10 2

♠ 3 ♥ K J 10 8 7 ♦ J 7 6 ♣ K Q 8 6

Passing is okay in the first case and probably okay in the second case. But with the third hand any rebid will be misleading. Passing would show a tolerance for spades. Bidding on would imply a full opener.

Should you have passed in third seat? No. You should have opened with 2♥. Weak two-bids in third seat with five-card suits will become a way of life for you. This way, you don't have to deal with the difficult situation where you bid 1♥ and partner bids 1♠.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what should you bid in third seat?

♠ 4 2 ♥ K 8 7 ♦ K Q 10 7 ♣ Q 9 8 7

Pass. It is semi-reasonable to open 1♦ because you want a diamond lead. Also, if partner responds with anything other than 1♠ you can pass with comfort. Partner doesn't have to bid 1♠. Sometimes the opponents bid spades. Nonetheless, I personally would pass. Good things can indeed come from opening 1♦, but if partner bids 1♠ our sequence will be in jeopardy. I don't want to set my partner up for a fall. If partner plays in 1♠ and does poorly he may become gun-shy on later hands. Partner is special. Don't embarrass him.

It is important to understand why opening 1♦ and then passing 1♠ is dangerous. It is not that 1♠ will always be a bad contract. Partner may have ♠J865, in which case 1♠ will be an awful spot. But he may have ♠Q10863. In this case, 1♠ will be a decent spot.

The trouble is that 1♠ does not always end the auction. Say your partner, West, has this hand:

♠ Q 10 8 6 3 ♥ Q 5 ♦ J 3 2 ♣ A 10 6

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♠	pass	pass	dbl
pass	2♥	pass	pass
?			

If your partner bids 2♣, expecting a mild fit, he will be unhappy with your hand.

Plan ahead

A consequence of rule one is that you should avoid opening very weak hands in third seat when you have a higher-ranking singleton or worthless doubleton. If you are not strong enough to make a rebid, you should pass if partner's most likely bid will get the partnership into a bad contract.

RULE TWO

When partner responds in a suit at the two-level

A pass of partner's new suit response at the two-level does not promise a fit or even a tolerance.

When partner responds at the two-level to a third seat one-bid, he should have at least a good five-card suit. For this reason opener does not have to worry

much about bad holdings in lower-ranking suits than the one he is opening. He knows his partner has a good suit when he bids it at the two-level.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A 7 5 ♥ K Q J 6 ♦ 4 2 ♣ 9 7 6 5

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♦	pass	?	

What do you bid?

Pass is fine. You do not like having only two diamonds but since West has at least five of them, 2♦ should be a playable contract. By comparison, when partner responds at the one-level, he is permitted to have a poor four-card suit.

Once in awhile you will open light and partner will respond in your singleton at the two-level. Now what?

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ J 7 6 ♥ A J 9 7 5 ♦ 3 ♣ K 10 8 5

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♦	pass	?	

What do you bid?

I suggest pass. It is contrary to what I have said, but it does stop the bidding. Partner can have a singleton heart, so bidding 2♥ isn't going to improve matters. It was reasonable to bid 1♥, since partner could have responded with either 1♠ or 2♥, or even 2♣, Drury. Partner's 2♦ response means you lost your gamble. Do not try again. Pass before you get into an even poorer contract.

RULE THREE

A notrump rebid promises a full opener.

If you open in third seat and then rebid 1NT or 2NT you promise a full opener with normal strength for your rebid. This means you do not have a 10 point hand and you usually do not have a singleton in partner's suit. If you rebid 1NT, your partner is entitled to bid his hand as if you have your promised values.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A Q ♥ Q 7 6 ♦ Q J 7 5 4 ♣ 9 8 4

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♠	pass	?	

What do you bid?

Pass. It is slightly unusual to pass partner with only two cards at the one-level, but at least they are good ones. You can't rebid 1NT because that promises a full 12-14 points. If your partner passed a good 11 count or a shabby 12 count, he would be right to raise to 2NT, which you do not want.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 9 6 ♥ K Q 10 4 ♦ A J 9 8 ♣ K J 8

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♠	pass	?	

What do you bid?

Bid 1NT. If you are in the habit of bidding 1NT with 10 or 11 point hands just to get out of partner's suit, he will be gun-shy about raising you when he has a good passed hand. How would you feel if your partner huddled and passed regretfully? Would you like hearing that partner was afraid to raise because he was worried that you might have a dog?

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A J 8 7 4 ♥ K 6 4 ♦ 8 ♣ Q J 4 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♦	pass	?	

What do you bid?

Pass. You do not have full values to bid 2NT. If you do rebid 2NT, your partner will often go on to game and it won't make. There are all kinds of hands he might have that contain 11 or even 12 points that would expect 3NT to be playable. Among other things, he would hope you had at least two diamonds to help his suit.

Two other bad bids that I have seen people make are 2♠, rebidding the major, and 3♣, showing a new suit. Both of these bids will get you in trouble. Passing 2♦ may not lead to a wonderful spot but it rates to end the bidding.

RULE FOUR

A rebid of the opener's original suit implies a full opener.

When you open in third seat and partner responds at the one-level (or two-level) and you rebid your original suit, you promise a full opener and a six-card suit. The reason is that if you had a weakish hand with a six-card suit, you would have opened a weak two-bid.

This rule helps your constructive bidding. If you open a weak hand and keep bidding your suit, your partner won't know if you have something or if you are kidding. He will continue on, looking for games that are not there. In general, if you do not like what your partner is likely to do, you shouldn't start something.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 6 ♥ KJ9875 ♦ A107 ♣ AJ2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	?	

What do you bid?

Bid 2♥. When you rebid your original suit you promise a full opening bid and almost always a six-card suit. If you had one less ace you would pass or open a weak two-bid.

RULE FIVE

If opener rebids a new suit, he hints at a full opener or close to a full opener.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ J 8 6 5 ♥ 3 ♦ K Q 10 7 ♣ A 6 4 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	?	

What do you bid?

You can rebid 1♠ with this weakish hand because there is still reasonable hope for a good contract.

The following hand has the same high cards as the one above but the distribution is wrong for an opening bid in third seat.

♠ 3 ♥ K Q 10 7 ♦ A 6 4 2 ♣ J 8 6 5

It is tempting to open with 1♥. I would pass, though, because I will be unhappy if partner bids 1♠, which is likely. Bidding a new suit at the two-level gets us higher than I am ready to go. How do you feel about these possible sequences?

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	2♣	pass
2♥			

Partner didn't raise hearts immediately so he rates to have just two. You do not want to play in a 4-2 fit.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	1NT	pass
2♠			

Your partner could not open and now he is in 2♠. It doesn't rate to be fun since you have so little to offer.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	1NT	pass
3♠			

This is worse yet. You still have a stinky hand and your partner is at the three-level. This is the kind of result you wish to avoid and avoiding it is done by choosing when and when not to open a light hand.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	2♣	pass
2NT			

This is terrible. Your partner passed and now is in 2NT. He rates to have 10 or 11 points and he is going down.

Tip:

If you have awkward shape such that opening the hand will give you problems, consider whether passing and then coming in later might be better. For example, you are East:

♠ 2 ♥ K Q 10 7 ♦ A 6 4 2 ♣ J 8 6 5

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♣
pass	1♠	dbl	

This auction allows you to show your suits without overstating your values.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 8 ♥ A 10 8 7 6 5 ♦ K J 3 ♣ J 5 4

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	?	

This is a trap hand. You shouldn't have opened 1♥. If you have a six-card suit you will open, or think of opening, a weak two when holding 6-10 points, and you might choose to do this with bad 11 point hands. If you open this hand 1♥

and rebid 2♥, your partner will expect more. Always, when you are considering opening at the one-level, ask yourself if your partner can bid something you do not like. Here, if he bids 1♠ you won't be pleased.

Be aware that you are allowed to pass when the vulnerability is bad for you and when most of your features are poor ones. Passing is legal. The hand above has a nice suit and it has concentrated points. It is worth a 2♥ bid.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K Q 8 5 2 ♥ J ♦ 5 4 ♣ A 10 8 6 5

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♥	pass	?	

What do you bid?

Better to pass than to rebid 2♠ or 3♣. Your partner denies spade support, so spades will not be an improvement. Worse yet would be to bid 3♣. Whether you play a two-over-one system or go as you please, 3♣ should show at least a good 15 points.

As East, holding:

♠ A K 10 7 5 ♥ J 8 6 4 2 ♦ 3 2 ♣ 10

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♦	pass	?	

What do you bid?

Pass. If you rebid 2♥, you might get away with it. The odds are that your partner will have a fair hand and will try for game, thinking you have more. If you bid 2♥ it is quite possible that you will end up in a higher contract, possibly doubled. It is better to play in 2♦ making two or down one than to play 4♥ or 3NT going down 50 to 500. When you opened 1♠ you got your best suit in and, if the opponents play the hand, your partner will get off to a good lead. The auction has not gone the way you were hoping, but so far nothing bad has happened. Why give partner the opportunity to end up in a poor contract?

CHAPTER THREE

HOW LIGHT CAN YOU OPEN IN THIRD SEAT?

In my experience, almost all players have decided to loosen up in third seat, and I agree wholeheartedly. Aggressive bidding in third seat has withstood the test of time as an effective strategy. Keeping the five rules from the previous chapter in mind, how light should you open?

FACTOR ONE

Your partner's likely response

If you open light in third seat, will you be able to handle your partner's most likely response?

♠ 9 ♥ J 9 6 4 2 ♦ A J 3 2 ♣ K 8 7

If you open 1♥ in third seat with the opponents vulnerable, will you be happy when your partner responds 1♠?

If he does bid 1♠, you will have two choices:

1. Pass, and let your partner play in a hideous contract.
2. Rebid 1NT or 2♦, after which you will hate virtually any bid your partner can make. If he has a maximum passed hand he may bid 2NT, and that won't be good.

FACTOR TWO

Your partnership's style

Does your partnership like to live dangerously or does it depend on sound bridge? This is a question that you must answer for yourself.

In the following hands you are in third seat after two passes. Which of these hands do you open? For whatever it is worth, I will offer my opinions. Assume no one is vulnerable. You should be aware that if they are vulnerable you have more room to try something drastic in third seat than when they are not vulnerable.

Note that this is not a quiz. What you decide is neither right nor wrong. It is a measure of your partnership agreements.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	?	
♠ K J 8 7 5 ♥ Q 10 4 ♦ A 9 3 ♣ 8 2			

Bid 1♠. This hand is close to an opening bid and it has a decent suit. Because you have the spade suit, your bid will make it harder on your opponents than if you had the club suit.

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

Pass. Do not bid 1♠. Your bad suit and generally poor hand won't be much good if the bidding gets out of hand. The only thing you have going for you is that your bid is obstructive. Worse, you do not even want a spade lead. Let this one go.

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

Bid 1♥. While not a full opening bid, the hand has three notable features:

- 1. It is not a hopeless hand.
- 2. You can stand any bid your partner might make.
- 3. You want a heart lead.

♠ K J 9 3 2 ♥ 10 8 ♦ 8 4 3 ♣ A Q 4

Try 1♠. The bid is obstructive and you won't mind hearing partner bid something.

In general, a bid of 1♥ or 1♠ is more annoying to your opponents than 1♣ or 1♦. Opening one of a minor leaves room for LHO to do things he cannot do over one of a major. Passing this hand is possible but it gives up a good opportunity.

♠ Q 8 6 5 ♥ 3 ♦ 10 8 7 ♣ A K J 5 4

Here, 1♣ is reasonable. You will rebid 1♠ if your partner bids 1♥. You have good clubs and want a club lead, which is worthwhile. Note that when you open a suit and rebid in a new suit, you do not promise a full opener.

♠ K 7 5 ♥ J 6 4 ♦ A 7 ♣ Q J 6 4 2

Open 1♣ and pass whatever partner bids, even if he bids 1♦. Mostly he will bid a major and you can pass comfortably with three of them.

♠ 8 ♥ A Q 5 ♦ Q 8 6 4 ♣ Q J 6 4 2

Pass. Here you are terrified of a 1♠ response and you have no safe rebid. If you open 1♣ and rebid 2♣ you show a full opener and usually a six-card club suit. If you rebid 1NT you show a full opener. Your partner, remember, will take you seriously if you rebid 1NT, and will sometimes raise to 2NT or even 3NT.

♠ 8 3 2 ♥ 10 8 7 ♦ K Q J 8 ♣ A 10 6

Not vulnerable, I can imagine bidding 1♦. It is not my style but since you have a quality suit and since you can pass your partner's response, 1♦ is marginally acceptable. Be sure your partner understands that this hand is possible.

♠ 8 ♥ 10 9 8 5 ♦ K Q J 8 ♣ A 10 8 2

Pass. Same good diamond suit as above but you will lose control of the bidding if your partner bids 1♠. Note that the bidding can include a few nightmares that you have not considered. If your LHO overcalls 2♣ and your partner bids 2♠, you are in deeper than you imagined. No need to invite this kind of disaster.

Whatever style your partnership agrees on, it will be worthwhile going over these hands to check your agreements.

I suggest that after you finish this book, you come back to this and other similar sections and see if you answer the questions any differently.

FACTOR THREE

A reminder thought. Is your bid obstructive?

If you open light in third seat, you should have a reason for doing so. One such reason is to make life more difficult for your opponents. You don't have to preempt to obstruct your opponents. Obstruction can be more subtle than that. Here is a hand that your left hand opponent might have. Here is the problem from his point of view. Note how various opening bids affect his willingness to compete.

Sitting South, what do you bid when East opens with one of a suit in third seat? Here is your hand:

♠ K 6 2 ♥ A Q 7 5 3 ♦ 9 2 ♣ K 6 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1 of a suit	?

You would be happy to overcall 1♥ against 1♣ or 1♦, but you should hate to bid against 1♠. Even though 1♠ is not a preemptive bid, it often feels like one when you have to contend with it.

This suggests that if you are going to open light in third seat, one of your considerations should be whether you are able to open with a major or a minor. For instance, as East, neither vulnerable, you hold the following hand. What do you bid in third seat?

♠ J 10 7 5 4 ♥ 9 7 ♦ A 5 4 ♣ A J 8

This is a modest hand but a 1♠ bid does make life harder on your opponents. The preemptive value of 1♠ makes it worthwhile.

FACTOR FOUR

Opening lead possibilities

Another reason for opening light in the third seat is to help partner with the opening lead.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 6 5 ♥ J 6 5 ♦ A 2 ♣ K Q 10 8 5

Bidding 1♣ is fine. You have a good suit that will be impossible to introduce when the opponents start bidding. If West responds 1♦ you will have to pass, but I judge this as unlikely. Partner will usually bid a major, and if he doesn't, one of the opponents will usually have overcalled.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ K Q 4 ♥ 9 7 ♦ K J 4 ♣ J 9 8 7 5

Pass. With a weak hand and a weak suit, there isn't much reason to bid.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ K 8 6 ♥ Q J 4 ♦ K 9 6 ♣ Q 8 6 5

There is no real purpose in bidding with this hand, either. A 1♣ bid doesn't preempt anyone and you do not want partner to lead clubs. If you have to open this hand, a very weak 1NT is at least preemptive. You can only do this if your system calls for it. Frankly, I wouldn't. I would hate to hear the next player double it.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ K Q J 10 ♥ 8 6 2 ♦ 5 4 2 ♣ 9 7 6

This hand represents all that is good about bidding in the third seat. A 1♠ bid is preemptive and lead-directing. Whether you bid or pass depends on your partnership's accepted style. I admire 1♠, although it is closer to a psych than a light opening bid.

FACTOR FIVE

Vulnerability

Keep an eye out for the vulnerability. If you open and partner raises or bids 1NT, you should have a good enough hand that making or down one is available. Your partner will not be happy if you keep going for 200 or more. Not vulnerable, you can take liberties. Vulnerable, you should keep your standards up.

For example, both vulnerable:

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	?	
West		East	
♠ A 8 2		♠ K Q J 10	
♥ K 10 9 7		♥ 8 6	
♦ 4 2		♦ Q J 6 3	
♣ J 8 6 3		♣ 10 7 2	

Vulnerable, East should pass. If East opens 1♠, West will raise to 2♠; yet against normal defense the contract could go down two or even three. The specter of down two vulnerable weighs heavily against being too active in third seat. Heaven help us when we get doubled.

What would a minimum vulnerable 1♠ bid in third seat look like? Typically, you will have a good five-card suit. For instance:

♠ A J 10 7 5 ♥ 4 2 ♦ K J 7 ♣ 10 5 4

Opposite a decent raise to 2♠ I can easily construct hands where down one, or even making, is possible. Note that the fifth spade is an extra trick. Vulnerable in third seat, you shouldn't open on really weak hands with only a four-card suit.

CHAPTER FOUR

THIRD SEAT PREEMPTS

WEAK TWO-BIDS

Note that vulnerability is important. Unless noted otherwise, you are not vulnerable in the following discussion and examples.

Aggressive use of preempts is an effective technique in third seat. In first or second seat there is a danger that your partner has a good hand. Therefore, so as not to mislead partner, you need to keep your preempts reasonably well-defined.

In third seat, you have already heard your partner and RHO pass. Therefore, if you have a weak hand, one thing you can count on is that LHO has a good hand and is waiting to bid. You would like to do something to disturb his bidding.

Imagine yourself in fourth seat with nobody vulnerable:

♠ A J 3 ♥ A Q 10 8 7 ♦ J 3 ♣ A Q 7

It would be wonderful if you were allowed to open 1♥. It would be less wonderful if third seat in front of you opened 1♣, 1♦, or 1♠. And what if the opening bid was 2♦ or 2♠, or worse yet, 3♦? Who needs this?

This hand is typical of the problem posed to the fourth-hand bidder when third seat makes a weak two-bid. Since fourth seat will often be waiting with a good hand, it is good strategy to make life difficult for him. A weak two-bid is often the bid you will make in third seat in your effort to annoy the player behind you.

As with all good things, you can pursue this concept only so far. How far are you willing to go in making a third seat weak two-bid or weak three-bid?

Useful observation: In third seat, you will want to open many hands that should not be opened with a one-bid. The five factors in the previous section show all kinds of restrictions on what you need to open with one of a suit in third seat. When you have a hand that ‘wants’ to do something but that is not suitable for a one-bid, the solution may be a weak two-bid.

THIRD SEAT WEAK TWO-BIDS WHEN NOT VULNERABLE

In third seat, when not vulnerable and especially when you are not vulnerable versus vulnerable opponents, you can open a weak two-bid that ignores some of the usual cautions. You can:

1. Open with a five-card suit. In fact, third seat weak two-bids are often based on a five-card suit. It is very common. I would guess that about two thirds of your weak two-bids will be based on five-card suits, perhaps more.
2. Open with a side four-card major. This is a huge no-no in first or second seat. In third seat, almost anything goes.
3. Open with a void! This too is something that you would not have in first or second seat. Third seat weak twos allow for this and much more.

Following is a selection of hands where you might wish to preempt in third seat. Reminder: In the following hands you are not vulnerable. Sometimes they are also not vulnerable. Sometimes they are. If they are vulnerable, you may be a little more pushy than normal.

You may be surprised at the range of the hands that are eligible for a preempt in third seat when not vulnerable.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 2 ♥ K J 9 8 6 5 ♦ 4 2 ♣ K 10 3

Bid 2♥. This hand would be a normal weak two in first or second seat. Thus, the hand is also a good candidate for a weak two in third seat.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ K Q J 7 5 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 8 6 5 ♣ J 5 4

You should do something with this hand. A 2♠ bid is a very reasonable action, even at IMP scoring. In third seat you can afford actions like this. You know partner will not go looking for a game, and you know your LHO will often be looking at a good hand. Note that on this hand, your opponents are vulnerable. Bidding 2♣ with this hand would be too aggressive against non-vulnerable opponents.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 3 ♥ 7 5 4 2 ♦ A Q J 10 8 ♣ 8 6 4

Open 2♦. This hand isn't going anywhere, so you don't have to worry that hearts could be a better contract. A 2♦ bid will put South under pressure and will help West with his opening lead.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ Q J 9 8 4 ♥ 8 6 4 3 ♦ — ♣ Q 6 4 3

Bid 2♠. You can even be more extreme at favorable vulnerability. This hand shows how far you can go to in opening a third seat weak two-bid. Look at the rules you've broken with this one:

- You have only a five-card suit.
- You have a side four-card major.
- You have a void.
- You don't have enough strength.

I admit I wouldn't bid 2♠ at equal vulnerability, but I would certainly do it if they were vulnerable and we weren't. Bridge can be exciting!

Of all the requirements for a third seat weak two-bid, the only one I would really insist on is at least a fair five-card suit.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 3 ♥ K Q 10 8 7 ♦ K 9 7 6 ♣ J 8 6

Bid 2♥. This hand is rejected as a possible 1♥ bid since the hand could not stand a 1♠ response. Very frequently you will be able to avoid an awkward response from partner with a weak two.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 ♥ A Q 10 9 7 ♦ J 7 6 4 2 ♣ 9 7

Bid 2♥. You have a nice five-card suit. Having a side five-card diamond suit would be bad for a weak two in first or second seat but in third seat, it is fine.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 4 2 ♥ 8 6 ♦ A J 9 7 6 3 ♣ 8 3

Open 2♦. This is not a weak two in any other seat. You are sure the hand

belongs to the opponents. You have a decent suit and it happens to be six cards long. Feel free to bid 2♦ with this when not vulnerable. You would prefer that they were vulnerable but winning bridge is not always technically correct bridge.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 5 3 ♥ 7 6 ♦ Q 9 6 5 ♣ K Q 10 9 7

Pass. This, of course, is not a weak two-bid because you have clubs. I would respect anyone who was brazen enough to open 3♣. In fact, I have seen this play used more than a few times by very good players.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ Q 7 2 ♥ K Q 10 9 7 ♦ Q 2 ♣ Q 8 7

I would not bid 2♥ with this. With scattered high cards, I would prefer 1♥, intending to pass anything partner bids that is not a conventional bid. This hand is suitable for play in any suit, not just hearts. You do not want to play in 2♥ and find partner with five spades to the king and a singleton heart.

Important reminder:

Scattered honors in side suits are a warning against making a preempt. The three queens outside of the heart suit are not necessarily good cards for you in a heart contract but they may become useful if you end up on defense. You would open 2♥ if you could trade in the three side queens for one king.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ J 10 9 7 6 5 ♥ A 5 4 ♦ J 10 ♣ 8 3

Bid 2♠. Why give LHO room to bid 1NT? If no one was vulnerable passing would probably be best. But it would only take a little change to get me to bid 2♠.

♠ J 10 9 7 6 5 ♥ 5 4 ♦ A J 10 ♣ 8 3

Now my six points are working somewhat, meaning I rate to take at least one more trick than in the previous hand.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 2 ♥ Q J 8 6 5 ♦ A 4 3 2 ♣ 7 5

Bid 2♥. Stretching a bit, if your partner is understanding.

Tip:

The better your suit, the more acceptable it is to have poor values on the side.

If your suit is only so-so, such as here, you need all your side strength to be working.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ Q 9 6 5 4 2 ♥ K ♦ Q J 3 ♣ Q 9 2

There is nothing here to recommend a weak two. I would pass. Not vulnerable versus vulnerable you can bid aggressively, but not madly. This hand has a wretched suit and it has soft high cards outside. Even at favorable vulnerability you have to have a reason to bid. This hand has too many flaws.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ Q J 10 8 7 ♥ 5 2 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ K 5 3

A thoughtful 2♠ bid. I will discuss how partner should respond to a third seat two-bid later. For the moment, keep this hand in mind. It is just another example of a third seat weak two on trash. Good suit, a little on the side, and some prayers.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ J 10 8 7 5 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 7 ♣ K 10 7 6 5

Pass is probably best. I offer this hand as an example of weak twos I have seen that worked. Bidding this way is not my cup of tea, but I can't help remembering that this sort of bidding can be effective at times. Take your choice.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ J 8 6 5 2 ♥ Q 10 ♦ Q ♣ K 8 7 6 5

Pass is best. This hand is similar to the previous one, which I offered as a tentative 2♠ bid. But it has a poorer spade suit, two wasted queens in the red suits, and the club suit is a bit weaker too. When your suit is poor and when you have wasted values that are not going to help on offense and which may help on defense, you should be passive. Wasted values are a serious warning sign. Pass this one.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 7 ♥ Q J 10 7 2 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ 9 5 3

Pass is probably right but I know that if I held this hand and passed, the opponents would have an easy route to wherever they are going. I might try 2♥ at favorable vulnerability. This hand requires your partner bid gingerly when responding to your third seat weak two-bids.

WEAK THREE-BIDS

Three-level preempts in third seat come in all sizes and shapes, just like weak two-bids in third seat vary greatly. Interestingly, some hands that would have been opened in first or second seat with a two-bid are now opened with a one-bid or a three-bid.

Which Hands That Normally Open with a Weak Two in First or Second Seat Now Open with a One-Bid?

If you have a hand with a six-card suit that qualifies for a weak two in first or second seat, you may wish to open with a one-bid when you have a maximum hand. The reason for this is that when you open a third seat weak two, your partner will tend to give you more room than normal. If you are close to a full opening bid, go ahead and bid one of your suit rather than two of your suit.

Note that in the hands shown below, you are still not vulnerable. Do not lose sight of that fact. Guidelines for vulnerable weak two-bids differ from guidelines for non-vulnerable weak two-bids.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ A J 10 8 7 3 ♥ 5 2 ♦ 7 6 ♣ K Q 3

Bid 1♠. If you were in first or second seat, especially if vulnerable, this would qualify for opening 2♠. If you agree to open a lot of five-card weak twos in third seat, then this hand is too good. You are not far from an opening bid and in third seat, that is a better way to start this hand. Be aware that you own the

spade suit, which has one nice advantage. You know that your partner cannot make a one-level bid that will embarrass you.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ K 2 ♥ A Q 10 8 7 5 ♦ Q 6 3 ♣ 9 2

Bid 1♥. You would open 2♥ in first or second seat, but in third seat 1♥ is better. I do this because my third seat weak twos can be so bad that partner won't suspect I have this good a hand. With this hand, if partner bids 1♠, I will rebid 2♥. In theory I owe partner another point for this bidding. Not an easy hand, actually.

Which Hands that Normally Open with a Weak Two in First or Second Seat Now Open with a Three-Bid?

Some hands that open a weak two-bid in first or second seat actually are better handled with a three-bid in third seat.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 5 2 ♥ 5 2 ♦ K Q J 8 7 4 ♣ K 5 3

Bid 3♦. Since 2♦ in third seat doesn't show much of a hand, when you have a real weak two such as this one, opening at the three-level is a sane tactic. Remember that your partner has passed so you do not rate to have a contract of your own. You also know that your LHO rates to have a good hand and hitting him with a three-bid instead of a two-bid is a good idea. Given your good suit, 3♦ is a fine tactical choice.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ K Q J 10 8 7 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 6 ♣ J 9 7 4

This hand would be a classic weak two in first or second seat. In third seat, with partner a passed hand and LHO still counting his points, 3♠ is correct.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 ♥ A K J 10 7 5 ♦ 10 9 8 4 ♣ 7 4

This is another classic weak two-bid in first or second seat. With your partner passing already, you expect that the opponents own the hand so you are entitled to bid 3♥.

Other Hands That Open in Third Seat with a Three-Bid

Note. If a hand is worth a three-bid in first or second seat, it is likely that it is also worth a three-bid in third seat.

In addition, there are some hands you would pass in first or second seat that in third seat become a three-bid. This creates a guessing game for your partner and for the opponents. Since the opponents are the ones with the high cards, you hope that your preempt will affect them more than it affects your partner.

Following are some third seat examples to show the extreme range of hands that can consider a three-bid in third seat. Note that many of these hands are suitable for bidding only when you are not vulnerable. Be aware that at favorable vulnerability, almost anything goes.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 7 2 ♥ 3 ♦ J 10 9 8 6 4 ♣ Q J 9 7

Bid 3♦. If you feel brave you can take advantage of the favorable vulnerability. In third seat 2♦ is okay, but LHO won't be bothered very much. 3♦ is a much better bid. Your partner should be aware that bidding in third seat is often more optimistic than in first or second seat. You both should learn to restrain yourselves when responding to a third seat preempt. Note that if both sides are vulnerable, you should either pass this hand or perhaps open with 2♦. Ignore the vulnerability at your own risk.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 7 ♥ Q J 10 7 6 5 3 ♦ K Q 8 ♣ 9 4

Bid 3♥, as you would in first or second seat. Hands that would open a three-bid in first or second seat still open with a three-bid in third seat. The consequence of this style is that your range for three-bids in third seat is extreme. This is not as important as you might think. Since your partner is a passed hand, your side won't be doing any constructive bidding. Mostly, your partner will not be involved after your preempt in third seat.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 2 ♥ K J 10 8 7 5 ♦ J 10 6 4 ♣ 2

Bid 3♥. Quite acceptable. Few aggressive players would miss this chance. Considering that LHO surely has a good hand, there is extra reason to make life difficult for him. If no one is vulnerable, a 2♥ bid is sufficient.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 2 ♥ A K J 9 8 4 3 ♦ 6 4 ♣ J 2

Bid 3♥. This is a classic three-bid and that is the bid you should make here. You can be ridiculous in what you do with three-bids but the one thing you cannot do is upgrade normal three-bids into four-bids. This is a 3♥ bid on virtually any vulnerability in first, second, or third seat.

Won't this wide range of hands make life hard on your partner?

♠ K Q J 10 8 7 3 ♥ Q 2 ♦ 6 ♣ J 10 4

♠ K 9 8 7 4 3 ♥ 4 ♦ Q 10 6 5 4 ♣ 4

In fact, mixing up classic preempts, such as the first hand, with weird preempts, such as the second hand, can be effective. It causes a lot of grief for the opponents. The trouble is that when your partner is not a passed hand he will have some very good hands. If you are capable of bidding 3♠ on both of these hands in first or second seat, he will make some pretty silly-looking decisions.

In third seat, if you choose to bid 3♠ with both of these hands you can be sure of one thing. Your partner won't have a hand that will consider bidding 3NT. He won't have a hand that looks for a slam. He won't have a hand that is thinking of bidding another suit. He may have a hand that would raise to 4♠, and with either of these two hands you do not mind that since you have found a fit.

It won't take long to teach your partner. After your side opens a few aggressive weak two-bids or weak three-bids, your partnership will quickly learn that if you are going to play them as I describe here, it is wise to be gentle when responding to a third seat preempt. Learn to let the preempt do the dirty work. Responder should not continue bidding unless he has a good fit with proper shape. If you do not have something special, be content to be quiet.

VULNERABILITY COUNTS

I have mentioned vulnerability already. This is a firm reminder that vulnerability is pertinent to third seat preempts. You need to be acutely aware of it. When you are not vulnerable, the sky is the limit. When you are vulnerable, you must account for it in your decisions. I know one author who says to ignore vulnerability. Sounds good, but when you start going for numbers you can usually spot the reason. If you make a bad preempt and go for 400, not doubled, and it is a lousy result, write him, not me. Vulnerability does count. Following are a few examples.

If Vulnerable In Third Seat

Weak twos

When you are vulnerable in third seat, your weak twos must remain classic if for no other reason than to avoid going down two for -200. And if doubled, that score is -500. You do need to be mildly cautious when vulnerable. Opening a five-card suit won't be as common but the idea is still sound with proper hands.

As East, Both Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 2 ♥ 9 7 5 ♦ K Q J 10 8 ♣ A J 5

I could accept 2♦. It describes your hand and does hinder LHO, who is likely to have a good to excellent hand.

As East, Both Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 ♥ A K J 10 7 5 ♦ 10 9 8 4 ♣ 7 4

You are vulnerable and that is a big deal. This hand was shown earlier as an example of a third seat 3♥ bid when not vulnerable. Vulnerable, sticking to classic requirements is best. Open just 2♥.

If Vulnerable in Third Seat

Three-bids

It is easy to describe a vulnerable three-bid in third seat. You need a sane hand. Here are a couple of acceptable examples of a third seat three-bid. Note the vulnerabilities.

As East, Both Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 ♥ K J 10 8 7 5 3 ♦ Q 10 6 4 ♣ 2

Bid 3♥. Your hand is weaker than it might be but your diamonds are potential tricks. You know their side has the majority of the points so you are motivated to preempt. You could go down a lot but the risk/reward is in your favor. If the opponents are not vulnerable, you might consider bidding just 2♥. Lots of checks and balances in your decisions when choosing the right opening bid.

As East, Both Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 ♥ 5 3 ♦ A Q J 10 6 4 2 ♣ Q 9 8

Bid 3♦. A fairly classic example. You have a lot of losers but your suit is good, which will dissuade them from doubling you. Not bidding 3♦ with this gives up a chance to do something good for your side.

As East, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 8 7 ♥ K Q 8 7 6 5 3 ♦ 6 4 ♣ Q 7

Pass or bid 2♥. Even though you would bid 3♥ if not vulnerable vs. vulnerable, you should respect the extra dangers that exist when you are vulnerable and they are not. You have a so-so suit, you have a balanced hand, and you have the wasted ♣Q, which may give you nothing on offense and which could be a potential trick on defense. Wanting to bid 3♥ with this shows your heart is in the right place.

As East, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 7 ♥ A Q 10 9 5 4 3 ♦ 6 4 ♣ K J 7

Bid 3♥. You are vulnerable and they are not, which is a genuine warning sign. If you get doubled and go down two, that is a tragedy because you know their potential game is only 420 or so. You can bid 3♥ here because you have such a good suit and you have some useful values on the side. Mind you, if you are unlucky and find partner with nothing in hearts or clubs and wasted values in spades and diamonds, this nice preempt won't be successful for you. This is a good hand, actually. If you were not vulnerable, bidding 1♥ would be a sane choice.

The invisible lifeline that may rescue you

Won't you get doubled if you preempt foolishly?

Don't believe it. You can often get away with murder when you preempt because the opponents will not always be able to double you for penalties.

West	North	East	South
	pass	pass	?

The point of this hand is to show that even when you could go for a large number the opponents won't always be able to punish you. West will usually have a good hand and if he doubles, his partner will take it out. Nor can West risk passing because his partner may not be able to reopen, which is what would happen here if West fails to bid.

It is because they do not do the right thing all the time that preempts are effective. Keep this in mind when you are thinking of a preempt. If you decide it is a sane effort, go ahead and do it. And when you do make your preempt, look happy about it. Your happiness is contagious and may (you won't find this in any book) influence your opponents' judgment.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	?	

[40] *Passed Hand Bidding*

are worried that they may compete. This means that your four-level preempts in third seat include a wide range of hands.

It is safe to say that not vulnerable you can be more frisky than when you are vulnerable.

When You Are Not Vulnerable in Third Seat

Here are some general thoughts on third seat decisions when not vulnerable.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 7 ♥ K Q 10 7 6 4 3 ♦ 4 ♣ J 10 9 8

A 4♥ bid is acceptable. You do not have eight tricks, but why should your partner have nothing? If you use as an argument that you were afraid to bid because your partner always has a bad dummy for you, you are on the wrong side of the force. Always expect good things to happen, not bad things, and you will get your wish more often than you might imagine.

As East, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ 7 ♥ 3 ♦ K J 10 8 7 6 4 3 ♣ 10 7 4

Bid 4♦. You are sure they have a game, you suspect they may have a slam, and importantly, they have so many major suit cards that if LHO or RHO doubles 4♦, the opponents won't try to defend unless it is absolutely clear to do so.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in third seat?

♠ A K Q 10 7 5 4 ♥ — ♦ J 10 8 3 ♣ K 8

Bid 4♠. You wouldn't do this in first or second seat since your partner might have enough values to make a slam. In third seat you don't expect slam to be likely and you do suspect that your opponents may be able to compete in hearts or clubs. A 4♠ bid may allow you to buy the hand.

When You Are Vulnerable in Third Seat

Following are some general thoughts on third seat decisions when you are vulnerable. Note that things are not the same when your opponents are not vulnerable versus when they are vulnerable. I will use the three hands from above to show the differences.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	?	

♠ 7 ♥ K Q 10 7 6 4 3 ♦ 4 ♣ J 10 9 8

If you are both vulnerable, bid 3♥. Your likely tricks will usually be enough to keep you out of harm's way.

If only your side is vulnerable, bid 3♥ but be aware that there is danger. Usually when you have a lot of shape the opponents do too, and they talk themselves into bidding something.

♠ 7 ♥ 3 ♦ K J 10 8 7 6 4 3 ♣ 10 7 4

If you are both vulnerable, bid 4♦.

If only your side is vulnerable, bid 3♦. In either case, your partner is a passed hand so you don't have to worry that he will go overboard.

♠ A K Q 10 7 5 4 ♥ — ♦ J 10 8 3 ♣ K 8

This was a 4♠ bid in third seat when you were not vulnerable. You should bid 4♠ even if you are vulnerable. You do not expect to have a slam, you expect 4♠ to have a play facing most dummies West will produce, and you do not want to hear from the opponents.

Caution: Don't forget the pass!

One of the problems with active bidding in third seat is that it becomes habit-forming. There are many options available in third seat, and many reasons for choosing them. One useful rule I would like to offer you is that you are not required to do anything with either a weak or sub-minimum hand. There is another bid available which I have already mentioned. I recommend that with any hand unsuitable for an aggressive third seat tactical bid, you just pass.

RESPONDING TO PARTNER'S THIRD SEAT PREEMPT

WHEN PARTNER OPENS A WEAK TWO-BID IN THIRD SEAT

You have seen that the range for weak two-bids is extreme in third seat. I suggest that if you have a decent hand for partner's suit, you just pass. Occasionally you will miss something but you will avoid hanging partner for having been creative.

When your side is not vulnerable

Unless you have a hand that screams for you to bid, it is likely that you shouldn't. Partner's weak twos are often wretched when not vulnerable.

Remember that he will open 2♠ with this hand:

♠ K Q J 8 4 ♥ 6 3 ♦ 10 8 3 ♣ 8 3 2

Unless you have four-card support and excellent shape and good values, just forget getting involved.

I suppose you might bid with three excellent spades and an otherwise good hand but the odds are that you will be too high. Take the view that the preempt hurt their bidding and live with that benefit.

Here are a few responding hands to consider when your partner opens a weak 2♠ bid, not vulnerable.

♠ 10 7 4 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ 3 2 ♣ A Q 7 6 3

You might be willing to raise a first or second seat weak two-bid but after a third seat 2♠ bid, you should let this hand go.

♠ A 9 8 3 ♥ 3 2 ♦ 10 3 ♣ K 9 8 3 2

Facing a first or second seat weak 2♠ bid you would raise to game, continuing the preempt. Facing a third seat weak two-bid, raising to 3♠ is sufficient. Opposite some of partner's lesser weak two-bids in third seat, your side could have only six tricks. Note that your fourth trump is a huge asset since your partner will often have a five-card suit for his third seat bid. Your fourth trump gives you nine trumps, which has a lot of value.

♠ Q J 4 ♥ K 5 4 3 ♦ K 9 ♣ Q J 7 4

Even though you have 12 points, you have no aces. Your spade fit is nice but given that your partner will often open a weak two-bid in third seat with a five-card suit and boring values, you surely do not have a game. Don't go further unless you have some kind of exceptional hand. If their side somehow finds their way to 3♦, for example, it is probably best to leave them there.

♠ A 6 5 3 ♥ 5 ♦ A 10 7 6 3 ♣ Q J 8

If your partner had opened in first or second seat, you would happily raise to game. This hand is about as good as you will have when your partner opens a weak two in third seat and in practice, you won't make more than a couple of spades facing many of his lousy hands. If you wish to do something, bid 2NT with the provision that it is treated as an invitational bid. Your partner can make a strength-showing bid by showing a feature and if he has super shape, he might even jump to game. He has to trust that you are not bidding 2NT with a random balanced hand.

The most important thing when responding to a third seat weak two is that you reflect honestly on the sort of hands that your partnership bids with in third seat. Does your partnership make weak twos on hands like this one? Here is a possible layout.

♠ A 6 5 3
♥ 5
♦ A 10 7 6 3
♣ Q J 8

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K Q J 10 2
♥ Q 8 4
♦ J 2
♣ 9 7 3

If these are the two hands, you will take eight or nine tricks. You cannot take ten. Do not hang your partner for being extravagant.

What does a new suit by responder mean after a third seat weak two-bid?

A CONVENTIONAL AGREEMENT

In closing this section, I offer an issue that you should discuss with your partner. If responder bids a new suit in response to a third seat weak two, it is reasonable to play that it is natural and not forcing, especially when you are not vulnerable.

If responder bids 2NT, it is reasonable to play that this shows a super fit for partner's suit and asks opener for your usual set of responses.

WHEN PARTNER OPENS A THREE-BID IN THIRD SEAT

When your side is not vulnerable

Watch out. The best hand your partner can have is a normal preempt and you are a passed hand, which means game is never making except in the case where you have a terrific fit with excellent distribution. If you are not sure whether to bid when your partner opens a not vulnerable three-bid, then it is surely right to pass. Remember that he is likely to have a lousy hand.

When your side is vulnerable

If your partner is vulnerable, he will have something resembling a normal weak three-bid and in this case you can make your normal bids.

A CONVENTIONAL AGREEMENT

When someone opens with three of a suit in third seat, it is virtually impossible to imagine a hand where partner will respond in a new suit. For the sake of having a rule I suggest that if this happens, responder is trying to play it there. His bid is not forcing.

QUIZ ON THIRD SEAT OPENING BIDS

This quiz will not have black-and-white answers because your partnership may choose to be aggressive or conservative according to your style. Hint. When you choose your opening bid, be sure to consider what you will do later.

Since what you do is subjective, you should not feel that you have to agree with me in every situation. Hopefully, we will agree more often than not.

Following is a twenty hand quiz. With neither vulnerable, the bidding proceeds with two passes to you. What do you bid with each of these hands? After answering that question, consider what you would bid if both sides are vulnerable. Also, when deciding on your bid, consider what you will do after partner's likely bids.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	?	

1. ♠ A J 8 6 5 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ Q 10 2 ♣ 8 3

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♠. Since you can pass anything partner does other than Drury (or any other convention you may be playing), it is better to bid 1♠ than 2♠. When partner's response to your one-bid is likely to be a problem, then you should consider a two-bid. This hand can cater to any response from partner, so 1♠ is best.

If vulnerable: Very close between passing and bidding 1♠. If I had the ♠AJ1098, I would be more willing to open 1♠.

2. ♠ A Q J 9 7 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 8 6 5 4 ♣ 9 6

If not vulnerable: This is an acceptable weak 2♣ bid. 1♠ is probably okay, but you do not have enough strength to encourage partner. If the auction becomes competitive, and it will, your partner should be able to count on you for minimum values. In my opinion, which will be argued in many quarters, I think a minimum third seat opener should have around 9+ useful points with a five-card suit and around 10+ useful points if opener is bidding a four-card suit. No one will notice if you fudge a little but the guideline is useful in general. If you open 1♠ your partner will occasionally bid to the three-level, and you may get socked for down two or three.

If vulnerable: This hand should pass. If you open 1♠ it may cause you to go down a few, and even undoubled that could be bad. A weak two-bid can also get you too high.

3. ♠ A J 8 6 5 ♥ 2 ♦ K 7 5 ♣ Q 10 7 6

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♠. You do not have a full opening bid but this hand does have some future if you find a fit. You will have to pass if partner bids 2♥, but that is unlikely. And remember that he will have at least a five-card suit. If he bids 2♥, rebidding 2♠ would be very wrong for many reasons. Partner might bid again, and chances are you will not like it. Note also that partner will not have three-card spade support. If he has three-card support for your major, his guiding rule is to show you support.

If partner bids 1NT in response to 1♠, you can continue with 2♣. It is an overbid, but a safe one. Partner may pass or bid 2♦, or even raise clubs. All of these things are good and they will occur frequently. If partner continues to 2♥ you hate it, but you must pass. If you were to bid 2♠ it would confirm both a full opener and a six-card suit.

If partner gives preference, bidding 2♠ over your 2♣, you will not love it, but it will be a tolerable spot. Finally, partner may try 2NT, making you wish you had passed 1NT.

Your 2♣ bid was reasonable because you had an excellent chance of improving the contract. When you open light, you should bid again only when a better contract is very likely. Do not bid again solely because you don't like partner's bid. And finally, do not bid when partner is a favorite to bid something you can't handle.

I need to emphasize the two big points from the preceding paragraph.

1. Do not open a light hand in third seat if you will not like partner's most likely bids.
2. If you open light in third seat and partner finds an unexpected bid that you do not like, stop bidding unless partner's bid is conventional.

Note that when you open 1♠, partner has fewer things to do that you will not like. In contrast, if you open 1♣, 1♦, or 1♥, your partner can bid a suit at the one-level without promising more than four.

If vulnerable: The distribution of this hand gives you a lot of chances to find a good spot. Bidding 1♠ is okay.

4. ♠ 2 ♥ A J 8 6 5 ♦ K 7 5 ♣ J 10 7 6

If not vulnerable: Pass or bid 2♥. 1♥ is okay if you are willing to take your chances when partner bids 1♠. Personally, I do not like doing that because partners have long memories and will recall this situation if you start getting bad results. Since a 1♠ response is likely, it would be okay to duck this issue by passing or opening 2♥. If my hearts were better (AJ1087) I would definitely bid 2♥. This hand is close either way. It's one of the things that make bridge so much fun. Whatever you do, you will be right half the time.

Note this distinction:

If you open 1♥ in third seat with some random hand, your partner will respond 1♠ with some pretty crummy four-card suits. This is why you hate to pass 1♠ when you have a singleton spade.

If you open 1♠ in third seat with some random hand, your partner won't often bid 2♥ and if he does, he will have a good five-card suit or perhaps some boring six-card suit that did not choose to open 2♥. If he does respond 2♥ you can pass it with virtually any heart holding because you know he has a good suit.

If vulnerable: Pass. The hand does not qualify for a vulnerable weak two-bid and the dangers of opening 1♥ are more than enough to discourage bidding.

5. ♠ 2 ♥ K J 10 7 ♦ K Q 5 4 ♣ Q 7 6 5

If not vulnerable: I would pass and hope to double later after any of the following sequences. You are East in these diagrams.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♠
pass	2♠	dbl	

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♠
pass	1NT	dbl	

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♠
pass	2♣ ¹	dbl ²	

1. Drury, showing spade support
2. Takeout of spades; some play a double of Drury is lead-directing.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♠
pass	1♠	dbl	

If you open 1♥ or 1♦, partner will often bid 1♠. You will not be able to bid 1NT since it promises two spades and 12-14 points. Nor can you pass 1♠. If you choose to rebid 2♣, partner may preference you to 2♥ with a doubleton. For instance:

West

♠ K J 8 7 5

♥ 6 4

♦ A J 6 3

♣ 10 3

East

♠ 2

♥ K J 10 7

♦ K Q 5 4

♣ Q 7 6 5

The bidding would go as follows:

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	2♣	pass
2♥	pass	pass	pass

The opponents won't even have to double to get rich off this one!

If vulnerable: Pass for sure and use your judgment about coming in later along the lines of the auctions shown above.

6. ♠ Q 8 7 ♥ Q 7 5 ♦ A Q 9 6 3 ♣ J 2

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♦. Anything partner bids will be fine. Nothing but demerits for bidding or even thinking about bidding a weak 2♦ bid. Your suit is bad and your hand is balanced.

If vulnerable: Bid 1♦. This isn't much of a hand but there are enough chances for you to find a contract at the one-level that you can risk bidding. An opening 2♦ bid would be awful.

7. ♠ 9 7 6 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ K Q J 10 7 ♣ Q 4

If not vulnerable: Bid 2♦. You have a poor hand with a good suit. The only reason to bid is to get partner off to a good lead. And you do not want partner bidding if the auction becomes competitive. Your hand is balanced, but you have super diamonds that guarantee some tricks.

If vulnerable: Give this opportunity up. Pass.

8. ♠ 8 2 ♥ 9 7 ♦ 9 7 6 5 ♣ A K Q 7 2

If not vulnerable: Pass or make an extreme and somewhat adventurous action bid of 3♣. If you open 1♣ there will certainly be some bidding and you may not like it.

For example:

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♣	1♠
2♥	dbl	?	

We are too high.

If vulnerable: No creativity here. Pass.

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

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♣. This is not a bad 1♣ bid. You have a good suit and a comfortable pass to whatever partner bids.

If vulnerable: Pass. The specter of getting to some contract down two or three, even undoubled, is real and would be expensive. Worse if doubled.

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

If not vulnerable: Bid 2♥. Partner will learn after a while to give your third seat two-bids a lot of room.

If vulnerable: Pass.

11. ♠ 8 6 4 3 ♥ K Q 10 9 7 ♦ 3 ♣ J 10 7

If not vulnerable: Bid 2♥. You have seen many similar examples of this theme. Do not worry that you have only five hearts. Do not worry that you have four spades on the side. Do not worry that you have only 6 points. You want a heart lead and you cannot get it on any other sequence. If you reflect on how difficult it is to bid when the opponents preempt, you will appreciate that you should do so yourself as often as possible. Here is an example of a possible problem that fourth seat may have if you open 2♥. Pretend that you open 2♥ and the next player has this hand:

♠ K Q ♥ J 6 2 ♦ K Q J 4 ♣ A 6 4 2

What should he bid over your 2♥ bid? The answer is that there is no clear answer. He is in a bind, something that you hope to achieve often with your preempts.

I remind you that when your side preempts in third seat you should rely on the initial preempt to do whatever good is coming to you. After a third seat preempt, partner should allow for opener to have a poor hand and should not continue to preempt without a good playing hand. I will talk more about this later.

If vulnerable: Pass. Not vulnerable, you can do almost anything. Vulnerable, all of the flights of fancy must be grounded.

12. ♠ 2 ♥ A K J 7 ♦ J 9 7 6 5 4 ♣ 10 2

If not vulnerable: Pass. If you open 1♥ for the lead, you may end up in a poor contract. If you open 1♦ or 2♦, you may never get to show where 89% of your high-card points are. Perhaps your partner can find a bid, allowing you to find a bid later.

If vulnerable: Pass. Unlikely that your side is going to be involved with this hand.

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

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♠ only if your agreed style is aggressive. Pass otherwise.

If vulnerable: Pass. No other option.

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

If not vulnerable: Pass. A reasonable decision. You would like better spades to open 1♠ and if you open 1♣, you will not like a 1♥ response. If you choose to bid 1♣ and then to rebid 1♠ you do not promise a full opener, but you do promise better than this.

If vulnerable: Just pass.

15. ♠ A Q 7 ♥ K J 8 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ 9 5 4 2

If not vulnerable: Pass. Do not open light with poor suits. If your side owns the hand, your partner will be able to overcall and perhaps you can do something then. If you choose to bid 1♣, you will hate it when they buy the hand and your partner leads a club.

If vulnerable: Pass. No upside here at all.

16. ♠ K Q 7 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ K 3 ♣ 7 6 5 4 2

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♣. With normal opening values, open 1♣.

If vulnerable: Bid 1♣. You have enough that you might make something in one of the majors.

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

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♠. 2♠ can be bid on such terrible hands that your partner will doubt you have this good a hand. I think this hand is good enough that I would bid 1♠ in third seat.

If vulnerable: Bid 2♠. You do not open lousy weak two-bids vulnerable so you are describing your hand well.

18. ♠ 8 7 4 ♥ 5 ♦ A 7 ♣ Q 10 9 8 6 4 2

If not vulnerable: Bid 3♣. Hardly a classic preempt but good enough under these circumstances. If their side is vulnerable, I think you can bid 3♣ without the ♦A. Favorable vulnerability gives you license to steal.

If vulnerable: Pass. Pretty clear.

19. ♠ 3 ♥ 7 ♦ K J 3 ♣ K 10 8 7 6 4 3 2

If not vulnerable: Bid 4♣. You are sure they have something their way and this bid makes life very hard on them. Further, you have a good enough hand that if partner wishes to raise, you don't mind.

If vulnerable: This is an adequate 3♣ bid. You don't expect much to come of this but it does take away some of their bidding room.

20. ♠ A Q ♥ 8 ♦ K 3 2 ♣ A Q J 9 8 7 3

If not vulnerable: Bid just 1♣. Do not preempt when you have a hand that might make a slam facing a passed hand. Your partner can have a variety of hands that will let you make 6♣. Here is one possible layout:

♠ K 9 5 3

♥ 9 7 4 2

♦ A 7 5

♣ K 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A Q

♥ 8

♦ K 3 2

♣ A Q J 9 8 7 3

If you open with any club preempt, you will miss an easy slam. You could also miss a lot of good 3NT contracts. Preempting with good hands is a bad habit except for the rare case where you are opening with four of a major.

If vulnerable: Bid 1♣. No need at all to preempt when you have such a good hand.

CHAPTER FIVE

FOURTH SEAT OPENING BIDS

In third seat, you have to weigh constructive bidding principles aimed at getting to a good contract against tactical bidding principals aimed at disrupting your LHO, who may be waiting with a good hand.

In fourth seat, you have an option not available in any other seat. If you pass, the hand is over. This option completely changes your emphasis. No longer do you have to worry that your LHO is waiting with a big hand. Since LHO is a passed hand, his overcall or takeout double will be based on limited values.

In fourth chair, the only thing you have to worry about is whether or not your side can go plus. You will open hands that can make a game opposite a maximum passed hand or opposite a hand that fits reasonably well. These hands are obvious to open. Almost all hands that would be opened in first or second seat should be opened in fourth seat. Be alert, though. There are some hands that would open in first or second seat that you should not open in fourth seat. Hands with shortness in the majors are a worry for the reason that if you open a minor, their side may be able to come into the bidding and outbid you with a major.

PEARSON'S RULE

A rule was formulated many years ago by one of my early partners, Don Pearson. Widely known as Pearson's rule, his rule for fourth seat openers was this: Add your high-card points together with 1 point for each spade in your hand to get your Pearson points. If you have 15 or more Pearson points you open the bidding. Otherwise you tend to pass.

There can be exceptions to the Pearson rule. As a rough guideline, Pearson's rule is very effective. However, there are some types of hands where I would ignore his rule. I would open hands with not enough Pearson points if they have quality points with aces and kings, if they have good shape, and if they are not likely to have any rebidding problems. On the other hand, I might pass hands that have just enough Pearson points but which have poor-quality points, have poor shape, and do have rebid problems. Here are some examples showing Pearson's rule along with some exceptions to that rule.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ 10 ♥ J 6 5 ♦ A J 9 5 ♣ K Q J 7 5

In first or second seat, you would open this with 1♣ or 1♦ according to your preference. In fourth seat the decision to bid would be much closer, and passing would be acceptable. You have only 13 Pearson points. Since the major suits are missing, it is very likely the opponents can outbid you in spades or even hearts. This means that the opponents are more likely than you to get a plus score. Just because they have both passed doesn't mean the hand does not belong to them.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ K ♥ Q 2 ♦ Q 10 8 7 5 ♣ A Q 7 6 4

14 Pearson points. I would respect a fourth seat pass. You have a minimum hand with only three cards in the majors. If the opponents have a major suit fit, they will probably outbid you and make a major suit partial. If your partner is loaded in the majors, then you probably have a misfit. So again you might go minus.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ 2 ♥ A 3 ♦ A 6 5 ♣ A 10 9 6 5 4 2

Open 1♣. Although you have a distinct lack of major suit cards you do have excellent defensive cards to compensate. You will probably make at least 3♣ or 4♣ and the opponents will be hard pressed to outbid you. An ace is a nice defensive card. Three aces represent a formidable obstacle to your opponents' enterprise. You can and should ignore the Pearson rule with this and similar hands. I will have some more thoughts on fourth seat bidding shortly.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ Q J 8 6 ♥ A 10 5 ♦ 10 3 ♣ K J 3 2

11 high-card points plus four spades equals 15 Pearson points, and that suggests bidding 1♠ is correct. Your four cards in spades give you some hope that your side is the one with a spade fit, in which case you have a chance to squelch your opponents' bidding.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ A J 8 7 5 ♥ A 10 8 4 3 ♦ 3 ♣ J 5

10 high-card points plus five spades equals 15 Pearson points. Open 1♠. Having spades makes up for a lot of missing points and having two aces gives your hand some defense. If you had a bunch of queens and jacks with perhaps one king, you would not take this liberty. You expect to show hearts next.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ 3 ♥ Q J 8 7 ♦ K Q 3 ♣ K J 9 7 5

Pass. 12 high-card points plus one spade equals only 13 Pearson points. With no aces, you should be extra cautious with marginal or sub-marginal hands.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ — ♥ A J 7 ♦ K J 10 9 7 ♣ K J 10 8 4

Even though this hand has only 13 Pearson points, I would open 1♦ because of the good shape, good spots, and good high cards. One thing to note is that if they compete and find a spade fit, their trumps will divide poorly. It is possible that they will not like that. You can't count on a bad spade break being fatal for them but it is a consideration.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ A 2 ♥ A 10 9 7 5 ♦ K J 8 6 ♣ 9 2

This 14 Pearson point hand has aces and a king. Bid 1♥. Your defensive values will keep the opponents under control in most cases.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ Q J ♥ Q 10 ♦ K Q 7 2 ♣ Q J 6 5 2

This hand has 15 Pearson points, but I would pass it. The hand has mostly junk cards with no aces and just one king. Significantly, you are short in both major suits. Even at favorable vulnerability, you should pass. Your opponents will successfully outbid you too often to start a little war with this hand.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ — ♥ A J 9 8 7 3 ♦ K J 10 2 ♣ K 10 2

You have only 12 Pearson points but you have excellent shape. Your spade void tells you the opponents may bid, but you know their trumps will break badly. Your points are fairly good defensively, plus you have an easy rebid. Open 1♥ with mixed feelings. This hand has exceptional potential and that adds to your reasons for opening it.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ — ♥ K Q 8 ♦ Q J 7 5 2 ♣ K J 7 6 5

Another hand with 12 Pearson points and excellent shape. Trouble is that you have terrible defensive values. The odds are great that someone will bid spades and you won't like that no matter who bids them. Pass.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ A 10 9 7 ♥ 2 ♦ K 10 9 7 5 ♣ K 10 8

Bid 1♦. A close decision. You have 14 quality Pearson points. If partner bids 1♥, you can rebid 1♠. You should view the three tens and the two nines as assets. This is probably the weakest fourth seat opening bid you will ever have.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ Q 2 ♥ K J 4 2 ♦ J 3 ♣ K Q J 5 2

Open 1♣ or pass. You have 15 Pearson points, but not a clear opening bid. If you open 1♣ and partner bids 1♠, you won't be comfortable. You would have to pass or rebid 1NT. Neither bid is anything special. I would open 1♣ and rebid 1NT over 1♠, but I wouldn't be happy about it. Passing this hand is not a bad idea.

Remember that the side with the spade suit has the biggest gun. Pearson's rule recognizes this. If you don't have spades, you will not get many plus scores unless you have extra points to compensate.

FOURTH SEAT WEAK TWO-BIDS

In third seat, it is acceptable to open a weak two on absolute garbage because of the tactical consideration of not giving fourth seat an easy run. In fourth seat you don't open crummy weak two-bids because there is no need to open the bidding if you think the hand belongs to your opponents. When you open a weak two in fourth seat, you should have a good enough hand that you can expect the hand to belong to your side.

If you open with a one-bid you do show a full opening bid, but your side may have to bid for awhile to get to the best spot. If you open with a two-bid, a three-bid, or a four-bid, you are also showing a decent (but limited) hand which expects to make opposite an average passed hand of 9-11 points.

Remember. In fourth seat there is no such thing as a preemptive bid. Bad hands are passed out!

Your average weak two-bid will typically show 11-13 high-card points and a good suit.

Interestingly, when you are in fourth seat your opening two-bids are pretty much the same no matter what the vulnerability. The reason is that you are showing a good hand and the same hands qualify whether vulnerable or not vulnerable.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ Q J 9 7 6 5 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A K 10 ♣ Q 5

In fourth chair, you can draw the reasonable conclusion that your partner has 9-11 random points. 2♠ rates to make more often than go down. You could open 1♠, but that might encourage partner to bid too much and it would leave more room for the opponents to get together. A 2♠ bid describes your hand immediately and precisely, which means your partner will make excellent decisions. If you had ♠QJ10965, you might bid 2♠ without the ♣Q. This hand is average for a fourth seat weak two-bid.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ 10 3 ♥ A K Q J 7 6 ♦ J 2 ♣ Q 4 3

This hand will make 2♥ all the time barring something unusual, but you do not want to look for game. Bid 2♥, which will usually end the auction. Note that your bid makes it a little tougher for your LHO to bid spades.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ K Q J 9 8 7 ♥ Q J ♦ Q J ♣ Q 4 3

Another hand full of wasted points. It actually has 14 points but no one holding this hand should think of these high-card points as being really worth 14 points. Bid 2♠, hoping to make it. Remember, your partner is a passed hand, so game is unlikely. But at the same time your opponents are also passed hands, which means your partner has some of the missing values. You can see that while 2♠ will often make, higher contracts will be tougher.

Most fourth seat weak twos could be opened with a one-bid. The reason a two-bid is chosen is to warn partner that you have an opening bid without much hope for a game. Note that it is not a sign-off. If partner has good values and good shape, he can go forward.

FOURTH SEAT THREE-BIDS

Just like a weak two, a three-bid says that you expect to make if partner has his average values. The reason you are opening with a three-bid rather than a one-bid is you fear there is enough shape around the table that the opponents may be able to make something.

No matter what the vulnerability, a fourth seat three-bid shows a decent hand with good shape. You need a good enough hand that you hope you can make your contract facing an average dummy. If you have a typical three-level preempt you will often go down, and that is bad since you could have passed the hand out.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ 2 ♥ K Q J 9 7 6 4 ♦ A J 2 ♣ J 3

Open 3♥ in fourth seat. 1♥ is possible, but you do not want to hear the opponents bidding spades. Your partner will raise with an appropriate hand, but in general will make an informed pass. Your partner knows your hand is similar to this because with a better hand you would open 1♥ and with a worse one you would pass.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ K Q J 10 8 7 5 ♥ Q 2 ♦ K 2 ♣ 9 5

With lots of wasted values, there is danger at the three-level. I would open 2♠, a rare case of a seven-card weak two-bid.

As South, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ 4 2 ♥ 7 3 ♦ K 6 ♣ A K J 10 8 4 3

Bid 3♣, since 1♣ would invite competition. Three of a minor in fourth seat shows a good playing hand with normal opening-bid values so your partner will be alive to bidding 3NT. Your 3♣ bid does not promise a solid suit, but it does promise a good one.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what do you bid in fourth seat?

♠ 5 4 ♥ Q J 10 9 7 6 3 ♦ Q 10 5 ♣ K

This would be an acceptable 3♥ bid in any other seat. In fourth seat it is right to pass. 3♥ will be a slight underdog and 2♥ will not buy the hand. That singleton ♣K doesn't carry much weight.

FOURTH SEAT FOUR-BIDS

FOUR OF A MAJOR

A fourth seat four-bid in a major, like a fourth seat three-bid, shows a good hand that expects to make if partner has a few points. The reason you don't open one of your suit is that your shape suggests the opponents might have a good save; or worse, they might have a making contract. Any of these hands would be a good 4♥ or 4♠ bid in fourth seat regardless of the vulnerability:

♠ 5 2 ♥ Q J 9 8 6 5 3 2 ♦ A Q J ♣ —

You expect to make 4♥ with many of the modest hands you hope partner has and if you do have a slam, it will probably be because partner has a lucky dummy that you could not find out about in any event.

♠ A K Q 9 7 6 5 ♥ 2 ♦ 8 ♣ Q 8 7 5

Since partner rates to have a few points and since you can't possibly guess where they are, open 4♠, making the reasonable wish that partner has good points or that the opponents fail to find the right opening lead. They are less likely to do the right thing when you open 4♠ than if you open 1♠ and perhaps allow them into the bidding.

♠ 5 4 ♥ K Q J 10 7 5 2 ♦ — ♣ A Q 8 5

Since partner's having the perfect cards for a slam is against the odds and since you can't find out in any event, bid 4♥. It is possible that they have a good save in 4♠ or 5♦ and they will be hard pressed to find it after you open 4♥.

♠ — ♥ A K J 9 7 5 4 ♦ K Q 9 ♣ K J 8

Open 1♥. This hand is too good for a 4♥ bid. It's true you are worried that your opponents might still get together in spades, but on this hand you have good defensive cards. If they do get to spades, your defensive strength plus the fact that the spades are breaking poorly for them may combine for a suitable penalty.

In addition, and this is a real danger, your partner doesn't need that much strength to make a slam. Bidding 1♥ may permit a sequence that gets you to slam.

Here are some examples of hands your partner might have. Your partner would pass each of these hands in second seat and they all give you a good play for slam.

♠ Q 10 9 5 3 ♥ Q 8 ♦ A 7 ♣ Q 7 5 3

This one is cold for 6♥ barring a club ruff. You will note the opponents wouldn't do well if they tried to take a spade sacrifice.

♠ 10 8 6 5 ♥ 8 6 3 ♦ J 7 5 ♣ A Q 2

This one is cold for 6♥ if the hearts divide.

And finally:

♠ J 10 8 6 5 ♥ 8 6 3 ♦ A 7 ♣ A 4 2

This hand makes 7♥ if the hearts behave.

FOUR OF A MINOR

I'm sure there is some reasonable holding for an opening 4♣ or 4♦ bid in fourth seat, but I honestly confess I cannot remember, in my lifetime, making such a bid.

I seldom play Namyats (where an opening 4♣ or 4♦ bid shows a good opening 4♥ or 4♠ bid), but it strikes me as a useful convention in fourth seat.

QUIZ ON FOURTH SEAT OPENING BIDS

Opening bids in fourth seat are different from opening bids in third seat. If you pass in fourth seat that ends the bidding, so if you have a bad hand in fourth seat you can just toss it in and go on to the next hand. This quiz will review the guidelines discussed in the section on fourth seat bidding.

The following hands include many of the hands from the quiz on third seat opening bids. There are big differences in your choices of bids.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	?

1. ♠ A J 8 6 5 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ Q 10 2 ♣ 8 3

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♠. You have 15 Pearson points, which suggests that you can outbid the opponents. Be aware that just because you have 15 Pearson points, you do not always have a hand worth bidding. This one is marginal and acceptable.

If vulnerable: Very close to passing.

2. ♠ A Q J 9 7 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 8 6 5 4 ♣ 9 6

If not vulnerable: Pass. A hand that you might open a weak two-bid with in third seat absolutely does not qualify for a fourth seat bid.

If vulnerable: Pass. Toss this one away.

3. ♠ A J 8 6 5 ♥ 2 ♦ K 7 5 ♣ Q 10 7 6

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♠. You have your Pearson points and because you have good distribution, this one is a pretty clear 1♠ bid.

More good things will happen than bad things (such as your partner bidding hearts), and this adds up to being worth a bid.

If vulnerable: The distribution of this hand gives you a lot of chances to find a good spot. Bidding 1♠ is okay.

4. ♠ 2 ♥ A J 8 6 5 ♦ K 7 5 ♣ J 10 7 6

If not vulnerable: Pass. Not only do you not have a full opener, you do not have anything in spades. If you bid something, their side will often find they have the spade suit and if they do, the hand may belong to them.

If vulnerable: Pass without a second thought.

5. ♠ 2 ♥ K J 10 7 ♦ K Q 5 4 ♣ Q 7 6 5

If not vulnerable: Pass. The stiff spade is the big deterrent. Respect the Pearson rule.

If vulnerable: Pass for sure.

6. ♠ Q 8 7 ♥ Q 7 5 ♦ A Q 9 6 3 ♣ J 2

If not vulnerable: I suggest passing. This is a hand that does not want to start arguing with your opponents.

If vulnerable: Passing is even more correct when vulnerable. At best you might have a partscore. If you don't, down two tricks will be a terrible result.

7. ♠ 9 7 6 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ K Q J 10 7 ♣ Q 4

If not vulnerable: Pass. Even with the ♣A instead of the queen, you should pass.

If vulnerable: On to the next hand.

8. ♠ 8 2 ♥ 9 7 ♦ 9 7 6 5 ♣ A K Q 7 2

If not vulnerable: Pass. In fourth seat you need a reason to bid. The only reason to bid here is that you want the lead. But if you pass, the hand gets tossed in. When you have a hand like this the opponents can usually make a partscore.

If vulnerable: Nothing worth doing. Pass.

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

If not vulnerable: Pass. The Pearson rule helps with this one. You do not have 15 Pearson points.

If vulnerable: Pass. I can't imagine a hand that would pass when not vulnerable that would bid when vulnerable.

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

If not vulnerable: Pass. Just one more example of a hand that would do something in third seat that passes in fourth seat.

If vulnerable: Clear to pass.

11. ♠ 8 6 4 3 ♥ K Q 10 9 7 ♦ 3 ♣ J 10 7

Pass no matter what the vulnerability. Most likely, the rest of the points are divided 12-11-11 and your side has the worst of it.

12. ♠ 2 ♥ A K 10 7 ♦ K 9 7 6 5 4 ♣ 10 2

If not vulnerable: Pass. Where are the spades? This is a nice hand with potential but the stiff spade is a big worry. And your shape is not nice. If you bid 1♦ and partner bids 1♠, you are stuck rebidding the diamonds.

If vulnerable: Pass.

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

If not vulnerable: Bid 2♠. In fourth seat, an opening two-bid shows a pretty nice hand. This one is typical. You expect that if your partner has his share of the missing points, you can make eight tricks. By bidding 2♠ you do two things. You warn partner that you have a minimum opening bid, albeit with six cards. And you make it harder for your opponents to have second thoughts about getting into the bidding.

If vulnerable: Bid 2♠ for all the reasons shown above.

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

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♣ and if possible, rebid 1♠. This hand is a normal opening bid and should be handled as such.

If vulnerable: Bid 1♣.

15. ♠ A Q 7 ♥ K J 8 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ Q 5 4 2

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♣. Passing is a little bit conservative given you have support for both majors. Your intention is to pass whatever partner bids.

If vulnerable: Bid 1♣. You have 12 high-card points and you have 15 Pearson points. The idea is that you will make something often enough that bidding gains in the long run.

16. ♠ K Q 7 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ K 3 ♣ 7 6 5 4 2

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♣. With normal opening values, open 1♣.

If vulnerable: Bid 1♣. You have enough that you might make something in one of the majors.

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

If not vulnerable: I would risk bidding 2♠. You have an excellent suit and your diamond values are nice. Also, you have a little distribution.

If vulnerable: Very close. I can imagine bidding 2♠. This is the minimum hand for a vulnerable fourth seat weak 2♠ bid. No demerits for passing it.

18. ♠ 8 7 4 ♥ 5 ♦ K 7 ♣ A K J 8 7 4 3

If not vulnerable: Bid 3♣. This is what a fourth seat three-bid looks like. If your partner wishes to bid 3NT, he will make it.

If vulnerable: Bid 3♣ on this vulnerability, too.

19. ♠ J ♥ K ♦ K J 3 ♣ K 10 8 7 6 4 3 2

If not vulnerable: Pass. With a normal preempt, just pass in fourth seat. This hand is worse than it looks because you have singleton honors in two of the suits. These honors won't help you much in a club contract but they might help slow the opponents down if they play the hand.

If vulnerable: Pass. Even with eight clubs, this hand is nothing to get excited about.

20. ♠ A Q ♥ 8 ♦ K 3 2 ♣ A K Q J 8 7 3

If not vulnerable: Bid 1♣. I occasionally see someone opening 5♣ because they do not want the opponents to get into the bidding. This is very poor thinking. You might have a slam. You might belong in 3NT. Bidding 5♣ is premature. Also, there is no reason to worry that their side can make anything. If your partner has a 4-4-4-1 10 count, their side won't even be in the bidding.

If vulnerable: Bid 1♣. No need at all to preempt when you have such a good hand.

PART TWO

RESPONDING TO THIRD AND FOURTH SEAT OPENERS

Because a third seat bid is often made on minimal values and because the responder, having already passed, will never have a good hand, some changes must be made in your bidding structure. This section will discuss old methods and new methods.

IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

Before showing you the new tools you have to use, I need to emphasize an important distinction. This information was included in the first part of the book but it bears repetition.

When partner opens in third seat

- His opening one-bids often stink.
- His opening two-bids can be putrid.
- His opening three-bids may be rancid.
- His opening four-bids are not always up to standards.

Sometimes your partner does have a real opening bid but you do need to be aware that your partner's bid in third seat, whatever it is, can be suspect.

When partner opens in fourth seat

- His opening one-bids are usually normal.
- His opening weak two-bids are stronger than normal.
- His opening three-bids are stronger than normal.

When he bids in fourth seat, you can trust him to have some kind of hand.

When your partner opens in third or fourth seat, you will often respond and the auction will often continue. What you need to be aware of is that your tools have changed. Here are some of the things you need to know.

When partner opens a one-bid in first or second seat, a new suit is forcing. A 1NT response to 1♥ or 1♠ is forcing if you play a two-over-one structure.

When partner opens a one-bid in third or fourth seat, a new suit is not forcing and a 1NT response to a major is no longer forcing. It has a new meaning.

Given that you have lost some of your normal tools, you need to have ways to bid to compensate for your loss. This section shows all of the new tools that are available. There are quite a few of them. Let's start with the big one.

CHAPTER SIX DRURY

DRURY - A GENERAL DESCRIPTION

A 2♣ response to one of a major is Drury, showing three or more trumps and about 10-11 support points. I will devote this entire chapter to the Drury convention. On the assumption that your methods will include Drury, the rest of your passed hand bidding methods can include the following ideas:

1. A response in a new suit at the one-level is not forcing.
2. A two-level response in a new suit is not forcing.
3. A 1NT response to a minor is the same as always.
4. A 1NT response to a major has a new definition. It is semi-forcing.
5. A raise of any suit is normal.
6. A jump raise of a minor is limit, as always.
7. A jump raise of a major is a new tool. It is a light limit raise promising good shape and excellent trumps. The range is around 6-8 high-card points in addition to the shape and trumps.
8. A jump shift shows a maximum passed hand with four- or five-card support for partner and a good suit of your own.
9. A jump to 2NT after a minor opening shows a balanced hand with no four-card major, and stoppers. Being a passed hand, your range is 11-12. It is not forcing.
10. A jump to 2NT after a major opening is traditionally used to show 11 points with no support for the major and a balanced hand with stoppers. In this book, a jump to 2NT will show a maximum four-card fit for partner's major

suit with a singleton somewhere. Opener has options on how to continue.

11. A fourth suit bid exists. It tends to show 11 points with three-card support for one of opener's suits.
12. A 3♣ response to a major shows six clubs and about 10 points. This bid is not forcing.

Drury is a convention that I endorse 100% and I am going to make the assumption that you are using it. If you do use Drury, it will have beneficial effects on many of your other bids. What I will do is begin this section with Drury and then I will cover the other items in the list above.

Drury helps clear up a common bidding problem and it permits you to judge competitive decisions when the opponents get into your auctions. Contrary to some opinions, Drury does much more than tell partner you have a 10 point raise. It allows for some very accurate auctions after third and fourth seat opening bids.

One would think that if Drury works as well as I say that everyone would use it. It turns out that Drury is not unanimously used. In England, it was barred for many years and even now, I read articles in British bridge magazines that state Drury stinks. I like Drury because it works well for me at very little cost. But I have never had long, insightful discussions with non Drury users. Therefore, I cannot clearly define the case for not using Drury. Perhaps this chapter will convince them. Perhaps a non Drury player will read this and tell me why he does not use Drury. In the meantime, I will show you why I insist on it.

THE ADVANTAGES OF DRURY

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	

West's 2♣ bid shows a 10 point (or so) hand with heart support. He can have three or four or more trumps. What can be more accurate than that?

If you are not playing Drury

If you are not playing Drury you will have complications. For instance, when you have support for partner's major, you won't be able to bid the value of your hand without getting too high, or worse, to the wrong suit.

Imagine your partner opens 1♠ in third or fourth seat and RHO passes.

Here are some possible hands that have spade support. How would you bid them without Drury?

West	East
pass	1♠
?	

♠ J 7 4 ♥ A 7 4 2 ♦ K 8 2 ♣ K 3 2

You have a balanced 11 count with three trumps. Do you jump to 3♠ with your balanced hand? Do you bid 2♥, your only four-card suit? Do you raise to 2♠ with your 11 points?

♠ Q J 7 3 ♥ J 4 2 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ K Q 7

This is another balanced hand that has the benefit of having a fourth spade. Do you bid 3♠ and risk going down when partner has opened a lousy hand? Do you bid just 2♠, risking missing a game? Not easy.

♠ K J 3 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A Q 8 7 ♣ J 9 6 3

Finally, a hand with some quality, but still only three spades. What bid, if any, gives you a chance to describe the fact that you have a good hand with only three trumps? Would a 2♦ bid be okay here? It might work but it suffers from being passable. If you bid 2♦ you might play it there.

The dangers shown with these three hands are listed here.

1. You raise to the three-level and go down.
2. You raise conservatively to two and make four.
3. You try a temporizing bid and get passed out.

In its basic form, Drury applies when third or fourth seat opens one of a major.

For the most part, if responder has support and 6-9 points he makes the normal raise. If responder has 10 or more points with support, he bids 2♣.

A LITTLE DRURY HISTORY

Drury was invented by a friend of mine, Doug Drury. He used to play with an adventurous partner named Eric Murray, a great player but one that liked certain bidding tricks. One of Eric's tricks was to open extremely light in third seat. With no one vulnerable, he would bid 1♠ on either of these hands:

♠ K 9 7 6 5 ♥ A 10 ♦ 8 7 3 ♣ Q J 3

♠ Q J 9 8 6 ♥ 7 4 ♦ J 10 9 3 ♣ 10 4

The first hand is merely a very light opening bid.

The second hand is a total psych.

Doug would not know what to do when he had a maximum passed hand and he found that he had to be extremely careful about bidding since Eric could have anything from 3 points up to a full opening bid. Doug devised the Drury convention in which a 2♣ bid would say he had 10 points with support for partner's major. This bid would allow them to stop at the two-level instead of venturing higher and getting doubled.

The original version of Drury

If opener bid a major, a 2♣ response said he had support and a good hand. Opener would bid 2♦ to say he was not interested in game and would bid something else when he did have interest. This was a big improvement in bidding.

A useless version of Drury

Some Drury players got the idea that they could bid 2♣ with either trump support and 10 points, or a club suit. If partner opened 1♠, they would bid 2♣ with both of these hands:

♠ K 9 7 6 5 ♥ K Q ♦ 10 7 3 ♣ K 7 4

♠ 6 ♥ 7 5 4 ♦ K 9 3 ♣ A Q 10 7 6 4

Since opener did not know what responder really had, troubles ensued. Opener had to waste an entire round of bidding to find out what responder was doing. Bidding space is too valuable to waste. Fortunately, this version of Drury became extinct, as it deserved.

THE CURRENT VERSION OF DRURY — REVERSE DRURY

A version of Drury was invented called Reverse Drury, which tidied up a lot of loose ends. This is the version of Drury that I will discuss here. I will discuss a better version in Chapter Eight (Lawrence Drury).

In Reverse Drury, discussed here, the following rules will apply:

1. Responder promises at least three-card trump support.
2. Responder promises 10 or more support points.
3. Drury is on after an overcall as long as 2♣ is available, with one exception (see rule 5).

If they bid 1♠ over 1♥, Drury is on.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	1♠
2♣			

2♣ is Drury.

4. Drury is on over a takeout double.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	dbl
2♣			

2♣ is Drury. With the auction about to become competitive, it is important to let partner know instantly that you have a good hand with trump support. If you redouble, the auction may get too high to show your support.

You have additional bids available to raise partner after they make a takeout double. I will include a section on bidding when your partner opens and they compete at the end of the discussion on Reverse Drury.

5. If they overcall 1NT, you need to know what that 1NT bid shows.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	1NT
?			

If 1NT shows a balanced strong notrump overcall, 2♣ is natural or it is a special convention made up for this exact sequence. This is the one exception to the rule that says 2♣ is always a Drury bid.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
?			1NT

South passed originally so he cannot have a big notrump hand. He has some kind of takeout hand. Likely, it is the unusual notrump showing the minors. If 1NT is an unusual notrump overcall or something similar, 2♣ is Drury.

Stolen bid – Do not use

West	North	East	South
pass dbl	pass	1♥	2♣

Some players like to double a bid if it had been their intention to make that bid. This double is called the ‘stolen bid’ double. I urge you to delete this understanding from your system.

Double is not Drury. This follows the rule that if you can’t bid 2♣, Drury does not exist. The double of 2♣ is a negative double. Negative doubles are too valuable to give them up in the name of a ‘stolen bid’ agreement.

Repeating. The only way for a bid to be a Drury bid is when it is 2♣. No other bid will do.

West	North	East	South
pass 3♣	pass	1♥	2♦

3♣ is natural. 2♣ is the only Drury. If there is no room to bid 2♣, then there is no Drury.

OPENER’S REBIDS AFTER PARTNER’S
REVERSE DRURY

Opener has many choices ranging from rebidding the major, which is a sign-off, all the way up to asking for aces. Three of his bids are common and if you are familiar with them, you are pretty much in control of this convention. The ‘big three’ bids are:

- 1. 2♦, saying you have full opening values. You are interested in game.
- 2. Two of the major, saying you want to stop the bidding right here.
- 3. Four of the major, saying you know game is reasonable and you have no slam interest.

Here is a discussion of all of the things opener can do, starting with the three bids shown above. You are East and you open 1♠ in third seat (or fourth seat). Your partner bids 2♣, Drury, and you have to find a bid. This is a brief description of what those bids mean, along with examples.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	?

2♦ WHEN OPENER REBIDS 2♦

Opener shows a hand with full opening-bid values. Usually, responder needs a maximum Drury to make game.

If opener has a balanced hand, 2♦ shows a rich 14 high-card points. Balanced hands do not play as well as shapely hands.

If opener has shape, 2♦ shows 14 useful points that can include distribution.

Rule

2♦ implies no slam interest.

Opener won't have any big hands when he bids 2♦. If he bids 2♦ and later starts bidding new suits, he is making a game try.

If opener has slam interest, he bids something else. Any bid that opener makes that is higher than two of the trump suit is a slam try.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ J 9 7 6 5 ♥ A 10 ♦ K J 3 ♣ K Q 4

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	2♦	

Bid 2♦ to confirm an opening bid and to make a gentle game try. 2♦ says game is possible opposite a maximum Drury, but not opposite a minimum. It is very important to understand what 2♦ shows.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K 10 7 ♥ A 10 9 6 3 ♦ 4 ♣ K J 10 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	2♦	

You show a hand that can make game opposite a good Drury hand but that is willing to stop in two. 3♣ by East would be game-forcing with slam implications.

It would not be a game try. Note that with only 11 high-card points East needs good shape, good points (aces and kings), and good heart spots. Note that East has important spot cards in spades, hearts, and clubs. Without these tens, he would rebid 2♥.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 3 ♥ A K J 8 6 ♦ A 9 8 5 ♣ 10 7 4

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	2♦	

Game is possible. You have excellent shape but not enough overall values to bid game. But you are willing to continue if partner is too.

Hiding information

Sometimes you will find partner has high-card points in the wrong place and your game is no good. If you do not give away much information in the auction and bid in general terms, the defenders won't have a lot to go on with their opening lead and later defense. Often they learn too late what your weak spot is. This means, in simple words, that you may get away with some impossible contracts.

2♥/2♠ WHEN OPENER REBIDS HIS MAJOR

Rebidding the major is a powerful statement that opener does not want to go higher. Responder should ignore this warning with care.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K Q 10 3 ♥ 8 6 ♦ 10 8 2 ♣ A J 3 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	2♠	

This is easy. You have a hand with no interest in game. 2♣, rebidding the major, says this. Keep this hand in mind when you are the Drury bidder and partner shows a minimum. This could be his hand. And yes, it could be worse.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K 3 2 ♥ A K J 8 ♦ 10 3 ♣ 9 8 6 4

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	2♥	

This hand is another minimum that should not make game opposite a passed hand.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A K Q 7 4 ♥ J 8 ♦ Q 9 3 ♣ Q 8 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	2♠	

This hand is as good a hand as opener can have to sign off in two of the major. Balanced hands should be discounted a bit. Here, opener has 14 points but the two minor suit queens and the ♥J have the potential to be worthless.

4♥/4♠ WHEN OPENER JUMPS TO GAME IN HIS MAJOR

Bidding four of the major shows a wide range of hands. The key message is that it says opener wants to be in game and he does not want to go higher. The Drury bidder must pass. Here are some examples showing hands where opener bids game over the Drury bid. You will note the extreme range of values opener can have.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 10 7 6 4 2 ♥ 3 ♦ A K Q 3 ♣ A J 5

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	4♠	

East is going to game no matter what West has. And, East is not interested in looking for a slam. Any other bid is just idle chatter that might help the opponents.

♠ 2 ♥ A J 9 8 6 5 ♦ K Q 8 7 ♣ Q 8

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	4♥	

This hand has super shape and once it finds a fit, going to game is a good idea. You could futz around but bidding game leaves the defenders in the dark. Note that after counting shape, this hand is worth around 16 points.

Rule – Commit this one to memory

Unless you have something to gain, do not tell the opponents about your hand.

As Billy Eisenberg, one of my most successful teammates, would say, “Don’t rat on your hand.” If your sole intention is to reach a game, bid it.

What is the upper range for a jump to game?

The range of hands where you will jump to game after a Drury bid is very wide. Here are a few of the better hands that bid this way.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 10 4 ♥ K Q J 7 5 ♦ A K 8 ♣ K J

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	4♥	

You might think of slam, but it is against the odds. Balanced hands can be evaluated with normal point-count, and this hand is nothing special. I doubt slam will ever be cold. But if it is, so what? You will lose far too much trying for that perfect fit. Your hand is maybe worth 20 points. Partner will need 13 and he did not open the bidding. He does not have what you are wishing for. Want proof? In the following layout, your responder has a super maximum and slam is marginal. Well worth stopping in game.

West

♠ K 7 5 3
 ♥ A 10 8 4
 ♦ 7 6 3
 ♣ A 3

East

♠ Q 10 4
 ♥ K Q J 7 5
 ♦ A K 8
 ♣ K J

If this is the layout you may find that game is the limit. You might lose a diamond and two spades. Mind you, I agree that you can pick and choose the hands that your partner may have but they will be what Barry Crane used to call miracle hands. Barry had a rule that his partners were expected to follow.

Barry's rule

I will never have the perfect hand that you are hoping for.

This is an excellent piece of advice that you should remember when you start making wishes about partner's hand.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A K J ♥ A K 10 7 6 ♦ K 3 2 ♣ J 5

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	4♥	

This hand has the same theme as the previous hand. Why look for something that probably does not exist? Remember this very important guideline. Balanced hands facing Drury hands are not likely to produce slams. If your partner has good shape slam might exist, but if partner has that hand he won't use Drury, he will use a different bidding tool.

West

♠ 9 7 3 2
 ♥ 9 5 4 3
 ♦ A Q 5
 ♣ A 4

East

♠ A K J
 ♥ A K 10 7 6
 ♦ K 3 2
 ♣ J 5

Dummy has a useful hand that includes four trumps but it is not clear how good or bad this slam is. With a club lead slam is in serious jeopardy and with any other lead there are still some issues.

I promise that bidding game after partner's Drury bid with the right 14 point hands and with balanced 19 point hands will be a big net plus for you.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 8 ♥ A K J 7 6 2 ♦ K Q 9 6 4 ♣ 5

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	?	

This hand has only 13 high-card points but it has excellent shape and excellent controls. It is worth looking for a slam. If partner has four little hearts and two aces, slam is worth bidding.

What you should not do with this hand is bid 4♥. The point of this hand is to show that shape hands and balanced hands are two different animals and must be treated with different gloves. I will have more examples of strong rebids in the next section.

Summing up this useful judgment rule

If you open a balanced hand in third or fourth seat, you will rarely have a slam facing a Drury bid. Your maximum balanced hands will typically have 19 high-card points and your partner will have a maximum of 11. This adds up to 30 high-card points. If you are balanced, your hand won't go up much in value. Mostly, you will make ten tricks on a bad day, eleven tricks most of the time, and when you do make twelve tricks it will be because you got a little bit lucky. Keep in mind that if you go exploring for a slam, you may give away information that will help the defenders defend accurately.

TWO ASIDES:

Why use Drury in fourth seat?

One of the justifications for Drury is that in third seat you can open light hands, and may need the protection that Drury gives you. When responder has a good hand, he can show it and get out safely in two of the major if opener is minimum or sub-minimum.

In fourth seat, opening bids are sound, being hands that would open in first or second seat. Why, might you ask, is Drury needed in fourth seat? The answer is that when you open in third or fourth seat, a two-over-one response is not forcing. This means that if your partner bids 1♠ in fourth seat, you do not have as many forcing bids as you would have after a first or second seat

opening bid. Doug Drury noted this and decided to take the 2♣ bid to be used exclusively to show a good raise for partner. It turns out that Drury does a lot more than originally thought. When your partner bids one of a major and you have Drury available, it means that you can start game and slam auctions with Drury without squandering a lot of bidding room. Opener learns of a fit immediately and can start slam exploration on his second bid. I am quite sure that Drury is just as useful, perhaps more so, in fourth seat as it is in third seat.

Balanced hands vs. distributional hands: a reminder

When you are raised, if you have a balanced hand, it will go up in value a modest amount only. If you have a distributional hand with a singleton or void, your hand goes up in value a lot. For this reason, if opener has shape, he should consider being more pushy than normal.

If you like to work on system, the following pages show more possible Drury agreements. I suggest you make sure your partner likes these ideas before you go into it too deeply.

CONTINUING WITH OTHER DRURY AGREEMENTS

2♥ WHEN OPENER REBIDS THE OTHER MAJOR, IN THIS CASE, HEARTS
 If opener bids 1♠ and rebids 2♥, he shows a full opening bid. (Some play this differently.)

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A J 10 4 2 ♥ K J 9 7 ♦ K J 10 ♣ 4

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♥

Even though the East hand is a minimum, the Drury response tells you there is a fit, which entitles you to reevaluate upwards. 2♥ tells your partner that you have at least opening-bid strength with four or five hearts and five spades. West will not be able to evaluate his hand exactly, but now that you have shown a heart suit he will have a better idea than before.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♥
2♠	?

Let's say you bid 2♥ and West bids 2♠. You could pass this on the basis that you have only 13 points. But is this best? You have excellent shape that may be the key to a game. You could get scientific and make a game try of 3♦ but you could also just bid 4♠. This auction would be my choice since my hand is worth around 15 points with good spot cards and with no obvious flaws. You might think that bidding 2♥ was a waste of time but there are hands where partner has three spades and five hearts. Finding hearts can be right often enough to mention them.

OPENER'S SECOND BID

What do these bids mean?

How does responder continue?

The material in this rather long section shows tools you can use. Read this but do not expect to find everyone else using it. It is necessary to talk with partner about the material in the following section.

Some hands will use ideas shown in the previous section and some will introduce a few new thoughts.

PART ONE: WHEN OPENER REBIDS TWO OF HIS MAJOR, SHOWING A WEAK HAND

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♠
?	

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

This is easy. West correctly passed with his crummy 12 point hand, which makes it a maximum passed hand. He responds with Drury to East's 1♠ bid. When East

bids 2♠, he is saying no game exists opposite a passed hand. On this hand East has a 25% play for ten tricks but it is possible that eight is the maximum. West should respect East's sign-off about 99% of the time. Note that East has a real opening bid and stopping in 2♠ is still a good idea. In the following examples, East has a typical lousy third seat opener.

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

This time, East has a light third seat opener. Game would require miracles, nine tricks would be against the odds, eight tricks is the most likely result, and seven tricks is possible.

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

This time, East has only four spades along with a third seat opener. These two hands never make 4♠. 3♠ would take a minor miracle and 2♠ could go down. Note that East has close to a normal minimum opener and that dummy has as good a balanced hand as possible and game is still unlikely. Balanced hands are not as useful as shapely hands.

When East has a real dog, hands worse than the ones shown above, it's possible that no contract is safe. There is a lot to be said for being aggressive in third seat, but only if your partner does not abuse your imagination.

Are there any hands where responder bids Drury and then bids again after opener signs off?

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♠
?	

East signed off in 2♠. West's first inclination should be to pass, and that is usually the right thing to do. If West feels that his hand is worth one more bid, it

should show a maximum that was not suited to other bids. He should not have a singleton because if he had a singleton, he would have chosen a different bid than Drury. If responder thinks a game might be likely after opener's sign-off he would need a maximum Drury plus both of the following:

- Five good trumps.
- Quality high-card points.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K Q 9 8 4 ♥ A J 4 ♦ 10 9 3 ♣ 9 2

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♠
?	

West can make one more try with 3♠. This says that West has super trumps and is still interested in game. If West had anything less, he would just honor East's sign-off and would pass 2♠. If you do bid 3♠ and opener passes, don't be surprised if he goes down. His 2♠ bid, remember, said he has no game interest.

PART TWO: OPENER REBIDS 2♦, SHOWING A HAND WITH GAME INTEREST

When opener rebids 2♦ after a Drury response, he is saying he has a full opener. If responder has a minimum, the bidding can stop in two of a major. Opener does not have a slammish hand. He would not bid 2♦ if slam was possible. 2♦ says he has a hand that is interested in game only. Here are a few examples of hands where opener would bid 2♦.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦

♠ K J 10 4 3 ♥ 3 ♦ K J 9 ♣ Q J 7 4

2♦, showing interest only, is fine. If partner bids a game, fine. If he signs off in 2♠, you can bid 3♣ as a game try if you wish.

♠ A J 8 7 6 5 ♥ K 4 ♦ 3 2 ♣ K J 2

2♦ is best. If partner bids 2♠ you can raise to 3♠, invitational, based on your six-card suit and useful side cards.

♠ A K J 8 4 ♥ 8 7 3 ♦ K Q 3 ♣ 9 3

2♦ is enough. If partner bids 2♠, pass. You have only 13 high-card points but the honors are all working.

RESPONDER'S BIDS AFTER 2♦

Here are some examples of responder's actions after opener's 2♦ rebid. These are important examples, worth more than a casual read.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 8 2 ♥ Q J 9 7 3 ♦ K J 5 ♣ J 10

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
?	

Bid 2♣. West has a minimum Drury with poor point quality and only three trumps. Since East has shown a full but minimum opener, West should bid 2♣. Opener is allowed to pass 2♣ and often does. Remember this very important guideline:

Important guideline reviewed

When you bid Drury and your partner has a hand worth being in game, but is not interested in a slam, he bids game.

You saw earlier that he can have a wonderful 14 points up to a balanced 19 or 20 for his jump to game. What this means is that his 2♦ bid shows a hand with game interest only that is worth around 14 so-so points.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 10 8 7 ♥ Q 10 8 4 ♦ K Q 9 ♣ K J 8

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2NT	

When West bids 2NT he does not deny three spades. Drury promised three trumps and no subsequent bidding can change this. 2NT offers a choice of game contracts and shows maximum values. It probably should be treated as forcing for one round.

As West, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 4 2 ♥ K 6 3 ♦ A J 10 8 6 ♣ Q 10 3

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
4♥	

You have minimum points, but they are good ones. Bid a game. Note that this auction doesn't say much about your hand. The defenders haven't learned anything of use.

As West, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q J 7 5 ♥ J 10 3 ♦ 2 ♣ A Q 10 8 5

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
4♥	

Your hand is really minimum but the singleton makes it better. Don't consider showing the singleton diamond. Partner does not have a strong hand so there is no slam. Just bid game and let the opponents learn about the singleton diamond when they see dummy, not before.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A 8 3 2 ♥ K J 8 7 ♦ Q J 4 ♣ 10 3

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
4♥	

East has shown his hand is worth at least 14 points. You have a maximum Drury, so game should be worth bidding. Note that your fourth trump adds a lot to this hand.

Don't bother raising to the three-level after opener's 2♦ bid

You may have been wondering why responder is not raising to three of the major after opener's 2♦ rebid. The long and short of it is that if opener has a sound minimum, you should be willing to bid game when you have a decent Drury hand, rather than invite. Keeping the opponents uninformed is a large part of bridge. I suppose that an invitational jump to three of the major is possible but if you can find any reason to bid game, do that instead.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A 8 6 5 2 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ K 8 6 ♣ 9 8

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
4♥	

Again, you have enough for game. Your partner said he has a game try and your values are solid. Whenever you know where you are going, don't stop off for idle and useless gossip. This theme of jumping to game is important and recurring, which is why I included as many examples as I have. Note that West did not bid spades. Raising hearts makes the bidding much easier.

MORE DRURY UNDERSTANDINGS

The remainder of this discussion shows cases where opener's rebid is higher than two of the trump suit. In all of these cases, opener is forcing to game.

Some of these bids are looking for the best game.

Some of these bids are looking for slam.

PART THREE: OPENER BIDS 1♥ AND REBIDS 2♠ AFTER A DRURY BID

2♠ WHEN OPENER REBIDS THE OTHER MAJOR, IN THIS CASE, SPADES

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A Q 6 5 ♥ A Q J 8 6 ♦ A 9 ♣ K 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
2♣	pass	2♠	

2♠ is natural and game forcing no matter how the auction continues. If a slam exists, 2♠ will emphasize the value of any spade honors partner may have. And if partner has three small spades, he will know they are bad.

PART FOUR: OPENER REBIDS 2NT OR 3NT IN RESPONSE TO DRURY

West	East
pass	1♥/♠
2♣	2NT/3NT

What is the difference between 2NT and 3NT?

2NT is a slam try. At the very least, you will reach a game. It shows a prime balanced hand. It will never have a singleton or void. Responder should want to cooperate when he has a flavorful hand. It would be lazy if responder merely jumped to game on all maximums. There are many good things responder can do. When opener bids 2NT, he does not expect to make a slam facing the majority of Drury hands. If there is a slam, it will probably require that responder has a source of tricks like a long suit or perhaps has a singleton. Responder has ways to show both of these features.

3NT offers a choice of games. No slam interest is implied here. Responder chooses between 3NT and four of the major. A 3NT rebid does not look for slam. It is an effort to find the best game.

WHEN OPENER BIDS 2NT IN RESPONSE TO DRURY

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A Q 10 6 2 ♥ A 5 3 ♦ K Q 9 ♣ A 10

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2NT

2NT is forcing and explorative showing a prime maximum hand of around 19 high-card points. This hand is an example of how serious opener must be about his hand. I have already suggested a rule that opener should not waste time looking for a slam when he has a balanced hand. You need an exceptional hand for this 2NT bid.

It is possible that you will be raised to 3NT. If you do not wish to declare notrump from your side, try to find a different bid. It is possible that 3NT or 4♠ is the best spot and this bid will help partner judge. It is barely possible that slam can make.

Responder can bid a new suit over 2NT

If responder bids a suit lower ranking than trumps, he is showing a good holding in the bid suit, usually five cards long, and more than minimum values.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2NT
?	

3♣, 3♦ These two bids show good suits. Note that when the opening bid is 1♥, as shown here, responder cannot bid 3♠ to show a suit. That bid shows a singleton. (See below.)

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2NT
?	

3♣, 3♦, 3♥ These three bids show good suits.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2NT
?	

♠ A 8 6 ♥ J 10 2 ♦ 9 2 ♣ K Q 8 5 3

Bid 3♣. This shows a nice suit and a good Drury hand. The ♣KQ853 is slightly better than average. Weaker suits such as AJ854, KJ543, or QJ1043 are okay too as long as you have maximum values. Avoid making these bids with a four-card suit.

♠ Q J 6 ♥ Q 10 2 ♦ J 2 ♣ K J 8 5 3

Do not bid 3♣. This is a minimum hand. What should the bid be? There are many bids that responder can make and I will discuss them shortly. On this hand, you have choices. I suggest 3♥ for reasons shown in the next few paragraphs.

Responder can raise 2NT to 3NT

The raise to 3NT shows a balanced hand with three-card support for partner's major suit.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2NT
?	

♠ J 9 6 ♥ K J 3 ♦ K 6 4 2 ♣ K 7 6

Bid 3NT. Your hand could not be more balanced. It may not be the bid your partner wants to hear but it is a descriptive bid. Your partner will bid four of the major or will pass 3NT.

♠ Q 9 3 ♥ J 8 4 2 ♦ K Q 7 ♣ Q J 2

Bid 3NT. You actually have a choice with this hand. I stated that 3NT shows a balanced hand, usually with three trumps, and this hand has four trumps. Still, the hand is balanced and it has honors in all suits.

Responder can make a splinter bid after 2NT

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2NT
?	

3♣, 4♣, 4♦ When your side is bidding hearts, these three bids all show singletons. Be sure to note that 3♠ shows a singleton. Almost always you will have just three trumps. With four trumps and a singleton, your hand will be minimum.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2NT
?	

4♣, 4♦, 4♥ When your side is bidding spades, all jumps to the four-level after opener's 2NT bid show singletons. If you have four trumps, you can make these bids with relatively weak hands. If you have three trumps, you need close to a maximum. Some examples:

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2NT
?	

♠ 4 ♥ QJ7 ♦ AJ74 ♣ J10743

Bid 3♠. With good hearts and an ace, you can treat this as a goodish hand. Your 3♠ bid shows a singleton spade. In practice, you usually have three trumps when you make this bid. This is the only case where you can show a singleton with a three-level bid. All the other singleton-showing bids after opener's 2NT rebid will be jumps.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2NT
?	

♠ QJ72 ♥ K62 ♦ Q7542 ♣ Q

This is not a great hand in spite of having 10 points and a singleton. I suggest

giving up on showing the singleton. I wouldn't show the diamonds, either. This hand is not worth a progressive move. Since you have nothing productive to do, you should choose between 3♥ and 4♥. As I will show shortly, a 3♥ bid shows a different hand than a 4♥ bid. With this in mind, I would bid 3♥ with this one.

Responder can bid three of the major after 2NT

If you go back to three of the trump suit, you are saying that you do not have anything special to bid such as 3NT. You may have a minimum hand and you may have a maximum hand with nothing you can show. The range for bidding three of the major is very large. One thing that partner can count on is that you do not have a proper hand to bid four of the major, which would show four good trumps and a minimum Drury hand. (See the next topic.) He will also know that you did not choose to bid 3NT.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2NT
?	

♠ J 10 7 3 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ K J ♣ Q J 7 3

Bid 3♠. You have close to a maximum Drury and your high cards are okay. But there is no sane bid you can make. Your 3♠ bid leaves room for partner to keep bidding and if he shows more slam interest, you can oblige.

♠ A Q 8 ♥ 8 7 4 2 ♦ 10 3 ♣ K Q 10 7

Anytime you have strong trumps, you know that you have one of the things that partner is most worried about. This hand has above average Drury points and it has good spades, a little shape, and a potentially useful club holding. Bid 3♠ and await further bidding from partner. A 3♣ bid would be a sane choice too. Partner would expect five of them but you have good values to compensate. Your doubleton diamond may turn out to be an asset. It is unusual to bid a new suit with only four. Do not make a habit of it.

♠ Q 7 4 ♥ 5 2 ♦ K J 10 4 ♣ K J 7 4

This is easy. Bid 3♠. You don't care to go on and will emphasize that on the next round. If you were 3-3-4-3, you would choose 3NT.

Responder can bid four of the major after 2NT

When you are unable to make a useful bid by showing a suit, bidding 3NT, or showing a singleton, you are left with bidding three or four of the major. Three of the major, as discussed immediately above, shows hands that have nothing else to bid. They can range from minimum Drury hands to good Drury hands.

Since you can't tell how big your partner's hand is you should still try to help him if you can. What this leads to is the following.

Jumping to four of the major shows you do not have a great Drury hand but you do have four nice trumps or perhaps five decent or better trumps. What you do not have is three trumps. Partner knows he can count on you to have Drury values but now he knows it is not a strong hand. Here are some examples where you would jump to game and get it over with.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2NT
4♥	

♠ 9 6 7 2 ♥ K J 6 3 ♦ K Q 2 ♣ J 4

Bid 4♥. This is a modest Drury hand but it does have excellent trumps. Roughly speaking, I would treat QJ74 or K1054 or better as good trumps.

♠ 9 7 2 ♥ A J 8 4 ♦ K 8 4 ♣ Q 4 3

You have good hearts and you have a king on the side but you also have zero ruffing values. You can bid 4♥ with this one. Your partner will learn you do not have a maximum hand but you do have four good trumps.

♠ 8 6 2 ♥ Q 9 7 4 ♦ K J ♣ Q J 3 2

Bid 3♥. You have four trumps but they are only fair. Plus, the hand is minimum anyway. If you had the ♥QJ97 in this hand, 4♥ would be okay.

♠ A J 2 ♥ Q 9 8 4 3 ♦ J 3 ♣ Q 3 2

You did well to use Drury and not one of the other raises available to you. Over partner's 2NT, you jump to 4♥, showing four good trumps or five decent trumps and a fair Drury hand. This hand does have 10 points and five trumps but it has two jacks and an uncertain ♣Q.

♠ A J 2 ♥ K Q 7 5 ♦ 5 3 ♣ J 9 3 2

Bid 3♥. This hand has four trumps but it also has excellent values and shape. The problem is that if you bid 4♥, you promise four trumps but only a modest Drury hand. This is a maximum Drury hand so you bid 3♥ and hope for a second chance to do something. This hand is not an easy one to bid. Fortunately, it is rare to have this fine a hand.

Other possible agreements

There are other acceptable agreements to use here. You can play that a jump to game shows a minimum hand and other bids show maximum hands. What I showed in the discussion above is just one of many possible variations. You should definitely have agreements and the ones I am showing here are both possible and acceptable. The reason I vote for the jump to show four good trumps with a minimum is that the message is so precise that opener can usually use it.

WHEN OPENER BIDS 3NT IN RESPONSE TO DRURY

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3NT
?	

This section is easy. East is offering a choice of games. West does one of two things.

1. He passes if he thinks 3NT is the best spot.
2. He bids four of the major (4♥ here) if he thinks four of the major is the best spot.

Some guidelines:

- If responder has three trumps, he tends to pass if he is balanced.
- If responder has three trumps, he tends to bid four of the major if he has some shape.
- If responder has four trumps, he tends to return to four of the major.

The only time he stays in 3NT with four trumps is when he has a balanced hand with scattered high-card points.

Some examples:

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3NT
?	

♠ 7 6 4 2 ♥ K 10 5 ♦ 8 7 ♣ A K 4 3

Bid 4♥. You have some shape and you have no help in spades or diamonds. Remember that your partner has five hearts so he has a doubleton somewhere. His doubleton could be in diamonds.

♠ A Q 9 3 ♥ K J 5 ♦ 8 7 4 ♣ 9 7 5

Difficult to say. I suggest bidding 4♥ because you have concentrated values and there are two suits to worry about. For the most part, returning to the major is a good idea unless you have a distinct liking for notrump.

♠ Q 6 2 ♥ J 9 7 4 ♦ Q J 9 ♣ K Q 3

You can pass 3NT with this. Even with four-card support, your balanced hand rates to be good for notrump. You have no shape and you have honors in all the suits. With four trumps it is unusual to stay in 3NT, but it is possible.

PART FIVE: WHEN OPENER SHOWS A NEW SUIT IN RESPONSE TO DRURY

There are two totally different situations where opener bids a new suit in response to Drury.

Case one:

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♥

In this case opener is confirming an opening bid, but is not looking for slam. Opener's 2♥ bid merely shows a second suit. 2♥ is not forcing to game but it is forcing for one round. This is the only auction where opener can bid a new suit and then stop in a partscore. 2♥ does two things. It helps responder decide whether to bid game and it also offers a choice of game contracts.

Case two:

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♠, 3♣, 3♦

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	3♣, 3♦, 3♥

All of these rebids by East are slam tries showing a good second suit and 20 or more support points. Responder should cooperate in the slam try if he has good things like honors in opener’s suits, aces, and singletons in unbid suits. If responder has kings and queens in the unbid suits, they are likely to be wasted. Here are the common things that responder can do when opener bids a new suit.

RESPONDER CAN RAISE THE NEW SUIT

The raise shows a good four-card (or more) fit for the second suit and a hand that is willing to consider a slam in that suit. If you have good support for the second suit but zero interest in a slam, just return to partner’s major.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 7 6 2 ♥ K 10 5 ♦ A 10 9 ♣ K 4 3 2

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3♣
4♣	

This hand is easy because you can raise clubs. 4♣ says you have good cards and you also have four or more clubs. If you had a worse hand, you would go back to 3♥ instead of raising clubs.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q J 2 ♥ K 10 5 ♦ Q 8 6 ♣ Q 10 5 2

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	3♣
3♠	

Much of this hand is wasted. Raising clubs would be descriptive of your clubs, but grossly misdescriptive of your values. Partner will be pleased with your spade and club cards, but if this hand can make a slam your partner will make another move.

Some complete hands and auctions

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

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	3♣	pass
4♣	pass	4NT	pass
5♥	pass	6♣	

Opener often has a five-card minor but he may have only a four-card suit, as he does here. Often a 4-4 fit gains you a trick and if 6♣ turns out to be cold while 6♠ can't make, you will miss out on the best slam if you insist on spades. On this hand you want partner to like the ♣K and this is a good way to let him know that. Your partner should be alert that clubs could be the best suit for slam and he will raise you if he likes his hand.

6♠ requires the diamond finesse, while 6♣ will be nearly cold.

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

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	3♣	pass
4♣	pass	4NT	pass
?			

The reason I do not include a finished auction here is that some players have special rules for Blackwood when two suits have been bid and raised.

Which fit is best?

The important thing about these hands is that 6♣ is relatively cold, while 6♠ requires a heart finesse. When you have a 4-4 fit, it is often best to play in the 4-4 fit. When you have a 5-3 fit and a 5-4 fit, playing in the 5-4 fit is usually best. Be willing to play in six of a minor when the chances of making it are greater than your chances of making six of a major.

WHEN OPENER STARTS WITH 1♠ AND JUMPS TO 3♥

If opener bids 1♠ and jumps to 3♥ over Drury, it also shows a super hand with four or five hearts.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q J 10 7 5 ♥ A K J 9 4 ♦ A K ♣ 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	3♥	

You need partner to have a spade honor and the ♣A to give you a play for slam. Or, if he has the ♠AK, that too gives you a play for slam. It might even be cold. Your jump to 3♥ gives partner some insights as to whether his hand is good or bad for you.

♠ K J 10 7 5 ♥ A K J 4 ♦ A K 10 ♣ 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	3♥	

You can jump to 3♥ with this hand, too. Hearts is a possible trump suit. Whatever partner has, he won't raise hearts without four of them.

Responder's problems are a little different from when opener shows a minor suit. When opener bids 3♣ or 3♦, responder can raise to 4♣ or 4♦ to show a good hand with a fit. When opener bids 3♥, responder can't bid 4♥ with a good hand because opener may pass it.

Suggestion

If your partner jumps to 3♥ after opening 1♠, play these agreements.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	3♥
?	

- 4♠ says you have a nice Drury hand with four spades.
- 3♠ says you have either a dull Drury hand or a great Drury hand.
- 4♥ says you have a dull hand with a reason to offer hearts as a trump suit.
- 4♣/4♦ are cuebids saying you like hearts.
- 3NT is special. It says you love hearts but do not have anything to cuebid in the minors. This gets my award for the easiest convention to forget.

WHEN OPENER SHOWS A MINOR SUIT IN RESPONSE TO DRURY

If you have a good hand that can't raise opener's minor suit, you can sometimes make a cuebid. It will be ambiguous at this point but it does say you like your hand. Most likely, you do not have four cards in opener's new minor. If you did, it would be better to raise, thus confirming you have four cards.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 8 6 5 2 ♥ K 10 5 ♦ A 10 4 ♣ K 10 6

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3♣
3♦	

You have great cards, but no easy way to show them. 3♦ implies a hand with good cards but with no other useful bid. Note that neither 3♥ nor 4♥ would show a hand this powerful.

Responder can return to three or four of the trump suit

When your partner bids a new suit and you have nothing you can do other than return to the trump suit, you can have this useful distinction that is similar to the case where your partner bids 2NT after your Drury bid.

Three of the trump suit shows a variety of hands that cannot bid four of the major and that do not have another useful bid to make.

Four of the trump suit shows an average hand with four nice trumps.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 9 7 6 2 ♥ K Q 10 2 ♦ K J 7 ♣ 9 3

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3♣
4♥	

The 4♥ bid says you have excellent trumps but a minimum Drury. Given that you have the ♥KQ102, you know partner is worried about your support. You might have raised with ♥953. By bidding 4♥ you put that particular worry to rest.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 9 7 6 2 ♥ K Q 9 2 ♦ 8 6 4 ♣ K J

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3♣
?	

4♣. An unusual bid that you might not think of. The idea is to let partner know of your fitting club honors. He will think you have four clubs and if he bids to slam, you will return to hearts. Your hand will not be a disappointment to him.

What might your partner have for his bidding? Here is a possible example hand for him to hold:

♠ A Q ♥ A J 10 7 4 ♦ 7 ♣ A Q 10 7 4

WHEN OPENER REBIDS 2♣

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K 8 3 ♥ J 8 7 4 ♦ Q J 8 7 ♣ K 4

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♠
3♥	

Your hand is nothing special. Since you do not have excellent four-card support, it is best to bid just 3♥. One thing that players often forget is that 2♠ by opener is a slam try. The bidding will not stop in 3♥.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ J 9 ♥ J 8 4 ♦ K J 9 7 ♣ K Q 9 4

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♠
2NT	

3NT could be the right contract. 2NT suggests that. You do this only when you have no worries about the unbid suits and you have lousy values in your partner's suits. Remember that 2♠ was game forcing so you cannot stop in 2NT.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 9 ♥ 9 8 4 ♦ K J 10 7 ♣ K Q 10 4

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♠
3NT	

You feel very strongly about playing in 3NT.

Responder can make a splinter bid

Splinter bids are excellent tools to have. When the trump suit is known to both players, an unexpected jump in an unbid suit shows good values and a singleton in the suit you are jumping in. The idea is to tell partner in one bid how the hands fit.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 8 6 5 3 ♥ A J 2 ♦ 3 ♣ K J 9 6 4

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3♣
4♦	

A splinter, often in support of clubs. For a hand which is a minimum Drury, it has improved enormously.

PART SIX: WHEN OPENER MAKES A SPLINTER BID IN
RESPONSE TO DRURY

When opener splinters, responder knows which cards are working and which are not. If responder has lots of working cards he tries for slam, and if not, he signs off. The main point is that responder must not fall in love with the wrong maximums or fail to appreciate the right minimums. Remember that opener has a hand that can play only in his suit. He does not have other suits that could be trump. This means opener wishes to play in his major. He may or may not have another four-card suit but if he does, he is not interested in bidding it.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 8 7 ♥ K J 9 7 ♦ Q J ♣ Q J 5 2

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	4♥
4♠	

West has 12 high-card points, but with much wastage in hearts. Sign off in 4♠. West should not be tempted. He has only three trumps and not even one useful ace or king.

As West, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K 10 7 5 ♥ A 2 ♦ 8 7 6 5 ♣ Q 10 4

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	4♦
4♥	

Bid 4♥. West has minimum high cards, but they are all working. Cuebid 4♥. What might partner have for his splinter bid? Here is one possible hand:

♠ A Q 9 8 6 4 ♥ K Q 8 ♦ 3 ♣ A K 2

Some players might not splinter with this hand but as you can see, your hand is just right for slam. 6♠ is an excellent contract. The way for responder to judge his hand is to add up the high-card points he has in the suits other than the singleton suit. Then add for the ace of the singleton suit if you have it. If you have 9 points or more, the odds are that your hand will make slam good or

at least worth looking for. On this hand, responder has only 9 points and they predictably mesh with opener's hand shown above.

The reason splinters work is that responder can tell whether he has a good hand. This hand is good because all the high cards will be facing something good in partner's hand.

Take the ♣Q104. Partner's holdings may be any of the following: K97, K873, KJ86, A82, AJ9, AJ8, AK2. In all cases, your clubs will range from modestly valuable to very valuable. The most important thing about this hand is that West realizes that his 9 high-card point hand is terrific at the point East bids 4♦.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q J 8 2 ♥ K 9 4 3 ♦ 8 7 6 ♣ K 4

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	4♦
4♥	

When East splinters in diamonds, he shows length in the other three suits. Therefore, this hand has good values even though it is a minimum. West would like to encourage, and since he has room to cuebid, he should cuebid the ♥K. This is not dangerous because the ♥K is a proven card. Partner has shown length in hearts and implied strength as well.

This is an important idea. The concept of cuebidding a king is contrary to normal bridge, but it is right to show it when you know the king is useful.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A J 10 7 ♥ 10 6 3 ♦ K J 4 ♣ J 7 3

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	4♣
4♦	

This time you have an ace to cuebid. It is still right to cuebid the ♦K. You have good points, but you have bad shape and bad trumps. Since the ♦K is worth almost as much as the ♠A, you should cuebid it instead, which leaves partner room to sign off in 4♥.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A J 10 7 ♥ J 10 3 ♦ K J 4 ♣ 8 6 2

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	4♣
4♦	

This hand is almost the same as the previous except that the jack is in hearts rather than clubs. This hand is good enough to cuebid 4♦ and then follow up over 4♥ with 4♠.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 3 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ 9 7 6 5 4 3 ♣ K J 2

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	4♦
4NT	

West has all suits controlled plus the needed ♥Q. Even the ♣J may be valuable. No amount of cuebidding will get across all the features of this hand and it is far too good to bid only 4♥. Blackwood by the Drury hand is rare but it is possible.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 6 5 2 ♥ K J 5 4 ♦ 8 7 5 ♣ K 2

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	4♦
?	

Tough. Anything except 4♥ has merit. Possible bids include 5♣, 5♥, and 4NT. You won't really know what is right until you see partner's hand. The one bid that is distinctly wrong is a conservative 4♥. Your hand has too many strong pluses to sign off. My choice is 5♥, which says I like my hand but have nothing to cuebid.

Let me put the above in the form of a useful rule.

Rule

If you have a known range of points and your partner makes a splinter bid, if all your points are working, then you probably have a slam.

Here, a Drury bid shows from 9-11 high-card points. All of your points are working, which means your hand is good for partner.

Here is an auction showing both hands.

West	East
♠ 7 6 5	♠ 10
♥ A 9 8 2	♥ K Q 10 7 6 5
♦ K 7 2	♦ A Q 4
♣ K 9 4	♣ A Q 2

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3♠
?	

Slam is cold because the hands fit perfectly. West knows that even with balanced shape, his ace and his two kings are super cards for opener. West might bid 4NT and he might content himself with a 4♣ cuebid. There are many things West can do. As long as he sees the worth of his hand, it should be feasible to reach a good slam. If West bids 4♥, that will end the bidding, which would be sad.

JUDGMENT QUIZ REGARDING THESE SPLINTERS

What should West think about these hands?

The bidding, until noted otherwise, is:

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	3♠
?	

♠ 8 6 5 4 ♥ K Q 5 4 ♦ K 2 ♣ Q J 3

After your partner's splinter bid of 3♠, your hand becomes a gold mine. This hand has maximum points, excellent trumps, good distribution, and nothing wasted in spades. This hand is good enough to drive to slam by itself unless there are two aces missing. A common error is for West to be pessimistic because he is aceless. Not to worry. East has made a descriptive slam try telling you which

values are working and which are not. This time your values are all working!
Possible bids now are:

- 4NT Blackwood.
- 4♦ Cuebid.
- 3NT “I have slam interest but nothing to show now.” Since East is making a slam try in hearts, it is not logical to play in 3NT.

♠ K Q 8 3 ♥ 9 7 6 ♦ Q J 3 ♣ K 6 2

This is a terrible hand for slam purposes. You have wasted cards in spades, poor distribution, poor trumps, and no aces. You have more high cards than you might but in general this is a bad hand. Bid 4♥, which should stop the bidding. Do not bid 3NT. That bid is used to say you have slam interest but nothing to show. Once your partner makes his splinter bid, your side is committed to playing in the major suit.

♠ 6 5 2 ♥ J 8 6 4 3 ♦ A 2 ♣ A 8 3

Bid 4♣, a cuebid. This is a super hand after partner's splinter bid. Aces are good to have and, of special importance, these aces are in suits where partner has length and strength. You hope your partner will ask for aces. If he doesn't, you will still continue bidding, perhaps by asking for aces yourself. This is one hand you can probably drive to slam safely.

♠ A 5 2 ♥ J 8 6 4 3 ♦ A 2 ♣ 8 6 3

Bid 4♦, a cuebid. These aces are nice, but they are not as nice as the ones in the previous hand. East has a singleton spade, which means your ♠A will not combine with lesser honors. Aces are great helpers. Kings, queens, and jacks by themselves have modest value. Put an ace next to them and they become giants. Still, you do have two aces and you have a fifth trump. You should make a cuebid of 4♦. You will have a tough decision whether to keep bidding if partner bids 4♥.

Here is a layout showing why one ace can be twice as valuable as a different ace.

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

Six hearts is cold because West's aces are both helping honors in East's hand.

West

♠ A 5 2
 ♥ J 8 6 4 3
 ♦ 8 2
 ♣ A 6 3

East

♠ 10
 ♥ A K Q 10 7 5
 ♦ K 10 5
 ♣ K Q 4

In this layout, West has the ♠A instead of the ♦A. Slam is still a good risk but it is not 100% as in the previous layout. West has exactly the same high-card count in both hands but there is a major difference in how well these points work. The reason is that West's ♠A is what we call a 'sterile' ace. It takes a trick and otherwise adds nothing to the hand. The ♦A is called a 'working' ace. It takes a trick and it adds to the worth of East's diamonds.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	4♣

♠ K J 3 ♥ J 6 3 ♦ Q 7 5 4 ♣ K 6 2

Bid 4♥. A normal hand that is indifferent to opener's enthusiasm. You will have a lot of hands like this one where you will sign off. You have a modest Drury hand and you just learned that your ♣K is now worthless. With no shape, no aces, and marginal heart support, signing off in game is clear.

♠ 8 7 2 ♥ K J 2 ♦ K Q J 7 ♣ 9 7 6

Bid 4♦. This one is harder to evaluate. Your good diamond suit could be a source of tricks so you do not want to sign off in 4♥ on the basis of only 10 points. In contrast to the previous hand, this one has excellent heart support. The only minus factor here is the balanced distribution.

♠ Q J 2 ♥ K 9 7 ♦ K J 4 ♣ 9 7 6 4

This is another tough hand to bid. You have 10 valuable points but you have bad shape. You want to make a move of some sort. I would bid 4♦, mimicking a thought that I have mentioned a few times already. If you have a good hand and no ace to show, show a king instead if convenient.

Remember this important rule that I have already discussed above.

If partner splinters and you have all or most of your values in the other suits, you will find that your hand is good for your partner.

PART SEVEN: OPENER BIDS FOUR OF HIS MAJOR IN
RESPONSE TO DRURY

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	4♠
?	

West has no option but to pass. Opener has stated that he wishes to be in game. Opener had all kinds of things to do if he had any slam interest.

The example sequence is the equivalent of a limit raise sequence where opener accepts the invitation. Many of opener's game jumps after Drury are normal gambles that game will make. A big advantage to such a sequence is that the defenders have no information to help them.

Some conclusions

Most pairs that play Drury discuss what the 2♣ bid shows, and then they discuss what kind of Drury they are using. There is no discussion on the later bidding. The tools shown here could actually be even more elaborate. I have another hundred pages of possible sequences that I am not including here. You may find that you would like to have more acute definitions for some of these sequences, but remember this. If you and your partner are in agreement about what is in this chapter, you will have better understandings than the majority of the world, and this includes quite a few good pairs who have let these bidding tools get lost in the shuffle.

DRURY IN COMPETITION

In my classes, I often get involved in discussions of Drury. A very common issue is whether Drury is a good idea after an overcall or a takeout double. Here is my opinion.

When your partner opens one of a major in third or fourth seat and RHO doubles or bids 1♠ over partner's 1♥ bid, I suggest that Drury is at its best. Take this situation.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 6 3 ♥ Q 5 3 ♦ Q 4 3 2 ♣ A Q 10 6

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	dbl
?			

What should West bid? A popular bid is redouble. This works well if West is able to bid 2♥ later. But what happens if the opponents bid something? Say the bidding goes this way.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	dbl
rdbl	1♠	pass	2♠
?			

What should West bid now? If he wants to show heart support he has to bid 3♥ and that is not a safe contract given some of East's light opening third seat bids. What happened is that their side, almost predictably, bid something that got in the way of your auction.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	dbl
2♣	2♠	pass	pass
?			

West bids Drury and now East knows all about West's points and his heart support. If the opponents want to bid something, let them. On this auction, North bids 2♠. East can bid more hearts if he has the hand for it and he can pass if he has a third seat dog. West knows that East did not bid over 2♠ and that lets West pass it out safely. If West had four trumps, he might continue to 3♥. The value of this treatment is that the decision to keep going belongs to the opening bidder, who knows what he has.

My opinion on Drury is that it is at its best in competition because it gets your hand across to partner in a safe, descriptive way before their side can accelerate the bidding. You want to be in front, not tagging along behind.

YOUR AVAILABLE BIDS WHEN THE OPPONENTS ENTER THE BIDDING

- If partner opens 1♥ and they bid 1♠: Drury is on.
- If partner opens 1♥ or 1♠ and they double: Drury is on.
- If partner opens 1♥ or 1♠ and they bid 1NT: Drury is on if their 1NT is a 'funny' bid.
- Drury is off if the 1NT bid is a normal strong notrump overcall.
- Drury is off if you have no room to bid 2♣.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	2♣
?			

Rule

If they bid 2♣ or higher, Drury is off.

This means you must fall back on natural bidding. You can either make a limit raise to 3♥ or you can make a cuebid with the understanding that the cuebid also shows a limit raise. You can have the best of both worlds here.

When you make a jump raise you show four trumps.

When partner opens a major in third or fourth seat and RHO overcalls, taking away your Drury bid, then a jump raise shows a limit raise with good playing shape and useful values and four trumps.

When you make a cuebid you usually have three trumps.

When your partner opens a major in third or fourth seat and RHO overcalls, taking away your Drury bid, then a cuebid usually shows a limit raise hand with only three trumps.

It is possible that if you have four trumps but lots of garbage points, you might be better off cuebidding instead.

WHEN THEY MAKE A SIMPLE OVERCALL AND 2♣ IS NOT AVAILABLE

Rule One

When you have a limit raise with three trumps, use a cuebid.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 7 6 ♥ K J 4 2 ♦ 9 3 ♣ K J 5 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	2♦
3♦			

The 3♦ cuebid shows limit raise values, but you are not proud of your hand. Even 3♠ can be too high and frankly, I would want to use Drury with this. Credit the 2♦ bid with making life difficult. Note that West has only three spades. The cuebid tends to show three trumps, which will help partner judge what his hand is worth.

As West, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 8 2 ♥ Q 8 5 ♦ Q 7 6 ♣ K J 3 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	2♦
2♥			

If you think this is worth a limit raise, bid 3♦. If you think this is a piece of garbage, bid 2♥. This looks like a garbage hand to me so I would bid 2♥.

Rule Two

When you have a limit raise with four trumps, make a jump raise. Do not make a cuebid.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K J 8 7 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A J 10 9 7 ♣ 9 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	2♥
3♠			

Bid 3♠. A jump raise shows values you like. This hand has strong playing strength. Note how this hand compares with the previous hand. Although this hand has fewer high cards, it is a much better hand. It has four trumps, shape, and quality points.

As West, Not Vulnerable vs. Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 9 8 ♥ J 9 8 3 ♦ K Q 6 ♣ K 7 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	2♣
3♣			

This one is close. You have four trumps, but the quality of your hand is nothing to be excited about. 3♣ shows a three-card raise with limit raise values. You actually have four trumps but your hand is poor. Soft-pedaling is okay. Don't be surprised if 3♥ goes down.

WHEN THEY MAKE A JUMP OVERCALL AND 2♣ IS NOT AVAILABLE

West	North	East	South
pass ?	pass	1♥	2♣

When the opponents preempt you lose bidding room and, perforce, the ability to make delicate distinctions. Drury does not exist and the cuebid won't work either since it pushes you up too high. Of necessity, you have to give up on science and fall back on judgment. Keep your judgment, of course, within the context that partner opened in third seat.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K 10 7 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A 9 7 6 5 ♣ J 10 4

West	North	East	South
pass 3♠	pass	1♠	3♥

You would have been happier to bid only 2♣ if room permitted. Under pressure from the preempt, you have to accept the risks and make the overbid. The price for passing is that they will often steal from you.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q J 7 6 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A Q 10 9 7 ♣ 9 7

West	North	East	South
pass 4♠	pass	1♠	3♥

You would prefer they had bid 2♥, which would leave you room to make a limit raise to 3♠. Although you can still bid 3♠, it will not show this good a hand. Partner knows you would bid 3♠ on the previous hand and will cater to that possibility. Therefore, with this hand you have to take a little plunge. Bid 4♠.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 10 8 7 6 ♥ 4 2 ♦ K Q 9 ♣ K J 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	3♥
4♥			

This is why people preempt. It is annoying and frequently gives you difficult choices. This time you have the answer. Bid 4♥. Your bid does not say you have a heart control. It says you have a super passed hand and can imagine a slam if partner has a good hand that likes your 4♥ bid. A 4♠ bid is not terrible but it lacks the message of anything special.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESPONDING TO THIRD OR FOURTH SEAT OPENERS

WHEN PARTNER OPENS A MINOR — SOME GENERAL IDEAS

When your partner opens a minor in third or fourth seat, your bidding will be pretty much the same as always. Here are a few small differences.

West	East
pass	1♦
1♠	pass

West's 1♠ response is not forcing. Opener can pass when he has a minimum or sub-minimum hand as long as he has modest support for spades.

West	East
pass	1♦
2♣	pass

West's 2♣ bid is not forcing. East knows that West has a maximum of 11 points and if East sees no game, he can pass. East doesn't promise much in clubs for this pass.

WHEN PARTNER OPENS A MAJOR — SOME GENERAL IDEAS

WHEN RESPONDER BIDS A SUIT AT THE ONE-LEVEL

A one-level bid in response to a major opening in third and fourth seats is not forcing. The only auction that applies here is this:

West	East
pass	1♥
1♠	pass

A very important inference is that responder should not have three-card heart support.

Rule

When your partner opens a major, your first goal should be to announce a fit if you have one. If you bid notrump or a new suit, you deny support.

WHEN RESPONDER BIDS A SUIT AT THE TWO-LEVEL

A two-level bid in a new suit in response to a major opening in third and fourth seats is not forcing. The exception to this rule is 2♣, which is Drury.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♥	pass

A two-level bid in a new suit shows a maximum passed hand with a good five-card suit or perhaps a six-card suit that was not proper for a weak two-bid. These hands would bid two of a suit in response to 1♠.

♠ 3 ♥ 3 2 ♦ K J 8 7 5 3 ♣ A J 4 2

Assuming you did not open this hand 2♦, it would be worth responding 2♦ to 1♠. This bid shows a nice hand but opener is allowed to pass it.

♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q 9 8 7 ♦ K J 7 3 ♣ 4 2

This is an acceptable 2♥ bid. If opener passes you will be disappointed, but if he passes he has a dog, so you should be comfortable stopping in 2♥.

♠ 6 ♥ Q 8 7 6 4 3 ♦ K J 7 3 ♣ 4 2

You do not have enough to bid 2♥. You have to start with 1NT. (See the following discussion on 1NT responses.)

A 1NT RESPONSE TO A MINOR

This is almost the same as always. When partner bids 1♦, a 1NT bid by you still shows 6-10 points. The only difference is that if you have a lousy hand with no other bid, you might bid 1NT with 11.

A 1NT response to 1♣ shows 6-11 too. (If you prefer to play 1NT shows 8-11, that is fine too. Do as your partnership chooses.)

A 1NT RESPONSE TO A MAJOR

The semi-forcing 1NT response

Recommended

A convention that has gained an enormous following is the semi-forcing 1NT response to a third or fourth seat opening bid of 1♥ or 1♠. In fact, this convention is well enough thought of that many players use it all of the time. Here is how it works.

When your partner opens 1♥ or 1♠ in third or fourth seat, you will always raise if you have 6-9 support points with three- or four-card support, and you will use Drury with better hands that have support. The 1NT bid by a passed hand therefore denies support for opener's major. 1NT shows from 6 high-card points all the way up to as many as 12 bad high-card points that chose not to open the bidding.

A 1NT response to a major suit in third or fourth seat is similar to the forcing 1NT bid used in two-over-one bidding except that it is semi-forcing, not absolutely forcing.

When you respond 1NT, your partner is not forced to bid but he often does. Here are the rules that dictate how he rebids:

- If he has a balanced hand with a good 14 or more high-card points and thinks that a game may exist opposite a maximum 1NT response, he bids something.
- If he has a full opening bid with good shape he bids something.
- If he is short of an opening bid but has distribution that warns him of playing in notrump, he considers making a rebid.

Here is a list of bids that opener makes when he has a normal or sub-normal opening bid in third or fourth seat.

West	East
pass	1♠
1NT	?

Pass: Usually a balanced hand with a boring 13 high-card points or less.

2♠, rebidding his major: A six- or seven-card suit. This guarantees a full opening bid. Opener would make a weak two-bid if he had less than an opening bid.

2♥ (the other major): Usually shows four and may include five. Probably only five spades. Implies an opening bid but might be slightly weaker with good shape.

2♣ or 2♦: Denies the ability to bid a major. Opener can have a four- or five-card minor but often will be bidding a three-card minor. Opener has an opening bid except when he has good shape. Still, he will have close to an opening bid.

Tip:

If opener has a light opening bid, he may make one of the rebids above when he has excellent shape. Bidding is a bit of an overbid but it is probably better than passing it out in 1NT.

Responder has a number of choices of how to continue. Most of his bids are neutral.

- If responder passes, he is content to play in whatever opener has bid.
- If responder returns to two of the major, he shows a doubleton with 6-9 points.
- If responder raises opener's new suit to the three-level, it is a forward-going bid.
- If responder bids 2NT, he shows a maximum passed hand. It is safe to do this because responder has learned that opener is likely to have a full opening bid. Opener, remember, passes 1NT when he has a poor, balanced hand.

Here are some examples showing some semi-forcing 1NT responses.

West	East
pass	1♥
?	
♠ Q 6 5 ♥ 8 7 ♦ K Q 7 3 ♣ 10 9 4 2	

Respond 1NT as you would normally do. Playing 1NT semi-forcing, your partner must rebid something if he has a nice 14 or more points. If he has a balanced hand with 13 or less points, he passes.

He may choose to rebid with shapely hands and less than 14 points.

♠ K 6 5 ♥ J 7 ♦ K Q 10 3 ♣ Q 9 8 3

Bid 1NT. If your partner passes, things are fine because you know he has a minimum hand and game is out of the question. If your partner bids 2♣ or 2♦, bid 2NT, showing an invitational notrump hand. You can see the benefit of the semi-forcing notrump bid here. If partner is weak, you get to play in 1NT. Only when he has a full opening bid are you going to play in 2NT or higher.

♠ K 5 ♥ 7 ♦ K J 7 4 3 ♣ J 9 4 3 2

Respond 1NT. If partner passes, you try to make it. If he rebids two of a minor, you can raise. If he rebids 2♥, showing six, you pass.

♠ A K 3 ♥ J 8 ♦ K 7 6 5 ♣ 6 4 3 2

Respond 1NT. If partner bids 2♣ or 2♦ you will bid 2NT, describing an 11 point hand. Partner tends to make a final decision at this stage. Of great importance is what you should bid if partner rebids 2♥. This rebid promises a full opening bid with six hearts. Your best bid is likely to be 3♥. The important point of this auction is that you denied three hearts when you bid 1NT. When you bid 1NT and later raise hearts, you show two of them, not three.

♠ 8 5 ♥ 9 2 ♦ A Q 10 7 4 ♣ Q 6 5 3

You respond 1NT. If partner bids 2♣, you pass or bid 2♥, which is a typical matchpoint effort. If he bids 2♦, you have just enough to raise. Your partner can have a pretty good hand so you want to give him one more chance to bid.

A special bidding trick – the ‘impossible’ spade bid

Used only after partner opens 1♥

West	East
pass	1♥
1NT	2♣/2♦
?	

♠ A 5 ♥ 7 ♦ K Q 7 3 2 ♣ J 10 5 4 2

Respond 1NT with this shapely 10 count. If your partner bids two of a minor, you have an interesting choice available. Bid 2♠. This is known as the ‘impossible’ spade bid. Since you can’t have spades, this bid can be used to say you have a super raise of partner’s minor suit. A good convention to have and use.

Here are complete auctions using the semi-forcing notrump bid.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
1NT	pass

This is a simple sequence. East opens a dog and West bids 1NT, semi-forcing. East has a balanced minimum so passes. 1NT becomes the final contract. 1NT may make. It may go down. Clearly, 1NT is high enough.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
1NT	2♦
2♥	pass

West bids 1NT, semi-forcing, and East rather likes the quality of his 14 point hand. He rebids 2♦, which can often represent a three-card suit. West is not quite strong enough to bid 2NT and he is not thrilled to play in diamonds so he bids 2♥. East passes since he has no extra values.

Note that 1NT is a better contract. This hand does not shine well using the semi-forcing 1NT response.

West	East
♠ J 4	♠ K 10 9 7 2
♥ Q 9 5 2	♥ K J
♦ K Q J	♦ A 10 9 3
♣ K 9 4 3	♣ Q J

West	East
pass	1♠
1NT	2♦
2NT	3NT

West passes a 12 point hand, something your partnerships may not wish to do. This one, as 12 point hands go, really stinks. East bids 1♠ and West bids just 1NT, semi-forcing. East has enough to rebid 2♦ and now West bids the full value of his hand with 2NT. East has a fair 14 with important spot cards and continues to the good, but not cold, game. The value of the 1NT bid shows up well here. If East had a minimum opener he would pass 1NT, and that contract would do well to make. It would be a better contract than 2NT, which is what would happen if West had bid 2NT instead of 1NT. Note that East rather likes the ♣QJ once West shows some values in clubs.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♥	pass

This is not a pretty auction. East opened a normal 1♠ and West bid 1NT. If not using a semi-forcing 1NT bid, it is possible that the hand would be passed out there.

Note that East does not keep bidding with his shapely minimum. East tried to find a fit and failed. West's 2♥ bid was not what East wanted to hear. It is wise to give up now and let West play in 2♥.

West	East
♠ J 4 3	♠ A 9
♥ 7	♥ A K 8 4 3
♦ K Q 8 4 2	♦ J 7 6
♣ K 8 6 3	♣ A Q 7

West	East
pass	1♥
1NT	2NT
3NT	

The point of this hand is to show how opener bids with some of his good hands. Here, East raises to 2NT, which shows 18 or 19 points. West has 9 so goes on to game. It would be better if East could play the hand but that is an unavoidable consideration. Some players raise to 2NT with lesser hands, which is a mistake. The next hand shows how East can handle some of his other good hands that do not quite measure up to a 2NT rebid.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
1NT	2♣
2♥	2NT
pass	

East had a choice with his opening bid and elected to open 1♥. Some would open 1NT. West's 1NT was semi-forcing and East rebid 2♣. It is tempting to bid 2NT but if you agree to play that this bid shows 18 or 19, East cannot raise. He does want to keep bidding since game is possible and so he rebids 2♣. West gives a preference to 2♥ and East gets a second chance. He bids 2NT now, which says he has a magnificent 16 points, or 17. West does not care which it is and passes.

An important reminder hand:

West	
♠	6 4
♥	K J 4
♦	A 8 7 4 2
♣	Q 6 3

West	East
pass	1♥
?	

This hand is shown to reinforce a point I have made earlier. West has three hearts and must find a way to offer support. One thing he must never do is bid 1NT. East can pass 1NT and West can see that missing a heart contract would be bad bridge. The correct bid for West is 2♣. This is the Drury convention, which promises 10 or more points with support for partner's major. I won't detail the sequence here. This is an important example that you should take to heart now.

RAISING A MAJOR

When partner opens a major in third or fourth seat, a raise to the two-level shows pretty much the same thing that you would need for a raise of a first or second seat bid. You can have a minimum of 6 support points up to a maximum of 10 support points.

Given that your partner opened 1♥ in third or fourth seat, these hands would raise to 2♥.

♠ A 4 3 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ Q 4 3 2

This is a very weak raise. You have bad shape but you have two cards that partner should like; the ♠A and the ♥J. You have only hopes for the ♣Q.

♠ K J 3 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ Q J 6 5 ♣ Q 3 2

This hand counts up to 10 in high cards but the shape is bad and the high-card quality is boring. You can discount something for the general malaise of this hand and content yourself with a raise to 2♥.

♠ A 9 3 ♥ Q 8 3 ♦ K J 5 ♣ 9 8 5 4

This hand shows where a simple raise ends and a Drury bid begins. You have 10

high-card points and bad shape but you have generally excellent-quality points. This is a minimum Drury bid.

RAISING A MINOR

No one likes to raise a minor suit when notrump pays so much more but it is still wise to keep the raise in mind. Remember that notrump does pay more, but only if you make it. Often you can make a game in notrump but it may require you play from the right side. My advice is to consider bidding notrump but if it is not attractive, consider raising the minor.

The values you need to raise a minor after third and fourth seat openers are pretty much the same as after first and second seat openers. Really not much to this discussion.

JUMP RAISES IN A MAJOR

NEW MEANING — THE AGGRESSIVE LIMIT RAISE

The jump raise of a third or fourth seat major suit opener is considered to be a limit raise, but the definition is not the one you are accustomed to.

When opener bids a major in first or second seat, a jump raise shows 10-11 support points and promises four or more trumps.

In third or fourth seat, your side has the Drury convention to work with. This influences your requirements for a jump raise. Here is your new definition of a jump raise.

West	East
pass	1♠
3♠	

This raise is still limit in principle but it uses a more aggressive style. You no longer have 10-11 support points. The range is more like 8-9 support points. Here are some examples of responding to 1♥ or 1♠ and comments on the best approach. Assume your partner opened 1♠.

West	East
pass	1♠
?	

♠ K J 3 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ Q J 6 5 ♣ K 3 2

Use Drury. The jump raise promises four trumps and fewer high-card points than this.

♠ K J 3 2 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ A J 6 5 ♣ 3 2

This is another Drury bid. You have the four trumps you need for a jump raise but your hand is too good.

♠ Q 9 8 3 ♥ 8 3 ♦ A J 8 6 5 ♣ 3 2

This is a 3♠ bid after partner's third or fourth seat opening bid. It has lots of useful qualities.

- It has four or more trumps.
- It has good distribution.
- It has decent-quality high-card points.
- It is weaker than a traditional limit raise.

♠ K 9 4 3 ♥ 3 ♦ 8 6 5 2 ♣ K 10 8 4

This is a better hand than the point-count gives it credit for. Bid 3♠. You won't have many weaker hands than this. At least, what you have is excellent.

RULE — TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHEN TO JUMP RAISE

If your hand has around 7 or so high-card points ask yourself this question:

If you only raise to the two-level, will you sell out if the opponents compete? If you judge that you would take the push, then do it right away.

♠ K 9 8 2 ♥ 9 7 3 ♦ J 7 4 ♣ K J 2

This hand is worth a raise to 2♠. If the opponents compete to 3♥, it is best in general to leave them alone. For you to raise to 2♠ and then bid again requires a hand with four-card support and some shape. This hand is full of defense and only so-so offense.

LIMIT RAISES IN A MINOR

Limit raises in a minor remain the same as before. No matter what seat you are in, if your partnership plays limit raises, they have the same requirements. You need (with rare exceptions) five trumps or more and about 10 support points.

Here are a few examples.

West	East
pass	1♣
3♣	

♠ K Q 8 ♥ 9 7 3 ♦ 8 4 ♣ K J 8 7 2

Bid 3♣. You show five or more clubs and about 10 or 11 support points. Because these high cards are good ones, this hand qualifies for a tiny upgrade to 3♣. Importantly, do not bid 1NT. If you play in any number of notrumps, you may run into trouble in one or both red suits. Better to bid 3♣. If notrump is your best spot, your partner will look for it and you can play it from his side if he thinks that is best.

West	East
pass	1♦
3♦	

♠ K 8 ♥ 7 3 ♦ A Q 9 8 ♣ J 10 9 7 4

This is an exceptional hand where you should consider jump raising a minor with only four trumps. Your hand is not good for notrump, at least not yet. The only time you might jump raise a minor with four trumps is when you have diamonds and a hand like this one with no other useful bid to make.

A JUMP SHIFT

The worst treatment in the world

There are many ways to play a jump shift. The worst one, and possibly the most common one, is to play that a jump shift as a passed hand shows a maximum hand with a fair suit.

Here is one example of this treatment. I warn you now that this is a terrible method. Just terrible.

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	

♠ K 8 ♥ Q J 8 7 4 ♦ Q 9 8 ♣ K 9 4

Some players like to jump to 2♥ with this hand to tell partner that they have a maximum.

Why is this bad? There are many reasons.

- It is a waste of time.
- It takes up valuable bidding room.
- It gets you too high when opener has a minimum or worse.

The main objection is this. For you to make a game contract with this 11 point dog, you need for partner to have a good minimum opening bid. If he has a good minimum, or better, he will bid again if you bid just 1♥. If he passes 1♥ you will probably make 1♥ or 2♥ but you won't make more. There is just nothing to gain by jumping.

The best treatment

Introduction here. More details in Chapter Nine (page 166).

Play that a jump shift says you have a maximum passed hand with a good suit to jump in and an excellent fit for partner.

Here is one example. Since this is a new concept for many, I am going to discuss this topic in the 'advanced' section along with two other new treatments.

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	

♠ K 8 2 ♥ K J 8 7 4 ♦ K J 10 9 ♣ 4

When your partner opens 1♦, you should fall in love with this hand. It has a good heart suit, a good fit, excellent shape, and all of the hand is good. This is the kind of hand that would hate to respond just 1♥ only to find that you might have had a game in diamonds or hearts as a result of the super fit.

THE PASSED HAND JUMP TO 2NT WHEN PARTNER OPENS A MINOR SUIT

This is an easy bid to define. You probably already use this treatment. Play that a jump to 2NT shows a maximum balanced hand with all suits stopped. You usually have 11 or a bad 12 for this bid. A few examples:

West	East
pass	1♦
2NT	

♠ K 10 8 ♥ K J 2 ♦ Q 7 ♣ Q J 8 7 5

Bid 2NT. You have 12 points, you have all suits stopped, and your hand is balanced. If partner is minimum, he can and will pass. One thing you and partner must agree on is what a further bid by opener shows. If opener rebids 3♦, can that be passed? I can make a case for it being forcing or not forcing. Your choice. But do make a choice.

♠ Q 9 8 4 ♥ K 10 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ A 9 6 4

Bid 1♠. Do not jump to 2NT when you have a major suit.

♠ K Q 7 ♥ 6 4 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ A 10 6 5 3

Bid 2♣. Do not bid 2NT when you have two or three little cards in one of the unbid suits.

THE PASSED HAND JUMP TO 3NT WHEN PARTNER OPENS A MINOR SUIT

It is hard to imagine this auction occurring but strange things happen. Here are two hands and some thoughts. Note that the first hand occurs after a third seat opening bid. The second hand occurs after a fourth seat opening bid.

♠ K 5 ♥ J 7 5 ♦ K 3 ♣ K J 9 7 6 3

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♣	pass
3NT			

This sequence is very rare. East opened in third seat and may have significantly less than an opening bid. West ought to have an extreme hand with lots of

partner's minor, in this case clubs. West's bid can only be based on a hoped-for source of tricks.

♠ A 10 2 ♥ Q 8 7 ♦ Q J 7 4 ♣ Q J 9

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
3NT			pass

With East opening in fourth seat, West knows that East has a real opening bid. West could bid 2NT but feels that his hand is a true maximum under the circumstances and is counting a bit on his diamond fit and on his excellent spot cards. If you feel that you would open this West hand, you won't have this exact problem. But the theme is valid. If you open in fourth seat and your partner bids 3NT, he should be thinking along the lines of the discussion shown.

THE PASSED HAND JUMP TO 2NT WHEN PARTNER OPENS A MAJOR SUIT

When you open a major in third or fourth seat, there are many possible meanings for a jump to 2NT. Here are some salient thoughts.

1. It can show a balanced 11 or 12 point hand with all suits more or less stopped and not including three-card support for opener's major.
2. If you play the semi-forcing 1NT response to a major, your partner will not have 11 or 12 balanced high-card points since his response would be 1NT, not 2NT.
3. If you play the semi-forcing 1NT response (very strongly recommended) you can play that 2NT shows a special kind of fit for opener. This topic will be discussed in Chapter Nine in the 'advanced' section (page 162).

FOURTH SUIT FORCING

Some awkward situations can occur in passed hand bidding

In passed hand bidding, there are often hands that start easily enough but that are hard for responder on his second bid. Sometimes responder can make a natural bid, but not always. Sometimes he has no easy bid and is in need of something else.

FOURTH SUIT FORCING AFTER A FIRST OR SECOND SEAT OPENING BID

What Does It Show?

After a first or second seat opening bid

Modern bidding gives us new ideas to work with, and one of these is a bid called fourth suit forcing. When three suits have been bid and you bid the fourth suit at the one- or two- or three-level, it is treated as a forcing bid. For instance:

West	East
1♣	1♥
1♠	2♦

The 2♦ bid is forcing and says nothing about diamonds. Some players play this as a one round force. Some play it as forcing to game.

The convention works nicely after a first or second seat opening bid. But mostly, players have not discussed what the 2♦ bid means when the 2♦ bidder is a passed hand.

FOURTH SUIT BY A PASSED HAND

What Does It Show?

When the fourth suit bid is at the one-level

As East, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 10 8 ♥ K J 8 2 ♦ 5 ♣ K Q 8 4 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♦	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	?	

1♠ may be forcing in principle, but so what? Whatever West has, he could not open. For the record, when 1♠ is the fourth suit bid it tends to be natural with no special overtones. This agreement makes passing it an easy decision for East because West is a passed hand, and therefore no game can exist.

When the fourth suit bid is at the two-level

A suggestion. You won't find this in print anywhere else. Play that if the fourth suit bid is 2♣ or 2♦ or 2♥, it shows a maximum pass with three-card support for one of the suits that opener has bid. For this to happen, the last bid by opener has to have been 1♠. Here is a troublesome hand showing a common dilemma. You are West.

♠ K 4 2 ♥ A 10 8 6 5 ♦ A 3 ♣ 6 5 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
?			

Is 2♣ forcing? If West wasn't a passed hand 2♣ would be forcing, usually showing game values.

It's a mess.

In fact, you can bid 2♣, fourth suit forcing. But you need a new definition for the bid. Here is what it shows.

It shows a maximum passed hand and it promises three-card support for one of opener's suits. If you had four-card support for either of opener's suits, you would make a jump raise.

Here is a layout using our example hand along with a complete auction.

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

West	East
pass	1♦
1♥	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♠	Pass

The first three bids are routine. West has a good hand with no obvious bid and chooses 2♣, the fourth suit.

Using my methods, East knows the following:

- 1. West has a maximum passed hand.
- 2. West did not have a natural bid that suited his hand.
- 3. West wanted to make a bid that was forcing for one round.
- 4. West does not promise anything in clubs. In fact, he probably does not have anything in clubs. If he did, a notrump bid might have been better.
- 5. West is supposed to have three cards in spades or diamonds. If he had four cards in either suit, he would have made a jump raise.

Opener bids logically, knowing that his partner has a maximum of about 11 points.

If opener thinks that game is out of the question he bids one of his suits at the two-level, a bid that partner can pass. On this hand, East has a weak hand so he bids 2♦, which is an offer to play in 2♦. West does not care for diamonds but he has three spades and bids 2♠. This sequence shows about 11 points with three spades. East is content to pass and does.

ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES OF PASSED HAND BIDDING ISSUES INVOLVING THE FOURTH SUIT:

As East, you are faced with this bidding:

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	?	

East can do all of the following things. Note that East can bid both of his suits at the two-level.

- East can bid 2♦, which shows a willingness to play there. He knows that his partner likes one or the other of opener's suits and normally, his partner will either pass 2♦ or return to 2♠.
- East can make a preference bid of 2♥ if he has three of them.
- East can also bid 2♠ but that is not likely to happen. You would tend to bid 2♦ or 2♥ before bidding 2♠.
- East can bid 2NT, which confirms a full opener with a willingness to be in 3NT. East should not bid 2NT with a minimum hand. He should only bid 2NT if he is ready to hear 3NT from his partner.

As East, you are faced with this bidding:

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
2♦	pass	?	

East can do all of the following things. Note that he can bid only one of his suits at the two-level; spades. He can't bid clubs at the two-level.

- East can bid 2♠, which shows a willingness to play there. Partner can pass this if he wishes. This is opener's weakest bid.
- East can make a preference bid of 2♥ if he has three of them.
- East can bid 2NT, which confirms a full opener with a willingness to be in 3NT. East should not bid 2NT with a minimum hand. He should only bid 2NT if he is willing to hear 3NT from his partner. You may, if you wish, play that 2NT is forcing to game.

These thoughts are a bit theoretical but I think they help with the odd difficult hand that responder finds now and then.

An error to avoid:

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K J 4 2 ♥ 3 ♦ A Q 10 8 6 5 ♣ 4 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♦	pass	1♠	pass
?			

Even a raise to 4♠ does not do this hand justice. If your methods include splinters I suggest you bid 3♥, showing a hand along these lines. If you do not use splinters, all you can do is bid 4♠ and hope partner gets it right. Do not assume that your partner has a minimum hand. He may, but you can't go out of your way to cater to it. This hand will make game opposite the majority of hands that East may have. Bid it. The point of this hand is that if you have a clearly acceptable natural bid, make it. Do not invent a scientific fourth suit bid of 2♥ expecting it will solve your problems. Fourth suit by a passed hand is useful but should be avoided if possible.

A couple of examples of responder's considerations on his second bid:

You are West:

♠ 8 2 ♥ K 6 5 2 ♦ K Q J ♣ Q 7 4 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
1NT			

Normally you would bid an invitational 2NT, or whatever was your equivalent sequence. Since East opened in third seat, it would be okay to bid 1NT only. You should not take this to extremes, but on close decisions you should be cautious. If instead you held:

♠ 9 2 ♥ K 10 8 3 ♦ K Q J ♣ Q 10 7 5

your excellent spots would give you enough to make the normal value bid of 2NT.

Rule

Do not use the fourth suit bid (2♣ here) when you have a descriptive bid in notrump that will also work.

As West, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 9 6 ♥ A K 10 8 4 ♦ Q 10 8 ♣ Q 4 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
2NT			

You can bid the fourth suit, 2♦, or you can bid 2NT. I would lean towards bidding 2NT, a straightforward descriptive bid. I would never rebid any number of hearts.

Note that many of your decisions will be what to do with an 11 point hand. Your decision should take into account the spot cards you have. If you have lousy spot cards, a 1NT bid may be better than a 2NT bid. The hand here has decent spots, which should help you in the play.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q J ♥ J 8 6 3 ♦ K 3 2 ♣ K Q 4 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
2NT			

You would rebid 2NT normally. The same bid is correct here. Do not use fourth suit bids when you have a good natural alternative.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ J 2 ♥ Q J 5 3 2 ♦ 2 ♣ K Q 6 4 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
1NT			

Bid 1NT. Do not bid 2♣. Your partner will consider 2♣ to show a bigger hand. This is not an easy choice but it does stop the bidding in a sensible contract. Better, you avoid one of those auctions where everyone keeps bidding until someone doubles.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 10 ♥ J 7 4 2 ♦ 9 2 ♣ K Q J 6 3 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
1NT			

You do not have the values to bid clubs, and that leaves you with a 1NT bid. It might have been best to bid 2♣ over 1♦. This is just an imperfect hand that comes with no easy bids.

PART THREE

ADVANCED
SECTION

In the first two sections I showed the need for judgment, along with a few system suggestions. If you stop here and use only the material from sections one and two, you will have an excellent set of tools.

The advanced section goes further, its main contribution being some additional tools that an experienced partnership may wish to use.

Included here are three important things and a small number of little things. The three important things are:

1. A better Drury
2. The 2NT response to one of a major
3. The jump shift

These are listed in order of importance and frequency. All of them will be useful when their time comes.

The little things include:

- Some splinter auctions
- Asking for a singleton when your partner makes a limit raise
- Defending against Drury

CHAPTER EIGHT

A BETTER DRURY — LAWRENCE DRURY

All conventions have some difficult moments. With Reverse Drury two issues come to mind.

1. There are occasionally problems when opener needs to know how many trumps the Drury bidder has.
2. There are times when opener would like to learn responder's range early enough to stay at the two-level.

A version of Drury was invented called 'two way' Drury that handles some of these problems. In this version of Drury, when partner bids 1♥ or 1♠ in third or fourth seat, responder bids 2♣ as 'three-card support' Drury and he bids 2♦ as 'four-card support' Drury. Some players reverse the meanings but the theme is the same. The number of trumps is always known by opener when his partner uses Drury.

This sounds nice but it comes with its own set of glitches. When responder uses the 2♦ Drury his bid takes up a little extra space, which can sometimes make things difficult. Further, there are a number of hands where 2♦ could be used to show, of all things, diamonds. Using both 2♣ and 2♦ is a waste of good bids. All you need is one of them, and that one is 2♣.

The version of Drury that I am suggesting here works this way. Note that I am showing the bids after a 1♥ opener and a 1♠ opener. There are a couple of differences.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	?

Opener rebids as follows after a Drury response to 1♥:

Note that bids higher than two of the major are forcing to game and are looking for slam.

- 2♦ Shows game interest and may be interested in bigger things. It asks responder what his Drury hand looks like.
- 2♥ Rebidding the major. Shows a dog. Please do not go on. (The same as with Reverse Drury.)

All other bids are forcing to game.

- 2NT asks for information.
- 3NT asks responder to choose between 3NT and four of the major.
- 2♠/3♣/3♦/3♥ are all natural slam tries.
- Higher jumps are splinter bids.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	?

Opener rebids as follows after a Drury response to 1♠:

Note that bids higher than two of the major are forcing to game and are looking for slam.

- 2♦ Shows game interest and may be interested in bigger things. It asks responder what his Drury hand looks like.
- 2♥ Natural, showing a full opening bid. (The same as with Reverse Drury.)
- 2♠ Rebidding the major. Shows a dog. Please do not go on. (The same as with Reverse Drury.)

All other bids are forcing to game.

- 2NT is a forcing slam try, asking responder to do something sensible.
- 3NT asks responder to choose between 3NT and four of the major.
- 3♣/3♦/3♥ are all natural slam tries.
- Higher jumps are splinter bids.

An important difference between Reverse Drury and Lawrence Drury

In Reverse Drury, a 2♦ bid by opener is almost always a limited hand that's interested in game only. Rarely is it interested in slam. Slam auctions are started with various bids that are higher than two of the trump suit.

In Lawrence Drury, opener may bid 2♦ on slam-interest hands because he learns so much about responder's values and, importantly, about how many trumps he has. However, any bid by opener that is higher than two of the trump suit is still a slam try.

THE KEY BID IN LAWRENCE DRURY

The key to making this Drury work is the 2♦ bid. When opener bids 2♦, responder gives an exact description of his hand.

West	East
pass	1♥ or 1♠
2♣	2♦
?	Asking about the Drury bid

Responder bids as follows. Note that these bids are artificial. It does not matter which major was opened.

- 2♥ This says responder has a minimum Drury. He usually has three trumps but may have four if he has bad shape and boring points.
About 75% of the hands with three-card support fall into this category.
About 25% of the hands with four-card support fall into this category.

For the sake of these example hands, assume that opener bid 1♥ and then rebid 2♦, asking for description of West's Drury bid.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
?	

♠ Q J 6 ♥ A Q 2 ♦ J 7 5 ♣ 5 4 3 2

Bid 2♥. This usually shows a hand with three trumps. You have good hearts but the shape is bad and the side values are only so-so.

♠ J 7 6 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ K Q 9 7 ♣ A 8 3

Bid 2♥. You have a typical, boring 10 point hand. This time your side values are nice but your trump support is terrible. And you still have a balanced hand, which is always a minus.

♠ Q 6 4 ♥ 9 5 4 ♦ K Q J 7 5 ♣ Q J

Bid 2♥. This is an 11 point hand with unredeeming high-card points and three poor trumps. This is a maximum for 2♥. If you had the ♣K instead of the ♣QJ, you would have too much for 2♥.

♠ 7 6 ♥ K J 4 ♦ A 10 5 3 ♣ J 7 4 3

Bid 2♥. This hand has only 9 high-card points but they are mostly good ones. Also, you have a little shape. These good things make it worth a Drury bid but the hand is still in the minimum family.

♠ K J 4 ♥ J 6 5 3 ♦ Q J 4 ♣ Q 10 3

Bid 2♥. Normally this bid shows three trumps and a minimum. There are a few hands with four trumps that will bid 2♥. This hand has ordinary trumps, bad points, and bad shape. The fourth trump made this a Drury hand. The fourth trump does not make it good enough for a stronger rebid than 2♥.

♠ Q 10 6 ♥ A Q J 7 ♦ 10 8 7 ♣ J 8 4

Bid 2♥. Good trumps but bad shape and average high-card points. Even though you have great hearts, this hand is a minimum. As I will show you soon, you can bid 2NT when you have a good hand with four trumps.

2♠ This says responder has a maximum balanced hand with exactly three trumps. There are no four-card trump holdings that will ever bid 2♠. Mostly a 2♠ bid shows 11 or 12 high-card points but a super 10 count may qualify.

For the following hands your partner opened with 1♠.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
?	

♠ A 6 2 ♥ A J 8 ♦ 10 6 5 3 2 ♣ Q 3

Bid 2♠. This is a normal maximum Drury hand with three trumps.

♠ Q 8 7 ♥ Q J 8 ♦ Q 7 6 5 3 ♣ K Q

Bid 2♠. You have 12 high-card points but the quality of these points is awful. Given that you chose not to open, the way to show this hand is by using Drury and rebidding 2♠ if partner asks about your hand.

♠ A J 6 ♥ A 8 ♦ 10 8 7 6 5 3 ♣ 4 3

Bid 2♠. This is only 9 high-card points but it is a very good 9. You promise 10 high-card points but you do have excellent values to make up for having only 9. You have good trumps, you have an ace on the side, and you have a little extra distribution. Do not be afraid to use your judgment.

♠ 10 9 4 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ 9 5 4 3 2 ♣ A 3

Bid 2♠. The quality of your values makes up for your having only 10 high-card points. Even the ♠1094 may play a part in this hand. Good trump spots have a way of adding to the hand.

2NT This says responder has four trumps and better than a minimum hand. This bid is forcing to game, which means that if opener bids something other than game in the major he is looking for a slam. When responder bids 2NT he almost always has a balanced hand. With four trumps and a singleton, responder has other tools he may choose to use.

Why is a fourth trump such a good value?

When you have four trumps it means that your partner won't run out of trumps, something that can happen when you only have three trumps for him. Four trumps add a lot of options to declarer during the play. When you have that fourth trump you are entitled to be optimistic. It is hard to describe all the good things that a fourth trump adds to the play. It is so much better to have nine trumps than eight trumps, you can be more aggressive in the bidding. As a result, you will bid 2NT, showing four trumps, on more hands than not.

Here is the bidding for the following examples:

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
?	

♠ K 4 ♥ K 10 7 5 ♦ 7 6 5 3 ♣ K 9 8

Bid 2NT. This hand is minimum in high cards but it has four trumps, some shape, and good-quality high-card points. Facing a partner who is interested in game this is worth bidding 2NT, which is forcing to game.

♠ 8 4 ♥ A Q 9 8 ♦ A 10 8 4 3 ♣ 4 3

Bid 2NT. With two aces, this is about as good a hand as you can have. Your shape is outstanding and you have a valuable queen as well. There is no need to do anything other than bid 2NT with this.

♠ K J 3 ♥ J 7 5 4 ♦ K 8 4 ♣ Q 4 3

Bid 2♥ with this one. 2♥ usually shows three trumps and a minimum. With balanced shape and a minimum too, you can treat it as a 2♥ bid. Partner will be pleased with your fourth trump but he won't care much for the rest of your hand.

♠ A K J ♥ 8 6 5 3 ♦ K 5 3 ♣ 8 4 3

Bid 2NT. When you have a balanced hand you have a choice of bidding 2NT or downgrading the hand to a 2♥ bid. The trumps are poor and you have terrible shape but you do at least have four trumps and you have excellent high cards. When you have this kind of hand, you often use the quality of your points to choose between 2NT and 2♥.

SPECIAL BIDS BY RESPONDER AFTER OPENER'S 2♦ ASKING BID

West	East
pass	1♥/♠
2♣	2♦
?	

Optional: 3♣, 3♦, 3♥

These three bids are optional. If you use them, they say that responder has an excellent three-card Drury hand with a singleton. Here is how they work. Be sure to note that the 3♥ bid is special.

When responder bids 3♣

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
3♣	

Responder shows a singleton club and a maximum hand with three trumps.

Here are some example hands. What makes a 3♣ bid and what does not? Be sure to note when a hand is worth showing a singleton.

♠ Q 10 6 ♥ A Q J 4 ♦ J 7 6 5 4 ♣ 2

Bid 3♣. You have good values with exactly three trumps and a singleton club. Do not overdo this bidding trick. I guess that I will show a singleton less than half of the time when partner rebids 2♦.

♠ K 8 7 ♥ A 10 8 4 ♦ 10 8 7 6 5 ♣ K

This is a fair hand but the singleton is a king, which makes the hand worth less than if the king was in one of the other suits. Bid 2♠, showing a maximum balanced hand with three trumps. If you have a singleton king or queen, it is unlikely that you will show it.

♠ J 8 4 ♥ K Q 7 4 ♦ Q J 6 5 3 ♣ 2

This is a minimum Drury hand. It has a small singleton club but the hand is not strong enough otherwise to show the singleton. Bid 2♥ with this one. Your surprise singleton might turn out to be the key to making a game but it is dangerous to show a singleton at this stage. Remember that you can't do everything all of the time. When you do choose to show a singleton, your partner will be able to count on you for full values.

When responder bids 3♦

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
3♦	

Responder shows a maximum Drury hand with three trumps and a singleton diamond. Responder shows a singleton when he has a good hand and does not show a singleton when he has a minimum or average hand.

When responder bids 3♥

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
3♥	

The jump to 3♥ is a little tricky. Regardless of which major partner opened, a jump to 3♥ shows a good Drury hand with three trumps and a singleton in the unbid major. Do not forget that this 3♥ bid is special since the singleton suit does not have to be hearts. On the auction here, spades are trump so the 3♥ bid shows a singleton in hearts (the unbid major).

Here is the odd auction that you need to recognize and remember.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
3♥	

On this unique auction, responder is showing a singleton spade. A possible West hand:

♠ 4 ♥ K Q 4 ♦ A 10 6 5 3 ♣ 10 9 7 5

Responder has a hand that is worth showing a singleton. He has super trumps and he has an ace. Bid 3♥, saying that you have a singleton in the other major. In this case, the other major is spades. Be sure to remember this trick.

You do not have to use all of this stuff. Here are two structures you can choose from, one easier than the other.

Structure One

Use the 2♥, 2♠, and 2NT bids only when responding to 2♦. Give up on showing singletons. This is an acceptable package.

Structure Two

In addition to structure one, you can use 3♣, 3♦, and 3♥ to show singletons with a maximum hand and three-card support.

This is my guess as to the frequency of responder's bids in response to the 2♦ asking bid.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
?	

- 2♥, 2♠, and 2NT make up about 94% of his bids.
- 3♣, 3♦, and 3♥ make up about 6% of his bids.

Believe it or not, I can actually come up with two additional structures. If you wished to add more detail it is available, but I am not including it because it would help less than 1% of the time. There is enough memory stuff here already.

Here's an assortment of hands showing how the new version of Drury works. I am going to assume for these examples that you are using the full treatment discussed above.

EXAMPLES OF COMPLETE AUCTIONS WHERE OPENER BIDS 2♦, ASKING FOR A DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDER'S HAND

In the following examples you are West with no one vulnerable.

When responder bids 2♥, showing three trumps and less than a maximum:

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♥	2♠

West bids Drury and East, counting his shape, has just enough to inquire about West's hand. He bids 2♦ and West bids 2♥, showing a minimum Drury, usually with three trumps. West does have 10 high-card points but they are of boring quality and his shape is bad. East is content to stop in 2♠. Discovering that your dummy has three trumps only is a big deal. You will learn that dummies with three trumps are relatively stagnant whereas dummies with four trumps give you lots of extra opportunities in the play. Note the small change made in the following West hand.

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

In this layout, I gave West one more spade and one fewer club. Now game has real chances. It isn't cold but its chances of making go up dramatically with West having a fourth trump.

West	East
♠ 10 5 4 3	♠ A K Q 7 2
♥ K Q 7	♥ 10 8 4
♦ K 7 5	♦ Q 8
♣ Q 10 3	♣ K 8 2

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♥	2♠

Another example of a 2♥ response. West bids Drury and East has to decide if there are any Drury hands West might have that will make game possible. With balanced shape, East can bid 2♦, optimistically, or 2♠, realistically. East chooses the aggressive route and inquires with 2♦. West bids 2♥.

Normally this bid shows a minimum with three trumps but four are allowed if West has minimum values and worthless distribution, as he does here. If West had another useful value he would bid 2NT, showing the four-card raise.

East stops in 2♠ and is happy to find that this is high enough. This East hand has 14 high-card points, which is enough to consider bidding game directly. East pulls in here since he is balanced and has some soft values, notably the doubleton ♦Q. Note that if West had bid 2♠, showing a maximum with three trumps, East would have bid game.

If you stop in a partscore and take ten tricks, is that bad bridge? The hand above answers that question. If South has the ♥A and if South also has the ♣J, there will be ten tricks, assuming spades do not divide badly. Ten tricks will make about 24% of the time. Not worth bidding.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♥	4♠

East has some distant thoughts of slam and asks with 2♦. West says he has a minimum with three trumps and this is enough to discourage East from going beyond game. East can imagine a slam if West has two aces, the ♦Q and four trumps. Facing the minimum 2♥ bid, East surrenders. The difference between three- and four-card support is meaningful on a huge number of hands. You do not think of this spade holding as having a loser but when the suit divides four-one or worse, a little over 30% of the time, bad things start to happen.

When responder bids 2♣, showing three trumps and a maximum:

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

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2♠	4♥

East has just 13 high-card points but he has useful spot cards and good shape. His hand is just good enough to ask about West's Drury bid and West says he has a maximum with three trumps. When West's bid is 2♣, it promises exactly three trumps. East bids game knowing it may not be cold but it ought to have a play. It does have good chances, although making will require some luck. Note that the defenders do not learn a thing about opener's hand, which makes it harder on them than if East describes his hand in any way.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2♠	3♥
pass	

A bad hand for this method. When hearts are trump, the 2♠ bid by responder (showing a maximum with three trumps) can nudge you higher than you want to go. This is a flaw in the method that I have not cured yet.

West shows he has a maximum with three trumps and East has a guess to make. He guesses to sign off in 3♥. If West had been able to show four hearts, East would have gone on. Even 3♥ may go down. Admittedly, if West had the ♣KQ instead of the ♠KQ, East would like to be in game.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2♠	3♣
4♥	

East asks about West's hand and West shows a balanced maximum with three trumps. East again is disappointed not to hear about four-card support but does have nice values. His 3♣ bid asks about club help and West has good-fitting honors in clubs. He jumps to 4♥. This hand demonstrates the recurring fact that nine trumps are better than eight trumps. This game may make but it is in jeopardy of losing three top tricks and a diamond ruff. Further, there is the problem of a possible heart loser. I think you can take from this hand that opener should be careful about looking for games when there are only eight trumps.

How Does Opener Continue when Responder Bids 2♥ or 2♠?

West	East	West	East
pass	1♥	pass	1♥
2♣	2♦	2♣	2♦
2♥	?	2♠	?

This is something important. When opener asks for information and gets it, he pays a price. When the Drury bidder bids 2♥ or 2♠, opener learns something important. The trouble is that opener's continuations are different since game bidding still needs to be resolved.

For this reason, this set of bids is necessary.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2♥	?

If opener is still interested in game or slam after 2♥, he has to start with a bid that will initially be interpreted as showing game interest.

- 2♠ is a forcing bid, usually natural and usually looking to find the best game. Opener may have slam interest.
- 2NT is a forcing bid, usually looking to find the best game. Opener may have slam interest.
- 3♣ is a natural game try. Opener may have slam interest.
- 3♦ is a natural game try. Opener may have slam interest.
- 3♥ is a game try, just asking responder what he thinks.
- 3♠ is a splinter and is a slam try.
- 3NT is a choice of games.
- 4♣ is a splinter and is a slam try.
- 4♦ is a splinter and is a slam try.
- 4♥ (a jump to game in the major) is a sign-off.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2♠	?

When responder bids 2♠, opener again learns a lot. But he still is not always sure whether to play in the major or in notrump. Here are the things that opener can bid over 2♠.

- 2NT is a forcing bid, usually looking to find the best game. Opener may have slam interest.
- 3♣ is a natural game try. Opener may have slam interest.
- 3♦ is a natural game try. Opener may have slam interest.
- 3♥ is a sign-off. Opener needs a fourth trump to bid game.
- 3♠ is a splinter and is a slam try.
- 3NT is a choice of games.
- 4♣ is a splinter and is a slam try.
- 4♦ is a splinter and is a slam try.
- 4♥ (a jump to game in the major) is a sign-off.

When the partnership is bidding spades, the bids differ just a little.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♥	?

- 2♠ is a sign-off.
- 3♠, a jump in spades, is a slam try.

- The rest of the bids are as shown above.
- 4♠ (a jump to game in the major) is a sign-off.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♠	?

- 3♠ is invitational.
- The rest of the bids are as shown above.

This short digression is rare but it is important, since responder has to know what opener's intentions are. If responder knows what opener's bids mean, the auction will be pretty routine. If responder does not know what opener's bids mean, you will suffer from misunderstandings that are, barring great luck, expensive.

When responder bids 2NT showing four trumps and better than a minimum hand

When responder bids 2NT after the 2♦ asking bid, he shows four trumps and more than a minimum hand. The bidding is defined as game forcing and any bid by opener other than four of the major is a slam try. Here are some specific thoughts on how the bidding can continue after the 2NT response.

When the opening bid is 1♠:

West's 2NT bid shows four trumps and is game forcing. If West had a maximum Drury with a singleton, he probably would have used the 2NT response to 1♠ to show that hand. So, if West does have a singleton, it will not be a maximum hand.

After West's 2NT bid, opener can choose from the following. Note that all of these bids are slam tries except for the jump to game.

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2NT	?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <p>3♣, 3♦, 3♥</p> <p>3♠</p> | <p>Usually a real suit with nice high cards. Slam try.</p> <p>Showing good trumps. Slam try. Responder does not have to worry about trumps. This bid is odd-sounding. Do not forget that it shows a big hand.</p> |
|-----------------------------|---|

- 3NT Asking for cuebidding. 3NT is a slam try hand that does not have a better bid. Remember that your side has nine spades. You do not want to play in 3NT with nine trumps.
- 4♣, 4♦, 4♥ A splinter. Slam try.
- 4♠ Jumping to game in the major is a sign-off.

When the opening bid is 1♥:

When responder bids 2NT, opener’s bid are as follows. Note that opener has different bids available to show his singletons.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2NT	?

- 3♣, 3♦ Usually a real suit with nice high cards. Slam try. After a 1♥ opening, opener cannot bid 3♠ to show a spade suit.
- 3♥ Showing good trumps. Slam try. Responder does not have to worry about trumps. This bid is odd-sounding. Do not forget that it shows a big hand.
- 3♠ A splinter. Slam try.
- 3NT Asking for cuebidding.
- 4♣, 4♦ A splinter. Slam try.
- 4♥ Jumping to game in the major is a sign-off.

Some Examples of Hands where Responder Bids 2NT, Showing Four Trumps and Not a Minimum Hand

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2NT	4♠

This hand shows one of the huge advantages of this form of Drury. West bids Drury and then bids 2NT to show a fair Drury hand or better with four trumps. East’s learning of four trumps puts his mind at ease. Knowing of the four trumps

during the bidding is an asset. The strength of the fourth trump is shown here. If West had ♠QJ4, there could be two spade losers. But West has four spades, which makes East safe against bad trump breaks.

Note that when West bids 2NT, the hand is now committed to game. If East makes any bid other than 4♠ he is looking for a slam. There are many things opener can do when responder's bid is 2NT. Following are more examples.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2NT	3♣
3♦	4NT
5♥	6♠

East asks with 2♦ and West shows he has four spades and a fair to excellent hand. East bids 3♣, a slam try, which is usually natural. West has extras under the circumstances, and bids 3♦. East has found out that he is getting four-card support (the 2NT bid) and West is making a cuebid too. East is good enough to check on aces and bid the slam. Note that the slam may make without West's ♦Q if the spades divide 2-2. East can discard a diamond from dummy and later ruff a diamond and a club. The ♦Q just makes it a bit easier.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2NT	4♥
4♠	pass

West bids Drury and then shows he has four trumps with more than a minimum. When West shows four trumps, East is entitled to consider a slam. Hands with

nine trumps play much more efficiently than hands with eight trumps. East bids 4♥, a splinter, and West learns that half of his hand is worthless. He signs off in 4♠. West would have been thinking of a slam if he had something like this hand:

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

West’s hand fits well, as the bidding suggested it would, and 6♠ is a big favorite to make.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
2NT	4♠

West bids Drury and East asks with 2♦. East is only interested in getting to game if West has four trumps. West shows he has four spades and better than a minimum. East goes to game, expecting that it may have a play. If West had bid 2♥ or 2♠, East would stop in 2♠. An important quality of this auction is that the opponents have no clue what East has.

West	East
♠ K Q 10 5	♠ A 4
♥ Q J 3 2	♥ A K 8 7 5
♦ 8 5 3	♦ A J 7 2
♣ Q 4	♣ K 8

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2NT	3♦
4♥	pass

West uses Drury and East asks with 2♦. West shows he has four trumps with something better than a minimum. This West hand is pretty weak and it qualifies for 2NT only because its points are concentrated. When East bids 3♦, it is defined as a natural slam try. West has the worst kind of diamond holding so he signs off in 4♥. Remember that when West bids 2NT, the bidding is forced to game. There is an important guideline mentioned elsewhere that is worth mentioning again.

Guideline

A balanced opening bid facing a balanced Drury hand will seldom stretch to slam. Opener seldom has more than 19 high-card points and responder usually has 10, perhaps 11. The total number of high-card points is generally around 30. When there is no distribution in either hand, the old saw about needing 33 points for slam is worth consideration. Trust me on this one.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
2NT	3♠
4♣	4♦
5♦	6♥

The important feature of this sequence is that East asks about the Drury bid and finds West with four trumps. East shows his singleton spade. West now knows that his minimum hand is a good one since all of his high cards are working. West shows his ♣A; East shows the ♦A. West might bid Blackwood here but chooses to show the ♦K instead. East knows slam should be playable so bids 6♥. Of interest is that East does not need West to have the ♥Q because the partnership has ten trumps and East knows it.

Some Examples of Hands Where Responder Bids Three of a Suit, Showing Three Trumps, a Singleton, and a Maximum Drury Hand

If your side is going to get to slam after a Drury bid it will usually be after responder shows he has four trumps, as shown by the 2NT rebid.

If the Drury bidder has just three trumps, it is unlikely that his 10 point hand will make a slam if opener has a balanced 19 or 20 point hand. The exception

comes when responder has a singleton with three trumps and a maximum hand. Remember that if opener has more values, he might have opened with 2♣. Opener has a practical maximum of 19 high-card points.

Here are some examples of hands where responder uses Drury and then shows a singleton with three trumps.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
3♣	4NT
5♣	5♦
5♥	6♠

West’s 3♣ bid shows a singleton club with three spades and decent values. East knows West has three spades, a stiff club and a maximum Drury hand. East, knowing West will have his values where they can be used, asks for aces. He learns that West has no aces. The 5♦ bid asks for the queen of trumps. West has the queen and that means he can show a king too. He shows the ♥K and East bids the slam.

West	East
♠ A 6 3	♠ K Q 9 5 4
♥ K 8 7 4	♥ A
♦ 5	♦ K Q 3 2
♣ K 9 6 5 4	♣ A 8 2

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	2♦
3♦	4♠
pass	

East has a lot of points and is thinking of a slam. 6♠ might make if West has some miracle hand. West shows a singleton diamond and a good Drury hand with only three spades. This is not good news for East. He has wasted diamond values and he knows West has just three trumps. East settles on game,

a sensible and informed decision. East had hoped West had four trumps and fitting honors. If West had one more spade without the singleton diamond, slam would be much better.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
3♥	4NT
5♦	6♥

West shows his Drury hand, leaving East to sort out the good news. Finding out if West has a spade control won’t be easy without telling the opponents what to lead. Say that East bids 2♦. West happens to bid 3♥, which says he has a stiff spade and three trumps and near a maximum hand. This is serendipity at its best. East is able to ask for aces and bid the cold slam.

RECAPPING SOME THEMES

Opener’s things to think about after partner’s Drury bid.

If opener has a big balanced hand and learns that partner has three trumps:

- You probably do not have a slam if he has balanced shape.
- You may have a slam if he has a singleton or a good suit you can use.

If opener has a big balanced hand and you learn that partner has four trumps, slam is possible, especially if partner has some shape as well.

Responder’s things to think about

If your partner bids 2♦ in response to Drury, asking you to describe your hand, do not show a singleton with three trumps unless you have a maximum with quality points.

One of the most important values that the Drury bidder can have is four-card support.

OTHER LAWRENCE DRURY BIDS

Other bids that opener can make after partner's Drury bid include the following:

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	?

- 2NT A forcing slam try, asking responder to do something sensible.
- 2♠/3♣/3♦ These show good suits and are natural slam tries.
- 3♠/4♣/4♦ These are splinter bids, also showing slam interest.
- 3♥ The jump in trump is a slam try showing excellent trumps.
- 3NT Offers a choice of games.
- 4♥ The jump to game in the trump suit is always a sign-off.

All of these bids are handled exactly the same as in Reverse Drury. That discussion begins on page 86.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF THEY USE DRURY AGAINST YOU?

I have a couple of ideas for you when they use Drury.

You are sitting South and you are faced with this auction:

West	North	East	South
1♠	pass	pass	pass
		2♣	?

West bids 1♠ in third (or fourth) seat and East uses Drury. What can you do about this? I suggest you use the following understandings:

You are already a passed hand so you can't have more than 11 points. If you bid something, you are known not to have a big hand and the fact that you did not open a weak two-bid further limits your hand. Given that your partner won't take you seriously and given that they have a fit and won't be inclined to double you, you can and should bid a good suit if you have one. This will help your partner with the lead and it will hurt their Drury auction because opener is deprived of his 2♦ rebid, which is an important bid in any version of Drury that they may be using.

As South, Neither Vulnerable, what should you bid on each of the following example hands?

West	North	East	South
1♠	pass	pass 2♣	pass ?
♠ J 5 4 ♥ K Q J 5 4 ♦ K 5 ♣ 9 4 3			

Coming in with 2♥ is a good idea. They will hesitate to double you because they have a spade fit, which will cause them to consider bidding more spades first. You want a heart lead and your hand suggests that your partner may be short in spades, meaning he may have some hearts. This is a percentage bid that works more often than not. If it doesn't work, try it again a few times and you will eventually see its effectiveness.

♠ 4 2 ♥ 5 4 ♦ A Q 10 5 2 ♣ A 7 6 4

Bid 2♦. You are getting heard now, which is safer than passing and later wondering if you should bid something if they stop in 2♠.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF YOU DOUBLE THEIR DRURY BID?

West	North	East	South
1♠	pass	pass 2♣	pass dbl

There are two possible treatments.
The first is to use double as lead-directing. Here is one example of that.

♠ 9 4 ♥ K 7 4 ♦ 9 6 2 ♣ K Q 10 7 5

Double 2♣ as a lead director telling partner to lead clubs. This is the most popular use for a double of 2♣.

The second possible treatment, one that I rather like, is to play double as a takeout double of their major suit. Here is an example.

♠ 4 ♥ Q J 6 4 ♦ A 9 6 2 ♣ K 8 7 5

A double of 2♣ can be used as a takeout bid of spades. This double of 2♣ is not a penalty double. It tells partner that you have a good passed hand with takeout double shape.

Important thought #1

If opener bids 2♠, for example, over your double, your partner is well placed to judge whether your side should be in the bidding. If he bids, it will be a good thing because he knows you have a limited passed hand.

Important thought #2

If you double 2♣ and opener passes, your partner does not have to bid. If he has a trashy hand with nothing good to bid, he can pass. The opponents won't be able to judge whether to pass it out in 2♣. In effect, your double of 2♣ is a free bid. Your side bids on only when there is a contract your side likes, and if there is no good contract, the opponents end up in their major.

CHAPTER NINE VARIOUS JUMPS BY RESPONDER

Some jump bids by responder require special attention. Some of the items in this section will be repeats of earlier material for emphasis.

- The jump to 2NT after an opening bid
- A jump shift. $1\clubsuit$ P $2\heartsuit$ or $1\heartsuit$ P $3\diamondsuit$
- A jump to $3\clubsuit$ after a major suit. $1\spadesuit$ P $3\clubsuit$
- A double jump shift. $1\clubsuit$ P $3\heartsuit$ or $1\spadesuit$ P $4\diamondsuit$
- A double raise. $1\clubsuit$ P $3\clubsuit$ or $1\heartsuit$ P $3\heartsuit$

THE PASSED HAND JUMP TO 2NT WHEN THE OPENING BID IS ONE OF A MINOR

West	East
pass	$1\clubsuit$
2NT	

In response to a minor suit opening, 2NT shows 11 or so balanced points and tends to deny a major suit. There is no other meaning for this sequence that makes sense. Just a couple of examples will do.

West	East
pass	$1\clubsuit$
?	

What should West bid with these hands? Mind you, not all of them are 2NT bids.

\spadesuit A J 4 \heartsuit Q J 4 \diamondsuit K 9 7 5 \clubsuit J 8 3

If you would have opened this hand, you won't have to wonder what to do after partner's $1\clubsuit$ opener. If you did pass, bidding 2NT is about right. Your partner can pass if he wishes and will bid game if he wishes. A different question that you should discuss is what opener's rebids mean. For instance, you bid 2NT and your partner rebids $3\clubsuit$. Is this forcing or is it a sign-off? This is something you need to discuss. For the record, I think $3\clubsuit$ by opener is forcing. In fact, any bid by opener is forcing. If your partner has a dog, he should pass 2NT or he

shouldn't have opened. If you choose to play that a rebid of opener's minor is not forcing, be sure to discuss it in advance.

♠ Q 8 7 6 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ A Q 8 ♣ 10 8 6

You might choose 2NT but with a four-card major, you are almost surely best off bidding your major.

♠ 8 7 4 ♥ A K J ♦ Q 8 4 3 ♣ Q 7 3

With nothing in spades, I would suggest bidding 1♦. If you can make 3NT, your partner will be bidding some more and you can catch up.

♠ A 7 4 ♥ 7 4 2 ♦ K J 7 ♣ Q J 3 2

Tough. You have a huge reason not to bid 2NT: no heart stopper. There are two other bids that I offer for your consideration. The first is a 1♦ bid. If partner bids again, you should be able to sort it out. The other option is to raise to 3♣. This is flawed, but since all other bids are also flawed it is up to you to select the least-bad bid.

THE PASSED HAND JUMP TO 2NT WHEN THE OPENING BID IS ONE OF A MAJOR

I am going to show you a number of ideas. After discussing them I will identify the ones that work best.

West	East
pass	1♠
2NT	

There are many possible meanings for a jump to 2NT after a major suit opening. Some of them are quite innovative. Note that the best one is Method Three.

Method One

2NT can be played to show 11 balanced points. Here is an example of a 2NT bid in response to 1♥.

♠ A Q 4 ♥ 5 3 ♦ Q 9 7 5 ♣ Q J 9 2

2NT is the bid if using it as natural. However, if you use the 1NT semi-forcing bid (highly recommended) you will be able to handle your 11 point hands, so

jumping to 2NT to show a maximum balanced hand will not be necessary. This method is not worth using.

Method Two

The second treatment is to use 2NT to show both minors and a maximum passed hand. You should have at least five cards in each minor to do this. My experience with this convention is that for three years I had it on my card and when it finally came up, my partner forgot it.

Assume your partner opens 1♠ and you have this hand:

♠ 6 ♥ 8 4 ♦ A Q 8 7 5 ♣ K J 10 7 3

You would bid 2NT to show the minors if you used this treatment.

If this treatment strikes you as odd, I can only offer that I know of more than a few players who use it. Once, I asked them how the bidding should continue and they had no idea. This struck me as curious and less than a recommendation for the convention, so I can say that you should remember this one only as a conversation piece. There are many reasons why this is not a useful convention, the big one being that if notrump is going to be your contract you will play it, not your partner. With your heart holding, notrump from his side of the table rates to be better than notrump from your side of the table. This method is horrible. Feel free to reject it if anyone asks you to play it.

Method Three

A very worthwhile treatment if your partnership is willing to try it.

The following treatment was introduced by Robert Goldman in his book *Aces Scientific*. His idea was to use 2NT to show a very strong raise with four or more trumps and an unknown singleton. If opener wants to know about the singleton, he bids 3♣ to inquire where it is. Responder then bids his singleton.

West	East	
pass	1♥	
2NT	3♣	Where is your singleton?
3♦		Diamond singleton
3♥		Club singleton
3♠		Spade singleton

West	East
pass	1♠
2NT	3♣ Where is your singleton?
3♦	Diamond singleton
3♥	Heart singleton
3♠	Club singleton

Note these helpful memory tricks:

- 3♦ always shows a diamond singleton.
- Three of the unbid major always shows that singleton.
- Three of opener's major always shows a club singleton.

Is all this worth the effort? I guarantee it. Your slam bidding will improve dramatically when you are dealt hands that fit well.

Here are some examples showing when and when not to use this bid.

In the following hands, your partner opens 1♠ in third or fourth seat. What is your approach?

♠ A J 9 5 ♥ 5 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ K 7 4 3 2

Bid 2NT. Partner usually asks where your singleton is and you will tell him, after which your partner will have an excellent idea about where to go with this hand. Note that if he has a terrible opening bid he can rebid 3♠, expecting you to pass. For the most part, you should respect that opinion. If you choose to overrule him you should have extra good trumps, usually five of them, and maximum-quality high-card points.

♠ Q J 8 7 ♥ K ♦ K J 8 7 ♣ J 9 6 4

Hands with singleton honors are hard to evaluate. If the ♥K is worthless, this hand will have limited value. Bidding 2NT to show a limit raise with a singleton would be bad. My choice with this would be Drury.

♠ Q J 10 8 ♥ 2 ♦ A Q 5 4 ♣ J 10 7 3

A perfect example of a hand worth using the 2NT bid.

♠ K Q 10 9 8 ♥ 2 ♦ Q 8 6 5 4 ♣ K 7

With 5-5 shape, this hand is worth forcing to game. 4♥ shows this kind of hand. The advantage to this bid as opposed to other bids is that the splinter bid lets

partner know pretty much what you have. He may be able to head for a slam. Note that a 4♠ response here is lazy and does little for partner's judgment. A splinter response shows greater shape than the 2NT response and it promises good trumps, either four with good high cards or any five cards.

♠ J 9 7 5 ♥ K Q 9 7 ♦ 2 ♣ K J 10 6

Use the 2NT raise. This is a good hand given that you passed originally.

♠ J 9 7 5 ♥ K J 9 7 ♦ 2 ♣ Q 10 7 6

This is not strong enough for Drury or for the 2NT response. Bid 3♠, which is a mix of limit and preemptive. The bid shows about 6 or 7 points with four trumps and shape.

Here are some examples of complete auctions using the 2NT response.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2NT	3♣
3♥	4NT
5♦	6♠

This is a simple sequence if using the 2NT response. West passes and then bids 2NT, showing a very good passed hand with four trumps or more and an unknown singleton. East's 3♣ bid asks where the singleton is. West shows it and that gives East the assurance that hearts are not a problem. East bids slam, which is virtually cold.

Note that if West had shown a singleton diamond, East would have been right to worry about hearts. East would tend to stop in game, and that would be a good choice.

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

West	East
pass	1♠
2NT	3♣
3♥	4♠

The auction starts with West's passed-hand jump to 2NT. East is excited about a slam and asks where the stiff is. 3♥ was not what East was hoping for and he stops in 4♠. If by some chance West had shown a singleton diamond, East would continue the search for slam.

This brings up an interesting theme. I have mentioned repeatedly that the less you tell your opponents, the less information they have on defense. If East had bid 4NT over 2NT, asking for aces, and then bid 6♣, South might miss the diamond lead. This would be bad bidding but it could work. You have the choice of being a good bidder or a bad bidder. Each has its different kind of rewards.

How good is the 2NT convention?

It won't happen often but it is worth the effort if you are sure that you won't mess it up. I use it and have had more than a few successes with no bad results. Not all of my slams made but they were all worth bidding.

PASSED HAND JUMP SHIFTS

PASSED HAND JUMP SHIFTS IN RESPONSE TO A MINOR

Which treatment is best?

West	East
pass	1♣
2♥	

In response to a minor there are a number of possible interpretations for a jump shift. I will comment on two of them, one bad and one excellent.

1. *The bad treatment*

Use the jump shift to show a maximum passed hand with a five-card suit.

West	East
pass	1♣
2♥	

The most common treatment, and perhaps the worst, is to use the jump shift to show a maximum passed hand with a five-card suit. This is a bad treatment. If you have a random 11, you will not miss a game if partner passes a one-over-one response.

A possible hand for this treatment:

♠ K 7 5 ♥ A J 8 7 2 ♦ K 9 ♣ 4 3 2

If you use a jump shift to show a maximum pass, you would bid 2♥ with this hand. There are many reasons why this treatment is awful. A big reason is that if your partner passes you in 1♥, he will have a minimum hand and you won't miss a game. Save your jumps for something useful.

Evaluation of this treatment: Too bad for words.

2. *The best treatment, highly recommended*

Passed hand jump shifts in response to a minor show a good suit and a fit for partner's minor. The suit you jump in has five cards and you have four- or five-card support for partner. And, you have all of your values in your suit and partner's suit.

West	East
pass	1♣
2♥	

A specific jump shift makes a lot of sense. It is worthwhile to use the jump shift to show a good suit, a super fit, and a maximum hand.

A possible hand for this treatment:

♠ 8 4 ♥ A Q 10 7 2 ♦ 9 4 ♣ K J 3 2

If you use the jump shift to show a good suit, a good fit, and a maximum pass, you would bid 2♥ with this hand.

Evaluation of this treatment: Excellent. The only drawback is that the ensuing auction requires some understandings.

PASSED HAND JUMP SHIFTS TO THE TWO-LEVEL WHEN THE
OPENING BID IS A MINOR

Most of your two-level jump shifts will be into a major suit. There is a rare case of jumping to 2♦ after a 1♣ bid. The important thing is that if you decide to play strong, fit-showing jump shifts by a passed hand to the two-level in response to a minor, you will need guidelines and then you have to follow them. Do not abuse these ideas.

- A jump shift shows a maximum hand.
- A jump shift shows a good five-card or longer suit.
- A jump shift shows good four- or five- or even six-card support for opener's minor.
- A jump shift may or may not have a side singleton. If you do not have a singleton, you need maximum values.

The above rules are ironclad. Violating any of them means that your partner will not be able to evaluate his hand properly.

- A jump shift is 95% forcing for at least one round.

Some examples of possible jump shift hands after a one of a minor opening bid

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A Q 10 8 7 ♥ 2 ♦ K 10 9 7 5 ♣ J 2	
West	East
pass	1♦
2♠	

This is the kind of hand that can make game opposite a very light third seat opener. Imagine partner has something like this miserable hand:

♠ J 9 2 ♥ K J 5 ♦ A J 6 4 2 ♣ 10 5

4♠ makes if the spade finesse works and the diamonds split. Passed hand jump shifts are made when you know there is at least one good fit and maybe two good fits. Hands that fit well take an amazing number of tricks. Your 2♠ bid tells partner almost everything he needs to know. Even minimum hands can be reevaluated upwards to allow for games, and even an occasional slam, on as few as 20 combined high-card points.

For the following examples, assume no one is vulnerable.

♠ A Q 9 8 7 ♥ Q 4 2 ♦ J 3 ♣ Q 8 7

West	East
pass	1♦
1♠	

Hands without a fit are not worth a jump shift. It is the extra strength that comes from a fit that gives you a reason to get excited. Bid 1♠ with this hand, and if partner chooses to pass, it means he has trash and you are not making much anyway.

♠ A J 8 7 ♥ 5 2 ♦ K J 3 2 ♣ Q 4 2

West	East
pass	1♦
1♠	

Even though you have a fit for diamonds, you don't have much distributional strength and you do not have a five-card spade suit. Having a five-card spade suit for this jump is important because your partner will occasionally raise you to game with just three cards.

If you respond 1♠ and East passes, he won't have much to be proud of.

♠ A K 8 7 4 ♥ 10 4 ♦ Q J 8 6 ♣ 9 4

West	East
pass	1♦
2♠	

This is a sound jump to 2♠. If you had one more useful point this would be an opening 1♠ bid for many players.

♠ A K J 8 ♥ 5 2 ♦ 3 2 ♣ K 7 6 5 2

West	East
pass	1♣
1♠	

Assuming you would not open this hand you have a maximum passed hand;

about as good as it gets. Still, the correct response is just 1♣. A jump promises a five-card suit. Keeping your standards up will help partner judge his hand.

Can opener pass a jump shift?

This is a rare bid. Opener knows his partner is a passed hand so he usually knows when there is no game, partner's good hand notwithstanding. Here are some example hands that might consider passing the jump shift.

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	?

♠ 7 4 2 ♥ Q 3 2 ♦ K Q 7 ♣ A J 8 7

It would be reasonable to pass 2♠ with this hand. The way to decide what to do is to envision a likely hand for partner to have. Here is one possibility:

♠ A Q J 5 3 ♥ 9 ♦ 10 4 ♣ K 10 6 5 3

If partner has this hand, you have a fair play for 4♠. I point this possibility out because hands that are worth a jump shift have a way of producing unexpected tricks. The double fit is a powerful tool. Now if responder happened to have two hearts and one diamond, game would be way against the odds. You would require the spade finesse, a spade break, and finding the ♣Q. All in all around 17%.

CONTINUING THE BIDDING WHEN OPENER REBIDS 2NT

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
?	

2NT is a device that allows opener to find out what partner has. Partner's jump shift ranges from 5-4-2-2 hands to hands with 5-5-2-1 or even 6-4-3-0.

2NT promises a decent to excellent hand. With bad hands opener either passes the jump shift or returns to three of his original suit.

Responder's three steps after a 2NT rebid by opener

1. Returning to opener's suit: Minimum jump shift with no singleton.

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
3♣	

♠ K Q 9 8 4 ♥ 10 9 ♦ 7 4 ♣ K Q 10 4

This is a nice hand but it is minimum for your jump shift. Partner asks about your hand and you tell him you have a minimum balanced hand such as this.

Opener is allowed to pass this bid.

2. Rebidding responder's suit: Maximum jump shift with no singleton.

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
3♠	

♠ K Q 9 8 4 ♥ 10 9 ♦ 7 4 ♣ A Q 9 4

This is a true maximum passed hand and it rebids three of its suit, spades, to show these values. You will note that there is a very fine line between minimum and maximum hands.

3. Three of an unbid suit: Shows a singleton in that suit.

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
3♥	

♠ A K 9 8 4 ♥ 9 ♦ 7 4 3 ♣ K J 5 4

♠ A K 9 8 4 ♥ 9 ♦ 7 3 ♣ K 5 4 3 2

Both of these hands would jump shift and then show a singleton. The first hand is maximum in high cards and has just four-card club support. The second hand has one less high-card point but its improved shape allows it to jump shift and

then show the shape. You can see how this description is useful to your partner. He learns of your support, your shape, and especially of your good suit. And he knows very closely of your high-card points too. Partner's game bidding will be accurate and if he wants to bid a slam, he knows enough to consider it.

EXAMPLES OF THIS METHOD

Auctions where responder has no singleton

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

West	East
pass	1♣
2♥	3♣
pass	

East has a minimum in every sense of the word. He returns to 3♣, which West passes.

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

West	East
pass	1♣
2♥	2NT
3♣	pass

East has a minimum hand but since he can imagine some West hands that will make a game he bids 2NT to find out exactly what West has. West shows that he has a balanced minimum. Responder treats most of his 5-4 hands as minimums unless he has prime cards. This hand does have kings and queens, but West has no aces. East, knowing West has a minimum with no singleton, exercises his option to pass.

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

West	East
pass	1♣
2♥	2NT
3♥	?

When responder rebids his major he shows a maximum hand with no singleton. East can do one of two things with his hand.

1. East can bid 5♣, knowing his dummy has more than a minimum. This isn't a great contract but it has chances. If opener does jump to 5♣ it is a sign-off bid. West must pass.
2. East can bid 3NT, not quite sure where the tricks will come from, but given that he often starts with five club tricks, 3NT is a sane option.

Note that when West bid 3♥, showing a maximum, the auction became game forcing. If East thinks there might be a slam he can bid 4♣, forcing. West will do whatever he feels his hand is worth.

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

West	East
pass	1♦
2♠	2NT
3♠	5♦

West passes and then bids 2♠ over 1♦. East has a good hand for diamonds and can easily imagine a slam if West has a singleton heart. East asks and West shows a maximum with no singleton. East chooses to bid 5♦, which is fine.

West

♠ A J 8 4 2

♥ 6 4

♦ 5 2

♣ K Q 10 5

East

♠ K 9

♥ 7 5 2

♦ A K 7

♣ A 9 8 7 4

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
3♣	5♣

East learns that West has a good hand with five spades, four clubs and no singleton. That marks West with two likely heart losers so East signs off in 5♣.

West

♠ K J 9 8 7

♥ 6 4

♦ 5 2

♣ A Q J 5

East

♠ 3

♥ A K 3

♦ A K 7 4

♣ K 9 7 6 4

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
3♠	4NT
5♦	6♣

This auction was basic. West showed a good passed hand with five spades, four clubs and no singleton. East could tell that there were no red suit losers and basically, he asked for aces and bid a slam. The important thing about this auction was that the 2♠ bid set up the entire sequence.

West

♠ 9 5

♥ 6 4

♦ A Q 8 7 4

♣ K Q 6 5

East

♠ A K 3

♥ 7 5 3 2

♦ K 9 6

♣ A 9 8

West	East
pass	1♣
2♦	2NT
3♦	3NT

East bids 2NT and learns that West has a maximum pass with good clubs and diamonds and no singleton. East bids 3NT. His little hearts are not a serious worry because he knows West has two of them.

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

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
3♣	4NT*
5♥	6♣

*Other ace-asking bids might be used here according to your system.

You will find that when you learn early in the bidding that partner has a good hand with two suits, including a fit, you are able to judge instantly what your goals are. When West bid 2♠, East got excited. Imagine that West had bid 1♠. East would rebid 2♣. How do you think the bidding would continue? Whether you find a successful sequence or not, I suspect it will include some difficult moments. On this auction East learned about West's four-card club support, and that was key to telling East that clubs will be a fine trump suit.

West	East
♠ A Q 9 5 2	♠ K
♥ 9 3	♥ A K 6 5
♦ K Q 10 5	♦ J 9 7 3 2
♣ 5 2	♣ A K 7

West	East
pass	1♦
2♠	2NT
3♠	4NT
5♠*	6♦

*Two keycards (♠A and ♦K) and the ♦Q.

Again. The jump shift puts East's mind at ease about the quality of his suit. When West shows a maximum with a balanced hand, East asks for aces and bids the slam.

Important note

On the auctions where Blackwood is used, you can, if you desire, use any variant of Blackwood that you prefer. Take the last bidding sequence above. If your agreements permit you to do this, East can bid something besides 4NT to ask for keycards. I mention this just to let experienced partnerships know that a different ace-asking bid than 4NT may be more efficient.

Auctions where responder has a singleton or a void

The previous section illustrated how responder can show balanced jump shifts. This section demonstrates how responder can show shapely hands.

West	East
pass	1♣
2♥	2NT
?	

2NT asks responder what kind of jump he has.

If West has a singleton, he rebids as follows:

- 3♦/3♠: When responder bids a new suit, it shows a singleton. Responder can be 5-4-3-1 or 5-5-2-1.
- 4♦/4♠: A jump in an unbid suit shows a void. Be very careful with this bid. If you are not sure about doing this you should probably bid 3♦ or 3♠, showing a singleton.

Here are some example hands. Assume West is the dealer with no one vulnerable in all of these hands.

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

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	2NT
3♠	4NT
5♦	6♦

This is a good-fitting hand that makes 6♦ with 23 high-card points, including some that are wasted. East's 2NT bid asked West for more information and discovered West has a singleton spade. Note that East did not feel reticent with his 14 points. The good diamonds and the ♥K were very encouraging values.

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

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	2NT
3♣	3♥
4♥	pass

East asks about West's hand and West shows a singleton club. East has choices of bids now.

Helping East make his choice is that fact that West usually has all of his points in the two suits he showed. Controls in other suits are possible but unlikely.

Here are East's choices:

- He can make a cuebid in clubs, looking for a slam in diamonds if West has a spade control.
- He can bid 3NT, hoping there are nine tricks.
- He can bid 3♥. This is forcing and, most likely, shows two hearts. If East had three hearts, the presumption is that he would have raised earlier. This is not certain since East might have wanted to learn about a singleton before showing heart support, but if that was his plan, then he must have a good hand. 3♥ is forcing, giving West options.

West has great hearts and suggests playing in hearts.

West

♠ A 9
 ♥ K 10 8 7 5
 ♦ K 10 9 4 3
 ♣ 4

East

♠ J 8
 ♥ A
 ♦ Q J 8 7 5 2
 ♣ A K 8 5

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	2NT
3♣	3♦
3♠	4NT
5♥	6♦

This auction raises some questions, as new conventions always do. Here are some questions you need to answer.

1. Is the West hand worth a jump to 2♥ given that he has an important high card outside of the red suits?
2. When West shows a singleton club, is East's 3♦ bid forcing?

Answer 1. I think this jump is okay in theory because West has 5-5 distribution. I do not think a jump shift is okay with 5-4 distribution when holding important high cards in one of the unbid suits. I have seen a number of auctions, however, where having a high card in a side suit made the bidding difficult.

Answer 2. I think that if you bid 2NT and get a positive response other than the weakish response of three of opener's suit, the auction is forcing.

Note that these jump shifts won't be common. The reason for using a convention like this that does not rate to come up very often is that there aren't many other useful meanings for these jump shifts. And, the meanings shown here are fairly easy to use if you have good judgment.

When opener rebids his suit after a jump shift

As East, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q J 6 2 ♥ 3 ♦ K Q J 7 5 ♣ Q 4 2

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	3♦

Even with an enthusiastic partner, this hand will not make a game unless partner chooses to bid on. Your 3♦ bid is a sign-off and West is expected to pass. The best hand your partner can have is something like this:

♠ 4 ♥ A Q 10 5 4 ♦ A 10 8 6 4 ♣ 8 7

This is a super hand, yet you have three fast losers in the black suits. If West does bid again with this hand he would bid 3♠, implying a singleton spade.

I can imagine that if West had a void suit he might bid again. If he chose to do that he would show his shortness. Opener won't know, though, if responder has one or none in this suit. Perhaps on sequences where opener tries to sign off, a bid of a new suit should promise a void.

When opener jump raises a jump shift to game the jump raise is a sign-off

The raise to game shows a huge range of hands. The one underlying feature is that opener does not think there is a slam. When he bids game the auction is over, and no one knows what is going on until the dummy comes down. Here are some examples of cases where opener bids game in responder's five-card major.

As East, Both Vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 10 5 ♥ 6 5 2 ♦ A Q 10 7 ♣ K J 2

West	East
pass	1♦
2♠	4♠

It would be an error to pass. Partner has good spades and diamonds. He may have a singleton too. Game will make rather frequently. Two possible layouts:

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

In this layout, 5♠ is possible and 4♠ is odds on.

West

♠ A K 9 6 4
 ♥ 10 3
 ♦ K 9 8 6
 ♣ 8 5

East

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

In this layout, 4♠ isn't cold but it is worth bidding. Your uninformative auction may cause a defensive error such as a poor opening lead.

Note that opener appreciated his hand was good enough to bid a game. If opener felt a slam was possible, he would have bid 3♠ instead.

When opener jumps to game: some example hands

This will be the auction for the ten example hands following. You have opened 1♦ and your passed partner jumps to 2♥. These hands show how opener should be thinking after hearing partner's passed hand jump shift. On some of these hands you will jump to game, ending the bidding. On some of the other hands, I will show you thinking that might cause you to look further. Note that I have included a trick or two in these hands.

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	?

♠ Q 4 3 ♥ K 9 8 4 ♦ A Q J 7 5 ♣ 2

4♥ looks to be best. Your partner has good hearts and diamonds and the odds on his having an outside ace are almost zero. A possible bid you might make (more on this later) is 4♣, a splinter bid. All in all, though, this hand rates to be high enough in 4♥.

♠ 10 7 6 2 ♥ K 10 3 2 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ K 2

When you have four-card support, bidding game is routine unless you have a disgusting hand. You know your partner has hearts and diamonds, very possibly 5-5. All he needs is the two red aces to give you a shot at game.

♠ K Q 2 ♥ K Q J ♦ A Q J 7 5 ♣ 4 2

This is a good hand that will make a game but that does not rate to make a slam. Imagine that partner has five hearts to the ace and four or five diamonds to the king. About the only holding your partner can have that makes slam a good one

is for him to have ♠A84 ♥A10765 ♦K1064 ♣3. If partner has this hand, might he not have opened it?

♠ A K Q 8 ♥ J 10 3 ♦ K J 4 3 ♣ 9 4

Bid 4♥. Game looks acceptable. There is no hand that makes slam better than a finesse. Note that your brisk auction did not tell them what to lead. If they lead a spade, your partner will have time to get rid of clubs whenever he feels like it.

♠ A Q J 3 ♥ K Q 8 4 ♦ Q 7 5 ♣ A 2

If your partner would open the bidding with

♠ 6 4 ♥ A 9 6 5 3 ♦ A K 8 4 ♣ 6 4

you shouldn't bother looking for a slam. I suggest bidding 4♥.

♠ Q 8 7 3 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ A K 7 5 ♣ J 2

You have choices. You could bid 4♥. You might lose four black tricks, but it is not a certainty.

A bidding trick

You can try a bidding trick with the hand above. Bid 2NT. If your partner bids 3♦, showing a balanced minimum jump shift, pass it. If he bids 3♥, showing a maximum balanced jump shift, pass that too. If he shows a singleton, go ahead and bid a game.

♠ 9 4 ♥ Q 10 ♦ K Q J 7 5 ♣ A Q 7 4

Who knows? It isn't likely that 5♦ will make but 4♥ will have a play facing most of partner's 2♥ hands. Fanciful, perhaps, but 4♥ is likely to succeed.

♠ 2 ♥ 8 5 3 ♦ A Q J 8 3 ♣ K J 9 2

Your shape suggests that you have a play for game. I would risk 4♥. When you have a singleton and at least three-card support you should bid game in general, unless you think there might be a slam.

♠ A J 2 ♥ K 8 4 ♦ A K J 5 ♣ Q 7 3

It is tempting to look for a slam in diamonds. 6♦ will make in both of the following layouts.

West

♠ 10 5
♥ A Q J 7 3
♦ Q 9 8 7 4
♣ 4

East

♠ A J 2
♥ K 8 4
♦ A K J 5
♣ Q 7 3

This West hand makes 6♦ a laydown. Hearts, on the other hand, will make only eleven tricks.

West

♠ K 4 3
♥ A Q 10 7 3
♦ Q 10 4 2
♣ 5

East

♠ A J 2
♥ K 8 4
♦ A K J 5
♣ Q 7 3

6♦ is pretty good with this West hand, too. If you ask with 2NT and find partner to have a singleton club, bidding towards a slam is reasonable. I point out these two possible dummies to give you an idea of the power of fitting hands.

If you bid 2NT and partner shows you a balanced hand, just bid 4♥. Should be easy.

When opener raises a jump shift to the three-level

This thought may seem unusual. Given that the jump shift has pretty much shown responder's hand, opener is well placed to decide if a game exists. For this odd reason, opener bids game with quite a few hands, some of them seemingly close to putrid. Jumping to game does one good thing for your side. It gives away very little information to the defenders. They do not know if opener has a pushy hand or a pretty good hand. This thinking leads to the following rule.

Rule

A simple raise is forcing to game.

My suggestion is that a raise to the three-level is forcing, against all instincts. The advantage is that it shows an unlimited balanced hand that is willing to consider looking for a slam if responder feels like looking for one. Some examples of complete auctions follow.

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

West	East
pass	1♦
2♠	3♠
4♦	6♦(♠)

East's 6♦ bid is made for these reasons. West could have signed off in 4♠. West could have made a cuebid if he wished, probably showing a singleton. Since West is marked with good spades and diamonds, East's 6♦ bid is sensible and well judged. East might also bid 6♠, which rates to be almost as good a contract as 6♦. Since West has the ♠J, both slams are excellent. But before you rush to play in the major suit, consider if West has five diamonds, two hearts and one club, 6♠ may go down on a heart lead while 6♦ is cold.

I admit that these auctions are a little bit unusual and I admit further that there is room to develop this structure. The problem is that these situations are rare and not worth a huge amount of work. If you have the basic understandings down, though, these tools will give you a good foundation to work with.

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

West	East
pass	1♦
2♥	3♥
3♠	4♣
4♦	4♥

This auction includes some science, some judgment, a little confusion, and a hypothetical idea. West passes and jumps to 2♥ after East's third seat 1♦ bid. East raises to 3♥, a strong bid.

Should West show his singleton spade? If he does bid 3♠, how does East know that West does not have the ♠A? The answer is that West only shows a singleton, never an ace. He may be able to show the ace later. This way the singleton-showing bid is never misunderstood.

East is not thrilled that West has a singleton spade since it means that his ♠KQJ may not come into play, but slam is not out of the question yet. East makes one more bid towards slam; 4♣. West could sign off in 4♥ if he had nothing extra to show but he felt his five diamonds were worth something. His 4♦ bid was encouraging and that gave East reason to think further. He decided that if West had the ♥KQ and the ♦KQ, he would have asked for aces. Hence, he felt West was missing some important card. The final contract became 4♥. 6♦ or 6♥ can make if diamonds can be played for no losers, so slam is about even money. Stopping in 4♥ was not a bad thing to do. The important thing is how the bidding went.

When opener bids 3NT

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	?

♠ 4 3 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ A Q ♣ K J 8 7 6 3

It is reasonable to bid 3NT with this hand. You know the clubs will be good for tricks and a slam is way against the odds. Make the practical bid.

♠ A ♥ K Q 10 7 ♦ Q J 7 ♣ K 10 8 6 2

With this hand, your partner's 2♠ bid is nice in that you can imagine a game. 5♣ will be a good spot if partner has a singleton diamond. The auction continues:

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	2NT
3♥	3NT

When you ask what partner has, you find out that he has a singleton heart. That is bad news for a club contract but you have hearts well stopped. 3NT is a reasonable shot.

When Opener Makes A Splinter Bid

Is a splinter bid possible in response to partner's jump shift?

After bidding a few of these hands, I haven't seen many cases where opener would need to use a splinter bid. Usually he can bid 2NT or raise partner, which will give the information needed. Here is a possible hand where a splinter would help.

As East, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ A Q 4 2 ♥ — ♦ 6 5 3 ♣ A Q 10 9 7 2

West	East
pass	1♣
2♠	4♥

Optional – play that a jump shift shows a void

This shows a splinter with spade support and implies enough strength to invite slam opposite a passed hand. Your partner obviously does not have a lot of high cards in your suits. He surely has an ace or king in one of the unbid suits. A jump to 4♥ tells him you are interested in a slam and the implication is that you are worried about diamonds. A void in opener's hand is likely and perhaps that should be the definition of this jump to 4♥.

The drawback to this is that the defenders are listening and they will not make many bad leads. Frankly, I do not see this kind of sequence coming up.

PASSED HAND JUMP SHIFTS IN RESPONSE TO A MAJOR

I know of many ideas for passed hand jump shifts after a major opening bid but only one of them comes to mind as worth using. It is identical to the meaning for a jump shift response to one of a minor, which makes for few memory glitches.

One caveat. Do not forget that a jump to 3♣ is natural, a result of using the Drury convention.

Examples of jump shifts after a major opening bid

West	East
pass	1♥
2♠	

♠ A K 8 7 4 ♥ Q J 8 4 ♦ 8 4 ♣ 9 7

This is the one jump shift that can occur at the two-level after partner opens a major in third or fourth seat. You use this treatment with a maximum, good cards in partner's suit and your suit, and good shape.

Most of your passed hand jump shifts after partner's third seat 1♥ or 1♠ bid will be at the three-level.

West	East
pass	1♥
3♣/♦	

West	East
pass	1♠
3♣/♦/♥	

There is only one way to play these bids that makes any sense. Play a jump in any suit other than clubs as fit-showing. For instance:

West	East
pass	1♠
3♦	

You show a near opening bid with four spades and good diamonds and 5-4 or better distribution. Generally you will be 5-4-2-2 or perhaps 5-4 with a singleton when you make one of these three-level fit-showing jumps. A possible hand for this treatment:

♠ K 10 8 5 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A K J 6 4 ♣ 9 4

If you play fit-showing jump shifts, this is a perfect hand for it. It has the required four trumps, it has a near opening bid, and it has five good diamonds.

Remember the exception – a jump to 3♣

West	East
pass	1♥
3♣	

The jump shift to 3♣ is often played as showing six clubs plus a maximum passed hand, and denies three-card trump support. This treatment will apply only if you use Drury. Otherwise you would make a two-over-one response of 2♣. A possible hand for this treatment:

♠ K 8 5 ♥ 4 ♦ 6 3 ♣ A Q 8 7 6 4 3

This bid shows one thing; a 10 or 11 point passed hand with a good club suit.

This hand has seven clubs. You could just as well have six. You will never do this with only five.

OPENER'S BIDDING AFTER A JUMP SHIFT TO 2♠

West	East
pass	1♥
2♠	

This sequence is the only two-level jump shift after a major suit opening bid. This auction is treated like the other jump shifts. Note that you will never want to play in spades. With partner opening 1♥, and responder always having four or five hearts for the jump, the partnership will always play in hearts. Spades won't be the trump suit. The reason for this jump will mainly be to tell opener something important about responder's hand on the way to whatever heart contract you reach. Here are some possible examples of this jump shift.

West	East
pass	1♥
?	

♠ K J 9 8 2 ♥ A Q 10 2 ♦ 8 7 ♣ 8 7

If you do not have a singleton you need a maximum pass, such as this hand. Bid 2♠. Note that your high cards are in the two suits you are showing, spades and hearts.

West	East
pass	1♥
?	

♠ A J 10 7 5 ♥ K J 10 2 ♦ 7 ♣ 10 9 7

If you have a singleton, you can jump with a hand like this. Again, you have a good spade suit and excellent four-card heart support and no high cards in the other suits.

West	East
pass	1♥
?	

♠ Q 8 7 5 4 ♥ K Q 2 ♦ K 7 ♣ Q 7 4

This hand has everything wrong with it for a jump shift to 2♠.

- It has a poor spade suit.
- It has only three hearts.
- It has honors in the minor suits.
- It has no real distributional value.

If your hand has any of these flaws, use a different approach. On this hand, Drury is suggested.

Can opener pass a jump shift from 1♥ to 2♠?

West	East
pass	1♥
2♠	?

♠ 9 4 2 ♥ A Q J 9 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ Q 9 7

East has a rotten hand and has two sane choices. He can pass 2♠, which ensures stopping in a safe partscore. Or he can bid 3♥, definitely a sign-off bid that partner should accept. With lots of potential losers in the minors, passing 2♠ rates to get you to a partscore that has a good chance of making.

Most of the sequences that start with a major and a jump shift go along similar lines to when the opening bid is a minor suit and a jump shift. Here are a few example auctions.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
2♠	2NT
3♣	4NT
5♦	6♥

A ridiculously easy auction. East bids 1♥ and hears West jump to 2♠, showing spades and hearts and a maximum pass. East asks with 2NT and learns West has a singleton club. East asks for aces and plays in 6♥, which is virtually cold.

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

West	East
pass	1♥
2♠	2NT
4♣	4NT
5♥	7♥

East opens a modest hand in third seat and West jumps to 2♠. East should be excited about this because if West has a jump with short clubs, slam is possible. East asks with 2NT and West bids 4♣, showing a void. East can ask for aces since he knows West does not have the ♣A, given he is void. West shows two keycards, which can only be the ♠A and the ♥K. Knowing that West has four trumps, East can reasonably bid a grand slam.

WHEN YOU OPEN ONE OF A SUIT IN THIRD OR FOURTH SEAT AND PARTNER JUMP SHIFTS TO THE THREE-LEVEL

There are four passed hand auctions that include a fit-showing jump to the three-level.

West	East
pass	1♠
3♦	
pass	1♠
3♥	
pass	1♥
3♦	
pass	1♦
3♣	

West	East
pass	1♥
3♣	
pass	1♠
3♣	

These two auctions are part of the Drury convention. Both of these 3♣ bids show six or more good clubs with around 9-11 high-card points. These bids are not forcing.

How Does Opener Continue After a Three-level Jump Shift Response to One of a Major?

West	East
pass	1♠
3♥	?

East knows a lot about West's strength and general shape. What he does not know is whether West has a singleton or just an excellent passed hand with spades and hearts. Opener can continue along familiar lines.

Opener can bid three of his major

When opener bids three of his major, he is shouting at responder to pass. Responder may choose otherwise but he should continue only with a huge reason to do so.

West	East
pass	1♠
3♦	?

♠ K J 7 4 2 ♥ Q J 9 ♦ 7 3 ♣ K 9 7

This is a terrible hand and it shows that by signing off in 3♠.

♠ A K Q 7 5 ♥ J 9 5 ♦ 6 ♣ 9 6 5 3

This hand has excellent spades but the singleton diamond is not an asset and the hand is full of losers. I suggest signing off in 3♠.

♠ A J 9 8 7 ♥ K 3 ♦ Q 3 ♣ J 8 7 5

This is a weak opening bid but it has a diamond fit and it has decent spades. I would bid 4♠, expecting to make it much of the time.

Opener Can Bid 3NT

The most important continuation is 3NT. When your side has a major suit fit, you won't want to play in notrump. 3NT asks if responder has a singleton. You saw this principle used in the auctions where responder jump shifted after a minor suit opening bid.

West	East
pass	1♠
3♥	3NT
4♣/♦	

Both 4♣ and 4♦ show singletons along with excellent cards in the majors.

Two examples: Partner opens 1♥ and you have these hands:

♠ 4 2 ♥ A J 8 5 ♦ K Q 9 5 4 ♣ 9 7

With this hand the response would be 3♦, showing a near opening bid with four hearts and five diamonds and all or most of your values in these two suits. If opener has a terrible hand he can bid 3♥, expecting it to end the bidding. Responder can overrule but if he chooses, he can pass it out in 3♥. If opener bids 3NT, this hand would bid 4♦ or 4♥, which denies a singleton. 4♦ would show a minimum jump; 4♥ would show a maximum jump. On this hand the bid would be 4♥ to show a maximum jump. What makes this hand worth a 4♥ bid? Responder has good hearts and his diamonds are excellent.

♠ 4 3 2 ♥ A J 8 5 ♦ K Q 9 5 4 ♣ 9

With this hand, the response would again be 3♦, showing a maximum pass with good diamonds and four- or five-card support. If opener bids 3NT, the bid is 4♣, showing a singleton club.

For the record

When you have shape, you can choose from many bids. With the hand just above, you have lots to think about after the 1♥ opening bid. You can bid 3♦, showing a good suit with a good fit and a maximum passed hand.

But you also have two other approaches you can use.

- You can bid 2NT, which shows a maximum passed hand with an unknown singleton.
- You can make a splinter bid of 4♣, showing a stiff and a fit and a very good passed hand.

The advantage to these singleton-showing bids is that you let partner know of your shape, which may be a good thing for partner.

The disadvantage to bidding 2NT or 4♣ is that your partner won't know of your good diamond suit. Starting with a jump shift to 3♦ does not stop you from showing a club singleton later on some auctions. I like 3♦ since the diamonds may be an important source of tricks if opener has any help in the suit.

Sometimes you can make a jump shift and later show your singleton even when opener does not ask for it. For instance, you pass and then jump to 3♥ in response to partner's 1♠ bid with this hand:

♠ KJ754 ♥ AJ1053 ♦ 4 ♣ 97

West	East
pass	1♠
3♥	3NT
4♦	

If partner bids 3NT, asking for description, you bid 4♦, showing a singleton diamond.

West	East
pass	1♠
3♥	4♣
4♦	

If your partner makes a cuebid instead of bidding 3NT, you may be able to cuebid yourself. Here, opener cuebids 4♣ and you, in turn, can cuebid 4♦, clearly showing a singleton.

And finally, an example of overriding opener's decision.

West	East
pass	1♠
3♥	3♠
4♠	

You made your jump to 3♥ and your partner said he does not like his hand. You have so much extra distribution along with a fifth spade that going to game anyway is sane.

YOU OPEN IN THIRD SEAT AND PARTNER JUMPS TO THE THREE-LEVEL IN A HIGHER-RANKING SUIT

What do you expect your partner to have for this bidding?

West	East
3♥	1♦

If West is not a passed hand, what he has is open to your agreements. A common agreement is that West has a preemptive hand in hearts. Here are two possible hands he could have:

♠ 5 4 2 ♥ K Q 10 8 6 5 3 ♦ 4 3 ♣ 7

♠ 2 ♥ J 10 9 8 6 5 3 ♦ Q 3 ♣ K 8 4

Not vulnerable, West's hand would look like one of these. If vulnerable, his hand might be a bit better.

West	East
pass 3♥	1♦

If partner is a passed hand and he jumps to 3♥ after your 1♦ bid, you have something new to think about. What is West doing? West did not open with a preempt so it is unlikely that he has a good heart suit. I suggest you play these jumps as showing a singleton with a massive fit for your suit.

These are the auctions that would apply.

1♦	3♥ or 3♠ or 4♣
1♥	3♠ or 4♣ or 4♦
1♠	4♣ or 4♦ or 4♥

All of these can be used as splinters. Following are two example hands:

As West, Vulnerable vs. Not Vulnerable, holding:

♠ K 8 2 ♥ 3 ♦ K 8 7 6 5 4 ♣ A 9 7

West	East
pass	1♦
3♥	

West has too much to risk bidding 3♦ and playing it there. 3♥ shows a wonderful passed hand and implies something along the lines of the example hand above.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 9 ♥ K Q 8 7 5 ♦ A J 6 5 ♣ J 7 5

West	East
pass	1♥
3♠	

Bid 3♠, showing a raise to game with a stiff spade.

These hands both have the quality that they are too good to make a bid that can be passed short of game. Further, they promise very good support. With normal support, you might choose to use the 2NT bidding trick. These splinters are rare but they do work and will solve some annoying problem hands for you on occasion.

YOU OPEN IN THIRD OR FOURTH SEAT AND PARTNER JUMPS TO GAME

There is a family of hands that do not fit into anything in the pages above. When your partner opens in third or fourth seat, what kind of hand should jump to game?

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
4♥			

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	pass
4♥			pass

What do you expect from your partner, West, who is a passed hand?

The answer is that he has a weak hand with lots of shape and lots of trumps. Remember:

- He might have bid Drury.
- He might have bid 2NT.
- He might have made a jump shift.
- He might have made a splinter bid.

He did not do any of these things. He bid game.

Here are some example hands where your partner has a hand that might wish to raise to game. Which of these hands qualifies for a game bid and if they do not, how should they respond? In all of these hands your partner opens with 1♥ in third or fourth seat.

Did partner open in third seat or fourth seat?

Be aware that your bidding will usually be the same after a third seat bid and a fourth seat bid but there is at least one place where you might make an adjustment. For these hands, think about what you should bid after a third seat bid and then consider if you would bid differently after a fourth seat bid. I will note the hands where you should make an adjustment.

West	East
pass	1♥
?	

♠ 7 4 ♥ Q 9 7 6 4 3 ♦ K J 6 3 ♣ 5

This hand is worth a 4♥ bid. It has super trumps. It has shape. It doesn't have many high cards. Your bid makes it hard on your opponents if they wish to have second thoughts, but it also makes it hard on your partner. You need a pretty clear definition of this passed hand jump to game so your partner won't have to guess.

♠ 9 ♥ A Q 8 7 ♦ Q J 8 2 ♣ 9 7 4 2

Bidding 4♥ is wrong for many reasons. You have a bid available that is pretty accurate. The 2NT response says you have an unknown stiff and a maximum passed hand.

♠ K 10 8 7 5 ♥ J 9 6 5 4 ♦ J 2 ♣ 4

Bid 4♥. You may not make this, but then who knows what you can make? For that matter, who knows what the opponents can make?

♠ 9 8 2 ♥ K Q 8 7 5 ♦ — ♣ 9 7 4 3 2

Bid 4♥. Do not get fancy. You have super support, you have shape, and you do not want to defend if their side can somehow find their way into diamonds or spades.

♠ 9 ♥ J 10 8 5 3 ♦ A 10 9 6 5 ♣ 9 7

4♥ would be reasonable on these cards. Your hand is weak but it has lots of trumps and shape and just one useful high card. This is a maximum hand for a 4♥ response.

♠ A 8 7 5 2 ♥ K J 8 6 5 ♦ 5 ♣ 5 3

This hand with four fives is worth a lot. My choice would be a splinter of 4♦. Let partner make the last decision here.

And finally, an example hand to show the range of things you have to think about.

As West, Neither Vulnerable, holding:

♠ 9 7 4 ♥ K Q 9 2 ♦ A Q 8 7 4 ♣ 2

West	East
pass	1♥
?	

Here are some of the things you can consider doing.

- You can bid Drury.
- You can bid 3♦, a jump shift showing four hearts and a good diamond suit.
- You can bid 2NT, showing heart support and a singleton somewhere.
- You can bid 4♣, showing a singleton and making sure you get to a game.

What you should not do is jump to 4♥. Your partner will play you for a weak hand and will pass. Many good slams will be missed because of a hasty response.

This hand offers many options. My choice would be to jump to 3♦, showing a big passed hand with hearts and diamonds. Opener may ask for further description and I will then show a singleton club.

For the record

Remember. There is a difference between partner's third seat opening bids and his fourth seat opening bids.

Your partner will generally have a real opening bid when he opens in fourth seat. It may be a poor hand but it will be an opening hand.

Rule

A minimum third seat opener is potentially much weaker than a minimum fourth seat opener.

The next hand demonstrates this concept. Again, your partner opens 1♥ and RHO passes. The first question is how you should start the auction after partner's 1♥ bid.

♠ K 9 8 7 ♥ K J 10 5 2 ♦ K 3 ♣ 8 7

Bid Drury. You will learn enough to do the right thing next.

Two things you should not do:

Do not make a jump raise. A jump raise to 3♥ would show an aggressive limit raise (6-8 points) with shape and good trumps, not a maximum passed hand.

Likewise, you should not jump to a four of partner's major simply because you have lots of points and trumps. That bid would be wrong for two reasons.

- Reason one: Partner will think you are weak and will pass with some hands that will make a slam.
- Reason two: If partner has a weak hand, you may be too high in game. There is no reason to jump to 4♥ when there are ways to show a good hand and stop in a partscore if that is best.

The second question is what you should bid after partner's answer to Drury. For that you should consider the following: What seat is partner in? The hand above will be bid differently depending on whether partner is in third or fourth seat.

If your partner is in third seat:

I suggest bidding Drury and then if partner signs off in 2♥, raise him to 3♥. He will know you are showing a super passed hand with excellent trumps, such as this one. If he has anything useful he will bid game. Here is one possible layout that may cause you to rethink the urge to jump to game.

West

♠ K 9 8 7
♥ K J 10 5 2
♦ K 3
♣ 8 7

East

♠ Q 6 2
♥ A 9 8 7 4
♦ J 8 7
♣ K J

4♥ is down with no play (barring many miracles), 3♥ is not a certainty, and 2♥ isn't cold. And, if your partnership opens really bad hands in third seat, 4♥ might be even worse than it is here.

If your partner is in fourth seat:

I suggest bidding Drury, but if he signs off in 2♥, go ahead and bid game. He will have at least 12 real points.

West

♠ K 9 8 7
♥ K J 10 5 2
♦ K 3
♣ 8 7

East

♠ A 4
♥ Q 9 7 6 4
♦ 10 8 4
♣ A Q 2

Opener has a typical fourth seat minimum opening bid. He won't open with much worse than this. He has a good play for 4♥ even with this hand.

PASSED HAND BIDDING QUIZ: THE ADVANCED METHODS

You are West. What does East's 2♦ bid mean using the new version of Drury shown in this section?

West	East
pass	1♥/♠
2♣	2♦
?	

2♦ asks West to describe his Drury hand. This bid will give East enough information that he can often place the contract. Here is what West is instructed to do:

- 2♥ – Usually, a minimum Drury hand with three trumps. A few really minimum Drury hands with four trumps.
- 2♠ – A maximum hand with three trumps.
- 2NT – A decent Drury hand with four trumps. This bid is game forcing.
- 3♣/3♦/3♥ – These bids show singletons with quality maximums and exactly three trumps. 3♣ and 3♦ show these singletons. 3♥ shows a singleton in the unbid major.

West	East
pass	1♥
2♣	2♦
?	

♠ 7 5 2 ♥ A J 5 ♦ A J 4 ♣ 10 9 5 3

Bid 2♠. You have 10 high-card points in a balanced hand but the high cards are excellent. Your club spots may yet prove useful. 2♠ shows a maximum Drury hand with three trumps.

♠ J 5 2 ♥ Q 8 4 ♦ Q J 7 4 ♣ K J 5

Like the previous hand, this one is balanced with 10 points. The quality of the points is poor, which downgrades this hand to bidding 2♥. This hand is so poor, actually, that you might have chosen to raise to only 2♥.

♠ J 5 2 ♥ Q 8 4 3 ♦ J 7 4 ♣ K Q J

This is a rare hand with four-card support that bids just 2♥. This usually shows three trumps and a minimum hand. Four trumps is possible, such as on this hand, which is minimum in all regards.

♠ 2 ♥ Q 8 4 ♦ A 10 8 5 4 ♣ A 6 5 4

Bid 3♥. You have a super Drury hand with three trumps. 3♣ would show a stiff club. 3♦ would show a stiff diamond. 3♥ shows a singleton spade (the other major). Had your side been bidding spades, 3♥ would show a singleton heart.

You are West. Your partner opens 1♥ in third seat. What is your intention with each of the following hands?

West	East
pass	1♥
?	

♠ 2 ♥ Q 9 8 4 ♦ A 10 8 5 4 ♣ K 9 5

Bid 2NT. This tells partner you have a good hand with four- or five-card support and a singleton somewhere. He can, if he wishes, bid 3♣ to ask you where your singleton is.

♠ A 10 8 3 ♥ Q 9 8 4 2 ♦ 4 ♣ A 9 5

You have an exceptional hand that wishes to be in game no matter what. Bid 4♦, a splinter bid. A fifth trump is a nice asset since your partner will have only four of them on occasion in third seat.

♠ 3 ♥ Q 9 8 4 2 ♦ A K J 9 5 ♣ 9 5

Bid 3♦. This is a fine hand, one that can make a slam facing some minimum openers. Your jump says you have something like this hand.

♠ 10 9 3 ♥ 2 ♦ K 9 5 ♣ A K J 9 5 3

Bid 3♣. This is a special bid. 3♣ shows a good six- or seven-card club suit and a maximum passed hand. You deny three of partner's major. Partner can bid or pass as he wishes.

♠ 6 3 ♥ A K J 7 ♦ 9 7 6 2 ♣ 9 5 3

You have three choices:

1. You can raise to 2♥.
2. You can raise to 3♥, showing 6-7 high-card points, usually with a little shape.
3. You can bid Drury.

No bid is precise. My choice? I lean towards 3♥. The ♥J is probably worthless so this is really just 7 high-card points.

♠ 8 2 ♥ J 8 4 ♦ 6 2 ♣ A K Q 7 4 3

This hand looks like a 3♣ bid but you have heart support. Bid Drury, letting your partner know you like his suit.

You are East. You open 1♠ and your partner bids Drury. What is your plan on the following five hands?

West	East
pass	1♠
2♣	?

♠ A J 7 4 3 ♥ Q 7 ♦ Q J 4 ♣ J 8 4

Bid 2♠, a sign-off. Your partner will pass this 95% of the time.

♠ K Q J 7 ♥ A 7 4 ♦ 9 6 2 ♣ 9 5 3

Bid 2♠, a sign-off. You can see that with this hand you really, really want partner to pass. He'd better be careful if he is thinking of going on.

♠ J 10 6 5 3 ♥ 7 ♦ A K Q 2 ♣ K 9 8

Bid 4♠. This hand has 13 high-card points but with distribution, it is close to 15 or 16.

♠ Q 10 8 7 6 3 ♥ K 7 ♦ 3 ♣ A Q 8 4

Bid 4♠. That sixth trump is useful and your shape is excellent. Note that the opponents do not learn anything about your hand.

♠ A Q J 8 7 ♥ A 3 ♦ K J 3 ♣ A J 3

With balanced hands, slam is almost never making after a Drury bid. You can, if you wish, bid 2NT to see if partner can show a good side suit. Perhaps he can make a splinter. For the most part, you expect to end in 4♠. One thing to avoid is a rush to ask for aces. That is premature.

FINAL REVIEW QUIZ: GENERAL PASSED HAND BIDDING PRINCIPLES

You are East in all of the following questions. The auction shown will be used for the following hands until another auction appears. Assume no one is vulnerable unless otherwise stated.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	?	

♠ Q J 5 3 2 ♥ K 4 ♦ A 7 6 4 ♣ 7 3

Bid 1♠. You have a light hand but bidding 1♠ stops them from opening and using all their bidding tools. Your bid forces them to use defensive bidding methods instead.

♠ Q J 2 ♥ K J 10 8 4 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ 10 8

Bid 1♥ for many of the same reasons. Note that you are prepared to pass anything partner responds that is not a forcing bid.

♠ Q 4 ♥ K J 4 ♦ K J 4 ♣ J 7 4 3 2

Pass. I suppose you can open 1♣ but there is little to be gained. There isn't much going for this bid. Questionable hands with lousy values that have no offense and poor defense should not bother getting involved.

♠ 2 ♥ K J 4 ♦ Q J 6 4 2 ♣ K 8 5 4

Pass. You have a fair suit but you cannot bid again if your partner bids 1♠, which is likely. If you open 1♦, for instance, and rebid 1NT or 2♣, your partner will expect you to have a full opening bid or at least close to one. Some creative players might open with a weak 2♦ bid.

♠ K J 9 8 3 2 ♥ 4 ♦ 7 6 4 ♣ J 5 3

In third seat, your weak two-bids can be disgusting. You are not vulnerable and

you suspect fourth seat has a good hand. Bid 2♠. If they were vulnerable this would be even more clear.

♠ 3 2 ♥ A Q J 9 7 ♦ J 9 6 4 ♣ 5 3

In third seat you can, and often do, open a weak two with only a five-card suit. This is a fine 2♥ bid.

♠ 3 2 ♥ 7 ♦ A K J 8 7 3 ♣ 10 9 7 3

In third seat, your three-bids can be more aggressive than in first or second seat. Not vulnerable this is a classic third seat 3♦ bid. If you were vulnerable, sticking with a weak two would be better.

♠ A K Q 8 7 5 4 ♥ 7 ♦ 4 ♣ K Q 7 3

Bid 1♠. Even though your partner is a passed hand, 6♠ is not out of the question for you. Do not assume they can make anything they want. That is a somewhat negative view.

♠ 2 ♥ K Q J 8 7 5 4 ♦ A Q 4 ♣ K 3

In third seat or in fourth seat, opening 4♥ makes sense. Your partner is unlikely to have two aces and the ♦K, which is needed to make slam likely. In this case you do have a fear of their spades. Bidding 4♥ may let you shut the opponents out.

West	North	East	South
1♥	pass	pass	pass
		?	
♠ A Q 5 4 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ 4 2 ♣ 9 8 7 3			

Bid 2♥. You have the values for a raise. Don't confuse the bidding with a 1♠ response.

♠ 5 4 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ A Q 8 4 ♣ K 8 7 3

Bid 2♣, Drury. You have 10-12 support points and you do not have another bid available to show this hand. One terrible bid to avoid is the jump to 3♥.

♠ 8 4 ♥ K 9 8 3 ♦ 4 2 ♣ K 10 7 6 3

Raise to 3♥. The jump raise is a poor man's limit raise. You usually have 6 or 7 high-card points with four or more trumps and good shape.

♠ A 9 4 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q J 5 2 ♣ K 8 7 3

Bid 1NT. If you use 1NT as semi-forcing, you can have from 6-12 high-card points. If you do not use the semi-forcing notrump, your range is 6-10.

♠ A 4 2 ♥ — ♦ K Q 10 7 5 2 ♣ 10 8 7 3

Bid 2♦. It is rare to make a two-over-one bid after passing originally but if you do, be aware that your bid may end the auction. Your partner is not obliged to bid again.

West	North	East	South
1♥	dbl	pass ?	pass

♠ 9 7 4 3 ♥ K 9 8 3 ♦ 4 2 ♣ K 10 3

Now the opponents are bidding, too. Bid 3♥, a preemptive raise over a takeout double. I suggest that you do not make this preemptive raise with nothing, as I see some players do.

♠ 8 4 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ K Q 8 2 ♣ Q 10 6 3

Bid 2♣, Drury. Drury is on if they make a takeout double and it is on if they overcall 1♥ with 1♠. For the most part, you won't bid again unless your partner shows interest.

♠ K J 5 ♥ K 3 ♦ J 8 7 4 3 ♣ Q J 8

Redouble is sane. One big deal here is that your redouble denies three or more hearts. With three hearts and 10 points you would use Drury. This is an important inference for your partner.

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	pass
2♣	pass	?	

♠ A K J 7 3 ♥ K 7 3 ♦ 8 7 6 3 ♣ 5

Your partner bid Drury, showing 10 or 11 support points, which is good news. You have a minimum hand. Rebid 2♠, usually ending the auction.

♠ Q J 7 4 3 ♥ K Q ♦ A Q ♣ K J 4 2

Bid 4♠. This is a fine hand but your partner is a passed hand. There are too many balanced hands that make game but little more. On hands where slam is way against the odds, it is best to bid game and keep the opponents guessing.

♠ A Q 9 8 4 ♥ K 8 7 3 ♦ 8 ♣ A 7 5

Bid 2♥ or 4♠. 2♥ shows your shape and promises a full opener. Your partner cannot pass this. At the least, he will return to 2♠. It is very reasonable to bid 4♠, too. Your hand is worth around 15 points. Further, by bidding 4♠, you keep them in the dark about your four hearts.

♠ A Q 9 7 5 ♥ 2 ♦ A K Q 5 4 ♣ Q 5

Bid 3♦. A jump shift shows interest in slam. If partner shows no interest, accept stopping in 4♠.

♠ K Q 10 7 5 4 ♥ 3 ♦ K Q 10 8 5 ♣ A

Bid 3♦. You need two aces to make slam and you need one ace to be marginally safe at the five-level. If partner returns to 3♠, bid 4♣, a cuebid. If partner signs off in 4♠, give it up.

♠ Q 10 5 4 3 ♥ 4 3 ♦ A K ♣ A J 6 5

Bid 4♠. You have 14 good high-card points and you have some shape. Game will mostly be worth bidding. Bid it without blabbing about your hand.

♠ K J 8 5 4 ♥ 3 ♦ 6 3 ♣ A K J 8 7

Bid 4♠. It will have a play. Don't bother showing your clubs and don't bother bidding 2♦. Give the opponents as little information as possible.

♠ K Q 8 7 4 ♥ K 4 3 ♦ A 3 ♣ A Q 3

Bid 4♠. 3NT could be right but which side of the table should play it? You are worried a bit about both red suits and partner might be vulnerable to a club lead. What is clear is that you should not look for a slam.

Since you will bid game on some hands with 12 high-card points and also on hands with 18 or 19 high-card points, the opponents will have to be lucky to sort it all out in time.

The important thing about the previous examples is that you can bid 4♠ with a huge range of hands.

In the following sequences, East has opened with one of a minor in third seat. What should he rebid, if anything, on these hands?

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	pass
1♥	pass	?	

♠ A 7 3 ♥ 8 4 3 ♦ K Q 10 7 5 ♣ 8 4

Pass. Your 1♦ bid was enterprising and acceptable. Your pass tells partner that you have a tolerance for his suit.

♠ 8 4 ♥ K 4 ♦ A K J 6 5 4 ♣ Q 7 2

Bid 2♦. The important thing about this bid is that it promises a full opener. If you did not have the ♥K you would have opened with 2♦ or even 3♦.

♠ K 7 4 ♥ 4 3 ♦ Q J 8 7 4 ♣ A Q J

Bid 1NT. Importantly, you never open and rebid 1NT without a normal opening bid.

♠ K 10 4 ♥ 8 3 ♦ A Q 7 6 4 ♣ J 10 3

You have an unbiddable hand. A 1NT rebid would show a better hand. Passing would suggest you have a tolerance for hearts. The best bid was missed earlier. You shouldn't have opened 1♦. You should have passed.

There are many additional auctions that could have been highlighted in this quiz. If you found the winning actions in these hands you are off to a very good start.

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