

SPLINTER REBIDS BY RESPONDER

Responder can also splinter on his second or third bid, using a double jump rebid in a new suit or an "unnecessary" single jump. The splinter shows strong slam interest and a singleton in the splinter suit. In competitive auctions responder may have mere game-going strength. Splinter bids can only be made at the three or four level. Similar bids at the five level are asking bids, described in section 6-5.

There are seven types of splinter bid by responder:

1) An "unnecessary" single jump to the three or four level (even in opener's minor) by responder after a raise by opener:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♥
2♥	3♠/4♣/4♦ - splinter

A 2♠, 3♣, or 3♦ bid would be forcing, so the "unnecessary" jump is a splinter. For the 4♣ bid, responder has a singleton club and slam interest: ♠A87 ♥KJ843 ♦A983 ♣4. Opener signs off in 4♥ with ♠Q2 ♥A765 ♦KJ52 ♣KQJ. With ♠K76 ♥AQ6 ♦KJ1074 ♣98 opener bids 6♦ and responder corrects to 6♥.

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
3♦	4♥ - splinter

2) A jump reverse after a notrump rebid by opener:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♥
1NT	3♠/4♣ - splinter, diamond support
	4NT - natural raise

Gerber is not used over a 1NT rebid by either partner. A 2♠ reverse would be forcing, so the "unnecessary" jump is a splinter bid, showing great support for opener's suit. For the 3♠ splinter, responder has ♠3 ♥AQ43 ♦A9763 ♣K86. A 3♣ bid would be forcing (in accordance with the rules of Checkback Stayman--see section 4-9), but a 3♠ splinter bid describes the hand better. With five hearts responder would have responded 3♠ originally (see Section 3-8, Splinter Responses to a Minor Opening). This splinter therefore implies a four-card heart suit.

3) A jump to four in an unbid suit other than spades, or in opener's minor, when opener has rebid notrump (except that 4♣ over a 2NT bid is Gerber):

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♦	1♠	1♣/1♦	1♥
1NT	4♣/4♦/4♥ - splinters	2NT	4♦ - splinter 4♣ - Gerber 4NT - notrump raise 4♠ - artificial raise

Gerber does not apply over 1NT rebids by opener or responder. Responder may be interested in slam with either suit as trumps, so opener bids the cheaper one to sign off. This splinter cannot be made in clubs if opener has rebid 2NT, because a 4♣ bid is Gerber in that case.

The 4♠ artificial notrump raise implies that responder's hearts need a good fit to be useful for a notrump slam (e.g., he has five hearts with only one of the top three honors). The usefulness of this conventional notrump raise precludes its use as a splinter bid.

4) A double jump after opener rebids his suit:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
2♣	3♦/3♥ is natural 4♦/4♥ - splinter

Even though a 2♦ rebid would be forcing and 2♥ not, for memory's sake we treat both bids the same. The splinters show good support for opener's suit and, as usual, slam interest.

In the following sequence, responder denies a singleton heart, which responder could have shown in a number of ways, including a splinter bid of 4♥ over 2♠. See section 4-6, Non-Jump Splinters, for another way.

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♦
2♠	3♣
3NT	4♠

5) A jump in the fourth suit at the four level (not the three level):

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
1♥	1♠ - spade suit 2♠ - Fourth Suit Artificial 3♠ - natural

The 3♠ bid has to be a natural game-forcing reverse, since 2♠ is FSA in this sequence. See section 4-10, Fourth Suit Artificial. Splinter bid examples:

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♠	2♣	1♠	2♥
3♦	4♥	3♣	4♦

These are splinter bids. Remember that three-level jumps in the fourth suit are not splinter bids. When a non-jump bid would be Fourth Suit Artificial, a jump has to be natural.

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♣
2♦	2♥ - FSA
	3♥ - natural
	4♥ - splinter in support of diamonds (or spades)

6) A jump in a new suit, when responder has previously made a non-forcing raise and then hears a new suit (not a notrump bid) from opener:

Opener	Responder
1♣	2♣
2♦	3♥ - splinter

Responder has a good hand and a great fit: ♠642 ♥3 ♦Q1087 ♣KQ542.

Opener	Responder
1♣	3♣
3♦	4♥

Responder has ♠J107 ♥3 ♦Q1032 ♣AQJ87. He could not show a major suit stopper, so he might as well make a splinter bid. Whether opener is merely showing a diamond stopper or has a diamond suit, this hand is well described by the splinter bid. If opener has ♠AK3 ♥98 ♦AK4 ♣K9652, he can bid the odds-on club slam. With the majors reversed, he would stop at five.

The following jump is not a splinter bid:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♠
2NT	4♥ - natural bid

Responder has a good spade raise, three spades, and five or six hearts. He must jump to 4♥ because 3♥, showing a weak three-card spade raise and five or six hearts (♠Q32 ♥K9873 ♦5 ♣9862), would not be forcing. See section 4-3, Rebids by Responder, for more on this subject. Had opener rebid 3♣ or 3♦, 4♥ would be a splinter bid, implying a good fit with opener's second suit.

7) A jump reverse by a two-over-one responder

8) A jump to four in opener's first-bid-minor after opener bids a new suit:

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠	1♣	1♥
2♦	4♣	1♠	4♣

These splinters show at least four-card support for opener's second suit, plus interest in slam. Note that you can splinter in a suit bid by opener only if it is an unrebid minor, and only at the four level. To make a forcing raise of opener's minor, bid the fourth suit (Fourth Suit Artificial, section 4-10) and then raise.