

## FORCING AND NON-FORCING SITUATIONS

### Responses to One of a Suit

1♣	1NT	3♠	Not forcing, but distributionally strong and invitational. Responder's hand is not suitable for a double.
1♥	P	3♥	Limit raises, invitational. See section 3-4.
1♠	P	3♠	
1♦	P	3♦	Limit raises, invitational. See section 3-5.
1♣	P	3♣	
1♣/1♦	1♠	2NT	Not forcing, as if responder were a passed hand. Bid 3NT with a stronger hand. Stoplight (section 4-12) applies. No Omnibus.
1♥	1♠	2NT	Omnibus response (section 3-10). With 11-12 HCP, bid a minor
1♦/1♥/1♠	2♣	2NT	Not forcing. Non-jump responses of 2NT are invitational, showing 11-12 HCP and stopper(s) in the opposing suit.. No Stoplight.
1♥/1♠	P/Dbl	3NT	Forcing, artificial strong raise. See section 3-11.
1♥	1♠	3NT	Forcing, artificial raise. Note the double jump. Single jumps to 3NT are natural bids.
1♥	3♠	4♣	Forcing. Non-game new suit responses by an unpassed hand are forcing.
1♠	2♣/2♦	4♥	A forcing splinter bid. See section 3-7, Splinter Responses to a Major Opening.

### Rebids by Opener

1♠ P	2♦ P	Not quite forcing. Responder can pass with a weak response and a singleton or void in spades.
3♠		
1♠ P	2♦ P	Forcing, and promises another bid even if responder bids 3♦.
3♣		

1♠ P 2♥ 3♣  
3♦

Also forcing, but does not promise another bid if responder bids 3♥. Here the bidding has been crowded, and opener may have planned a 2♠ rebid over a 2♥ response with something like ♠AK1074 ♥Q3 ♦AJ96 ♣42. A weaker hand should pass.

1♣ 1♦ 1♠ P  
2♥

Not forcing unless responder has five or more spades. He can pass with ♠KJ32 ♥7654 ♦Q85 ♣62. See section 4-3.

1♦ P 2♣ P  
2♠

Forcing. Reverses are forcing on a two-over-one bidder, and promise another bid unless responder merely rebids her suit or returns to opener's diamonds. A return to hearts, however, (e.g., 1♥=2♣=2♠=3♥) is forcing, as is a 2NT bid.

1♠ 2♣ 2♠ 3♣  
3♦/3♥

Forcing, a game try. A double of 3♣ would be takeout, with perhaps little interest in game.

1♥ P 2♦ P  
2NT

Not forcing, but with a long broken suit and a weak hand responder should bid 3♦ to sign off.

1♦ 2♥ 2♠ P  
3♣

Forcing, even if 2♠ was by a passed hand. A 4♣ bid would have been a splinter. Does not promise another bid (nor does 2♠).

1♦ 1♥ P P  
3♣

Not forcing, highly invitational

1♥ 2♦ 2NT P  
3♣

Normal force, not Stoplight (2NT not a jump)

1♥ P 2♣ P  
4♣

Forcing. Jump raises of a two-over-one minor suit response are forcing to game. If responder now bids 4NT, that is natural, showing a minimum hand such as ♠K83 ♥64 ♦Q1084 ♣AQ75

1♥ P 1♠ 2♦  
3♣

Not forcing, but strong

1♣ P 1♠ 2♥  
3♦

Forcing. Reverses at the three level are forcing, even after a one-over-one response.

1♠ 2♥ Dbl 3♣  
P

A forcing pass. If the doubler is not strong enough to keep the ball rolling, she should not have doubled--no matter how many hearts she has.

1♥ Dbl Rdbl P  
3♥

Not forcing, but the redoubler should pass only with a small singleton heart and a minimum redouble. Opener should bid 4♥ if able to make game opposite such a hand.

1♣ P 1♥ P  
2♣ P 2♠ P  
3♥

Not forcing. If opener has three small hearts and extra values, he must bid 4♥ (responder guarantees five in this sequence). A reverse by responder does not promise another bid if opener's next bid is discouraging.

1♣ P 1♦ P  
1NT P 2♠ P  
3♠

Forcing. Ruffing values in responder's hand ought to produce game even if opener has a minimum. A jump to 4♠ by opener would imply not only good spades but good clubs and a diamond fit. Can opener have good spades? Yes, because he is supposed to rebid 1NT with a minimum 4-3-3-3 hand: ♠KQ32 ♥1087 ♦Q32 ♣AK3. See Rebids by Opener, section 4-1.

1♣ P 1♥ P  
1♠ P 3♣ P  
3♥

Forcing, accepting the game try. Opener must pass 3♣ with ♠AJ97 ♥762 ♦63 ♣AQJ3. Exchange the ♥7 for the ♥Q and the 3♥ bid is okay. If this seems too aggressive, raise a 1♥ response to 2♥ instead of bidding 1♠.

1♥ P 1♠ P  
2♠ P 3♣ P  
3♥

Not forcing. Shows five or six hearts and only three-card spade support. To accept the game try, opener must bid something else, perhaps even 4♥.

1♣ P 1♥ P  
 1NT P 2NT P  
 3♥

Forcing, accepting the invitation to game and giving responder a choice of contracts. Opener no doubt has less than adequate trump support for hearts, since a good hand raises hearts immediately with J10x or better. He could have ♠A10 ♥972 ♦AQJ10 ♣K1092.

### Rebids by Responder

1♣ P 1♥ P  
 1♠ P 3♣/3♥

Not forcing. Bid 2♦ (Fourth Suit Artificial -see section 4-10) if stuck for a good bid with a game-going hand.

1♥ P 2♣ P  
 2♦ P 3♥

Not forcing, merely a heart raise. A bid of 2♥ would be a preference, not a raise.

1♥ P 1♠ P  
 1NT P 3♠

Forcing. After a 1NT rebid by opener, all three level jumps by an unpassed hand are forcing. Use Checkback Stayman (section 4-9) with an invitational hand.

1♦ P 1♥ 1♠  
 P P 2♣

Not forcing. When opener refuses to make a free rebid, a non-jump new suit by responder is not forcing unless it is a reverse.

1♣ P 1♠ P  
 1NT P 2♥/2♦

Not forcing. A new suit by responder after opener's 1NT rebid is weak (barring reverses), but 2♣ is Checkback Stayman.

1♣ P 1♠ P  
 2♣ P 2♥

Not forcing, but invitational. May be a stretch at matchpoints, when you can't risk missing a heart contract. Forcing at IMP scoring.

1♣ P 1♠ P  
 2♣ P 2♦

Forcing. Pass with no game interest.

1♣ P 1♦ P  
 2♣ 2♥ 2♠

Forcing. Reverses by responder are forcing, even in competition.

1♣ P 1♠ P  
 2♣ P 3♠

Not forcing. Responder's jump rebids in the same suit are not forcing unless opener has rebid 1NT or reversed (whereupon all jumps are forcing).

1♣ P 1♠ P  
2♣ P 4♣

Forcing

1♦ P 1♠ P  
2♣ P 2♥

Fourth Suit Artificial. See section 4-10.

1♠ P 1NT P  
2NT P 3♣

Both partners have made limit bids, so how can one of them start forcing?  
Responder has a long weak club suit, doesn't like notrump.

1♠ P 2♠ P  
2NT P 3♥

Not forcing. With a hand like ♠Q65 ♥KQ943 ♦8 ♣6542 responder must bid 4♥, not 3♥, which he would bid without the queen of hearts. This jump to 4♥ is not useful as a splinter bid, because slam is out of the question after a single raise and mere 2NT rebid. A minor suit rebid is somewhat of a signoff, weak hand, six-card suit.

1♠ P 2♠ P  
3♣ P 3♥

Forcing. Responder may not have a heart suit, and is perhaps making a trial bid with a holding such as KJx. The difference between this and the previous auction is that opener, with five spades and four clubs, is unlikely to have heart support. A 3♥ bid is therefore more valuable as strength-showing than suit-showing.

1♠ P 2♣ P  
3♣ P 3♠

Forcing. Responder shows too much for an original 2♠ raise and opener shows extra values by going to the three level. The logic of the auction says that game will be bid.

1♣ P 1♠ P  
3♣ P 3♠

Forcing. Whenever responder bids over a strong but non-forcing jump by opener, opener must bid again. The only way to stop short of game now is for opener to bid 4♣.

1♣ P 1♠ 2♥  
3♣ P 3♠

Not forcing. Opener has a good hand, but may not have been planning a jump to 3♣ over 1♠. If he was stretching, he can pass 3♠.

1♣ P 1♦ P  
2NT P 3♣

Forcing. See Stoplight, section 4-12.

1♣ P 1♠ 2♦  
2NT P 3♣/3♠

Not forcing, weak signoff. Stoplight does not apply when the 2NT bid is not a jump.

- 1♣ P 1♠ P  
2♦ P 4♣ Splinter bid in support of diamonds, not a club raise. Denies five spades. 3♦ would be invitational and 3♣ a weak preference, so responder must often resort to Fourth Suit Artificial (section 4-10) to keep the bidding going.
- 1♥ P 2♦ P  
2NT P 3♦ Not forcing. When the 2NT bid is non-jump, a repeat of the same suit is weak, warning that responder's suit may not run at notrump. Opener needs a diamond fit to go on. Any other three level bid by responder, including 3♥, would be forcing.
- 1♦ P 1♥ P  
3NT P 4♠ Forcing. This is a notrump raise, not a natural bid. Responder's hearts need a good fit to be useful for slam. A natural new-suit 4♠ bid is not available over a natural 3NT bid.
- 1♣ P 1♥ 4♦  
P P 4♠ Not quite forcing. Responder probably has a 4-5-1-3 hand, so opener can run to clubs or hearts if he lacks spade support.
- 1♦ P 1♠ P  
3NT P 4♥ Not forcing, but invitational. Do not rescue a 3NT bid with a very weak hand.
- 1♥ P 2♦ P  
3♣ P 3♦ Forcing. When opener voluntarily goes to the level of three, he promises to bid again even if responder merely rebids her suit. Had the 3♣ been made in competition (e.g., over a 2♠ overcall) 3♦ would not be forcing.
- 1♠ P 2♣ P  
2NT P 3♠ Forcing. Responder's hand is unlimited. He is probably offering a choice between 4♠ and 3NT, but he could even have slam in mind.
- 1♥ P 3♣ P  
4♣ P 4♥ Not quite forcing, but opener will seldom pass with this double fit.
- 1♠ P 3♥ P  
4♥ P 4♠ Forcing, since responder could presumably pass 4♥ with a minimum jump takeout.
- 1♣ P 1♠ P  
2♥ P 3♥ Forcing. When a reverse into a *major* gets raised, opener must go on unless the original response was 1NT.

- 1♥ P 2♣ P  
2♠ P 3♥ Forcing. A return to hearts at the level of three is forcing on opener, unless the original response was 1NT. Responder must have heart support and too much for a raise of 1♥ to 2♥.
- 1♦ P 1♠ P  
2♥ P 2NT Not forcing. Theoretically denies five spades, but might have five weak spades and strong clubs: ♠108765 ♥J2 ♦85 ♣AQJ9
- 1♥ P 2♣ P  
2♠ P 2NT Forcing, in view of the two-over-one response and opener's reverse. If opener had rebid 2♦, 2NT would not be forcing.
- 1♦ P 1♠ P  
2♥ P 3♦ Not forcing, weak signoff. Denies five spades.
- 1♦ P 2♣ P  
2♥ P 3♦ Also a weak signoff, despite the two-over-one response: ♠432 ♥8 ♦Q87 ♣AQ10874. A 3♣ rebid would also be weak, and a 2♠ rebid is Fourth Suit Artificial (see section 4-10).
- 1♠ P 2♦ P  
2♠ P 3♣ Forcing. New suit bids at the three level by either partner are usually forcing.
- 1♣ P 1♠ 2♥  
P P 3♦ Forcing, despite opener's pass. Without enough to force, responder can double for takeout. See section 9-2, Competitive Doubles.
- 1♣ P 1♠ P  
2♠ P 3♣ Forcing. After a raise by opener, a return to opener's suit is usually forcing.
- 1♣ Dbl 1♠ P  
2♠ P 3♣ Not forcing, in view of the failure to redouble. Responder has psyched, possibly, but opener must not pass when holding four spades.
- 1♥ P 1♠ P  
2♠ P 3♥ Forcing. If responder has ♠AK93 ♥Q87 ♦42 ♣J432 she must respond 2♣ instead of 1♠, or she may find herself in this forcing situation.
- 1♠ P 2♥ P  
3♥ P 3♠ Forcing. Don't bid 2♥ with a four-card suit, spade support, and 11 points or so--or you might find yourself in this forcing sequence. With five hearts and a doubtful hand, just pass 3♥.
- 1♠ P 2♣ P  
2♥ P 3♥ Not forcing: ♠2 ♥10987 ♦A65 ♣KJ873

1♣ P 1♥ P  
 1NT P 2♠ P  
 2NT P 3♣ Forcing. After a 1NT rebid, a reverse followed by a raise is a forcing sequence. Use Checkback Stayman with an invitational hand.

1♣ P 1♥ P  
 2♣ P 2♠ P  
 2NT P 3♣ Not quite forcing. Responder must raise to 3NT, jump to 4♣ (promising short diamonds), or bid 3♦, with a game-going hand.

1♦ P 1♥ P  
 2♣ P 2♠ P  
 3♣ P 3♥ Forcing. After Fourth Suit Artificial (2♠) only a direct raise (4♣ over 3♣), a rebid of the fourth suit, or a notrump bid is non-forcing.

1♦ P 2♣ P  
 2♦ P 2♠ P  
 3♣ P 3♦ Forcing. Responder could presumably have passed 3♣ (or bid 3♦ over 2♦) with insufficient values to force.

1♣ P 1♥ P  
 1♠ P 1NT P  
 2NT P 3♣/3♥ Forcing, accepting the game try. Responder cannot say she likes notrump and then say she wants to stop in a suit. The 3♣ bid could be based on something like: ♠A9 ♥J9732 ♦J75 ♣QJ7. A 3♥ bid should be based on a good heart suit. (3♣ or 3♥ implies nervousness about diamonds).