

## Responder's Second Bid

Once your partner has opened, you've made a response and your partner has rebid (hopefully expressing both the *strength* and the *shape* of their hand) you will usually be in a position to set the final contract.

Remember the opener's likely ranges:

With a minimum hand (12-14) opener will have bid as cheaply as possible.

With an invitational hand (15-17) opener is likely to have jumped one level.

With a very strong hand (18-20) opener may well have bid game already.

### When you definitely have points for game

If you can deduce that you and your partner likely hold twenty five HCPs or more, you should bid game. With a fit in a major, you should bid game in that major. With no fit, you should bid Three No Trumps. If you have a fit in a minor, you should choose between game in the minor or game in No Trumps.

Opposite a minimum, you should bid game with 12+ points.

Opposite an invitational hand, you should bid game with 9/10 or more points.

Opposite a very strong hand, you will definitely be in game and with 12+ points you should consider slam.

Clearly what **you** do as responder is heavily dependant on opener following the rules to describe **their** hand.

### When you definitely don't have points for game

When you are confident that game is out of reach, you should **give preference**. Usually, that means going back to opener's first bid suit, although sometimes you will have a clear preference for their second suit (remember that **they** are likely to have at least five cards in their first suit and only four in their second – with an equal number, you should prefer their first).

With an extremely weak responding hand and a good six card suit, you can give preference to your own suit (by rebidding it at the cheapest level). If One No Trumps is available, you can bid that with a very weak hand but a stopper in the unbid suit. It might be the only biddable making contract!

### When you *might* have points for game

Sometimes, you may still be unsure about whether game is in reach. If you don't bid game and don't give preference, any other bid is **invitational**. It says "We might be able to make game, I'm not sure. Reconsider your hand within the boundaries that you've already set – with a good one, bid game. With a bad one, pass.

### Some Sample Hands

Suppose our partner opened One Club, we responded One Heart and Our partner rebid One Spade. What should we bid holding the following hands.

♠ JT

♥ AJ952

♦ J732

♣ 32

Bid Two Clubs  
(Game isn't possible.  
Give Preference)

♠ QT2

♥ QJ963

♦ Q975

♣ 9

Pass  
(Game isn't possible.  
Give Preference)

♠ K82

♥ AJT4

♦ Q983

♣ JT

Bid Two No Trumps  
(Game is possible. This  
is an invitational bid.)

♠ 82

♥ AQT953

♦ T462

♣ 7

Bid Two Hearts  
(Giving Preference to  
**our** suit)