

Reverses (Advanced!)

Assuming the opponents are silent, the first part of an auction is relatively straightforward – if we have twelve High Card Points or more, we will open the bidding and if we have six Total Points or more, we will respond to our partner's opening bid. It is incumbent on the Opener to make their **second bid** as descriptive as possible. This is because although opener usually has the good hand, it is usually responder who has to make the decision about whether to bid game and which game to bid.

Opener's second bid should show the following priorities:

1. a major suit fit for responder (if it exists)
2. they should bid no trumps (with a balanced hand)
3. they should bid a suit to show everything else (an unbalanced hand with no fit)

In addition to bidding out our shape, our second bid should show our strength. The fit showing bids and no trump bids are relatively straightforward (jump with good hands and make minimum bids with minimum hands) but in the case of bidding out our unbalanced hands it is more complicated. To be able to deal with the stronger hands, we need to be familiar with the concept of a **reverse**.

What is a reverse?

A reverse is a suit rebid by opener which is of a higher rank and a higher denomination than the opening bid. For example:

1 Heart : 2 Clubs	1 Diamond : 1 Spade	1 Diamond : 2 Clubs	1 Club : 1 Heart	1 Club : 1 Spade
2 Spades	2 Hearts	2 Spades	2 Diamonds	2 Diamonds

Another pictorial way to think about it:

When we open the bidding, there is an imaginary barrier at 2 of our suit. Any rebid which is greater than 2 of our suit is a reverse.

What's the problem? (ie Who cares?)

The problem with making a reverse bid is that usually, with weak hands, responder is going to give preference to your first suit. Because you are showing an unbalanced hand, you must have five of the first suit and four of the second, so with a poor fit in both, they will try and put you back to the first suit. By reversing, you are making them do this at the 3-level.

What does a reverse mean?

The rule we will adopt is that reversing shows not just the indicated shape, but also 16 or more High Card Points. It says "Partner, if you hate both my suits and have a bad hand, it's fine to go back to my first suit at the 3-level because I have a stronger than average hand."

What if we want to reverse but have a weak hand?

Now that we have agreed to only reverse with a strong hand, there will be times when we cannot show our second suit. We will need to suppress a suit (occasionally missing a superior fit but staying out of trouble more often). In the following hands, consider your opening bid and rebid if your partner responds One Spade.

♠ J	♠ 2	♠ 7	♠ 7
♥ KJT3	♥ AKT3	♥ T93	♥ AQJ4
♦ AT982	♦ AQT76	♦ AKQJ	♦ QJT
♣ QJ3	♣ J63	♣ QJ983	♣ AQJ93