



# Adventures in Bridge

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## *This Week in Bridge*

### **(101) Raising Responder's Suit**

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Level: 2

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#### **General**

When we open the bidding with a suit, partner will frequently respond with a new suit at the 1-level. Before we open with 1-suit (often 1-minor) we should take time to plan our rebids if partner responds with a new suit at the 1-level (especially if he responds 1-Major). Let's focus on when we have a fit for Responder and look at what each of Opener's rebids show.

#### **Buckets**

We will examine Opener's options based on their values (bucket.)

#### **Minimum Opener**

With 12-14 points and support for a partner's suit Opener will raise.

*Example*

1♦ 1♠

2♠

This raise can be made with either a balanced or an unbalanced hand.

Occasionally with 12-14 pts and only 3-card support Opener will raise Responder's Major because they have no other convenient rebid (usually an unbalanced hand trying not to reverse.)

*Example*

1♦ 1♠

2♠

With 3-4-5-1 shape and about 12 pts we would still raise to 2♠.

*Note: We also frequently raise 1♣ - 1♦ - 2♦ with 3-card support since we would have likely opened 1♦ with 4-card support.*

## Extra Values

With a balanced 15-17 points, Opener would have started with 1NT, so that is not a possible hand we need to consider. Thus, if Opener makes a jump raise of Responder's suit, then they have 15-17 points and either an unbalanced or semi-balanced hand.

### Example

1♣ 1♠  
3♠

A 3-level raise will normally have shortness. Since we have found a fit Opener can count their shortness as "support points" (not just HCP) since they are ruffing in the short side (either a 4-4 fit or 4-5+ fit.)

*Note: If we are only in a 4-4 fit this ruffing may not be as valuable as a long side suit would be in dummy (Opener's hand) and we will likely need to set up the dummy.*

In some cases there will be room for Opener to make a "mini-splinter" (by making a jump reverse), below 3 of Responder's suit. In this case, Opener will be able to show their actual shortness.

### Examples

1♣	1♠	1♣	1♥	1♦	1♠
3♦/♥		3♦		3♥	

*Note: With some more shapely hands (15-17 HCP + Length Points + Ruffing Values) Opener will bid even more (go to the 4-Level - see below.)*

## Strong Hands

When Opener has a large hand with a fit (4-card support) they will jump to a high level to show their hand. With a balanced hand (18-19 balanced that originally planned to rebid 2NT), Opener rebids 4-Major.

With an unbalanced hand Opener can show their shortness with a splinter (double jump shift.)

### Example

1♣ 1♠  
4♦/♥

This shows about 18-20 points worth of playing strength, 4-card ♠ support and shortness (singleton or void) in the rebid suit.

### Special “Illogical” 6-4 Rebid

Now that we have discussed double jumps in Responder’s suit and double jump shifts as splinters we only have a double jump rebid remaining to consider. This is sometimes called the *Illogical Rebid* since with only a long minor Opener would not go beyond 3NT, so a jump to 4-minor (Opener rebidding their suit at 4-level) must have a special meaning.

This special meaning for a 4-level rebid is to show a distributional hand with a 6+card minor and 4-card support for Responder’s suit. This is a hand that has enough playing strength for game (and often slam interest) but not purely HCP.

*Example*

1♣ 1♠  
4♣

♠ AJ87  
♥ A5  
♦ 6  
♣ AQJ943

When Opener rebids 4-minor, Responder will further explore slam if they have a good trump holding and/or fitting cards for Opener’s long/strong suit – this can be a valuable tool for finding trick-oriented slams!

### Conclusion

This has been an overview of Opener’s options for raising Responder when they have a fit. Opener should focus on evaluating their hand and showing their bucket (as well as fit) to Responder. Using the tools we’ve discussed, Opener can effectively describe their hand and thus leave Responder in a good position to judge how to proceed with the auction!