

The Elevator Game

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<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/ElevatorGame.pdf>

What is the elevator game?

Example 1:

Neither vul.

W	N	E	S
			1♣
1♦	1♥	2♦	2♥
P	P	3♦	P
P	3♥	P	P
4♦	dbl	all pass	

The elevator game is an opponent pushes a button, and the player goes up. When East bid 2♦, he must have known what he would do over 2♥? His hand did not change. However, East may argue that he may be allowed to play 2♦, and if he bids 3♦, he will never find out.

It is hard to win the elevator game with a lower ranking suit or when vulnerable or when partner is an overcall. Therefore, a player bids the limit of his hand right away and gives the last guess to the opponents. Kit Woolsey discussed this at length in his book, *Matchpoints*.

Example 2: Bidding the Limit of the Hand

E-W vul.

♠KJ42	♥K6	♦A1092	♣K109		♠7	♥AJ543	♦864	♣AJ73
♠10963	♥Q1072	♦KQ5	♣86					
♠AQ85	♥98	♦J73	♣Q542					

W	N	E	S
P	1♦	1♥	1♠
3♥	??		

North could pass because his ♥King seems suspect, but then he hides four-card support. If he bids 3♠, they are down in 4♠. If he passes, does he raise his partner's inevitable double or 3♠ bid? What does South bid over 3♥? He does not know if North passed because of a lack of points or a lack of spades. Any time the opponents are guessing even if they guess correctly, the better it is in the long run.

W	N	E	S
P	1♦	1♥	1♠
2♥	2♠	P	3♠
all pass			

If West bids 2♥ because he hopes to play it there, the auction is simple for North and South. Communication is allowed between them. South knows North has four spades because he did not use a support double which is on at the two-level but not at the three-level. Furthermore, North can bid 2♠ with just a minimum opening hand.

2♥ allows communication, and 3♥ leaves a guess. When the opponents (North and South) have opened and replied, not many games are missed (by East and West),

and the few that are missed are worth the price of being competitive. With a distributional hand 4♥ still may be bid if partner jumps to 3♥.

The opponents may ask if 3♥ is weak. All that means is that they are lost and hoping for a bidding clue from the opponents. If West is really weak, then East has more because East and West have the points which North and South do not have.

3♥ is based on the [Law of Total Tricks](#). A player supplements the law with his judgment.