

Game Forcing Bids

By Warren Watson
Kootenay Jewel Bridge Club
Last Revised November 19, 2020

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

The Following Bids are Game Forcing

- Two over one game forcing auction
- Fourth suit forcing
- Jump shift by the opener
- Reverse at the three-level by the opener
- Reverse by the responder
- New suit at the three-level
- Accepting an invite
- Pulling 3NT for 4m

Two Over One Game Forcing Auction

These are only on without competition and not by a passed hand.

1♠ 2♣, 2♦, 2♥

1♥ 2♣, 2♦

1♦ 2♣

Does 2m over 1♥ deny four spades?

No, but the minor is longer. Four-card suits are bid up the line.

Do the following auctions deny a side suit of four cards by the opener?

| W | N | E | S |
|----|---|----|----|
| 1♠ | P | 2♣ | P |
| 2♠ | | | No |

| W | N | E | S |
|----|---|------------------|-----|
| 1♠ | P | 1NT ^F | P |
| 2♠ | | | Yes |

| W | N | E | S |
|----|---|----|-----|
| 1♥ | P | 1♠ | P |
| 2♥ | | | Yes |

Fourth Suit Forcing

I was discussing whether we played FSF with a partner in San Antonio and an octogenarian at my table scoffed “When is the Fourth suit not forcing.”

Busy auctions are always forcing. When one is weak, choose one of partner’s suits and be done with the auction. When there is a misfit one ends the auction. The first one to realize there is a misfit passes. One does not scramble trying to save partner.

Fourth suit forcing to game is better than forcing one round. Either way, bidding the fourth suit does not show that suit and asks partner to make a delayed raise if he has one. A delayed raise is made with one less card than a direct raise.

See the books *Two Over One Fourth Edition* or *Simply Two Over One*. The bridge index also has an entry.

Jump Shift by the Opener

A jump rebid is only 16 or 17 HCPs. With 18 HCP, the opener must jump shift to force game. It does not even need to be a real suit especially if it is a minor, but if it is not a real suit, it must be a stopper. A jump shift in a Two Over One game forcing auction is a splinter because the game force is already on.

Holding

♠32 ♥AKQ432 ♦AQ3 ♣K3

The player opens 1♥ in first seat. If partner responds 1♠ or 1NT, 3♥ cannot be the rebid because that is only invitational. The opener must jump shift into 3♦. A jump in Notrump would deny six hearts.

See the books *Two Over One Fourth Edition* or *Simply Two Over One*. The bridge index also has an entry.

Reverse at the Three-Level by the Opener

A reverse by the opener at the two-level is 16+ and is forcing one round. A reverse at the three-level is game forcing.

| W | N | E | S |
|----|----|----|----|
| | | | 1♣ |
| P | P | 1♥ | 2♣ |
| 2♥ | P | 3♥ | 3♠ |
| P | ?? | | |

Should North raise with the following?

♠Q876 ♥987 ♦987 ♣J32

Yes. North must raise to 4♠. When partner bids this strongly, let him be the one to pass the auction out. He could have the following.

♠KJ109 ♥3 ♦3 ♣AKQ9854

What does North bid with the following?

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| ♠Q87 ♥9873 ♦987 ♣J32 | 4♣ |
| ♠9874 ♥987 ♦987 ♣J32 | 4♠ |
| ♠987 ♥9876 ♦9876 ♣J3 | 4♣ |

After a Reverse

Reverse shows an Ace better than an opening hand and is **forcing** one round. I prefer Lebensohl over a reverse where 2NT, a relay to 3♣, is the main bid showing responder does not want to go to game. However, in standard methods:

| | | |
|----|------------|--|
| 1♦ | 1♠ | |
| 2♥ | 2NT | to play |
| | 3♣ | FSF, GF, likely no ♣ stopper |
| | 2♠, 3♦, 3♥ | to play unless partner has more than a minimum reverse |

Reverse by the Responder

South skips a four or five-card diamond suit to bid a four-card major unless he is a full opener.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|---|-----|---|----|
| W | N | E | S | W | N | E | S |
| | 1♣ | P | 1♦ | | 1♣ | P | 1♦ |
| P | 1♥ | P | 1♠ | P | 1NT | P | 2♥ |

| | | | |
|---|----|---|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| | 1♣ | P | 1♦ |
| P | 1♥ | P | 2♥ |

Any reverse by the responder is game forcing.

| | | | |
|---|-----|---|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| | 1♣ | P | 1♥ |
| P | 1NT | P | 2♠ |

New Suit at the Three-Level by Either Partner

In Standard American, a new suit at the two-level shows 10+ points and promises a rebid. While a new suit at the three-level is forcing to game. The exception is when the three-level follows 1NT response or a negative double.

What about the auction?

| | | |
|----|----|----|
| N | S | |
| 1♠ | 2♥ | |
| 3♣ | | GF |

Therefore North, with a minimum 12 to a bad 14) has to bid one of the following:

| | | | | |
|----|----|---------------|----|-----|
| 1♠ | 2♥ | | 1♠ | 2♥ |
| 2♠ | | could be five | | 2NT |

Accepting an Invite

If a player accepts an invite, he tells partner something on the way 3NT and it is forcing.

The exception is the following.

| | | | |
|---|----|---|-----|
| W | N | E | S |
| | 1♣ | P | 2NT |
| P | 3♣ | | |

3♣ is just a better place to play. The lack of four-card majors poses a problem to Notrump.

After a Jump in Notrump

The way to play a partscore after partner jumps to 2NT is to pass 2NT. We do not worry about 6 opposite 18 most of the time.

| | | |
|-----|----|---|
| 1♦ | 1♥ | |
| 2NT | 3♣ | NMF (asks about 4♠'s then 3♥'s then 5♦'s then 3NT) |
| | 3♦ | Slamish |
| | 3♥ | Highly invitational-partner responded with 5 or a bad 6 |
| | 3♠ | New suit at the three-level=GF- no ♣ stopper |

Partner Signs off in 2NT

New suit at the three-level is GF

A rebid of an existing suit is suggesting a better place to play than 2NT

| | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| 1♥ | 1NT | |
| 2♣ | 2♦ | 2♦ is a signoff |
| 2NT | 3♦ | 2NT shows extra values, but 3♦ is also to play |
| 3NT | | “Partner, did you think my bidding box was missing 3NT” |

The following is the only way to invite with a five-card major when XYZ or NMF are not available.

| W | N | E | S |
|----------|----|---|-----|
| | 1♣ | P | 1♥ |
| P | 2♣ | P | 2NT |
| P | 3♥ | P | 4♥ |
| all pass | | | |

North accepts the invite showing three hearts on the way to 3NT or 4♥.

Partner pulls 3NT

Pulling 3NT for 4m is not only this forcing, but it is also a slam try.

We do not worry whether 3NT that has been bid normally makes or not unless it is doubled for penalty.

The following are also slam tries.

| W | N | E | S |
|---|-----|---|----|
| | 1♣ | P | 1♦ |
| P | 1♥ | P | 1♠ |
| P | 1NT | P | 2♣ |

| W | N | E | S |
|---|-----|---|----|
| | 1♣ | P | 1♦ |
| P | 2NT | P | 3♣ |