

Funbridge Masterclass: Passed Hand Bidding

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Topics for this Lesson

- Recognizing a Passed Hand
- Defining a Passed Hand
- Bidding as a Passed Hand
- Bidding opposite a passed hand
- Passed Hand Tools
 - Reverse Drury
 - Fit Jumps
 - Warning about a French tool that comes up in the practice

They Opened

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1 ♦ ??

YOU



AQ



KQ84



K932



T62

Not Really a Passed Hand

We have a full opening hand with the wrong shape to act. We cannot make a takeout double due to our lack of spade support and we don't have enough strength for 1NT.

It is really important not to mistake this pass as showing a passed hand. You can see from this example that we do not deny an opening hand with our pass.

Correct Bid:

P

They Opened

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1 ♥

??

YOU



AKQ84



AK32



T62

Not Really a Passed Hand

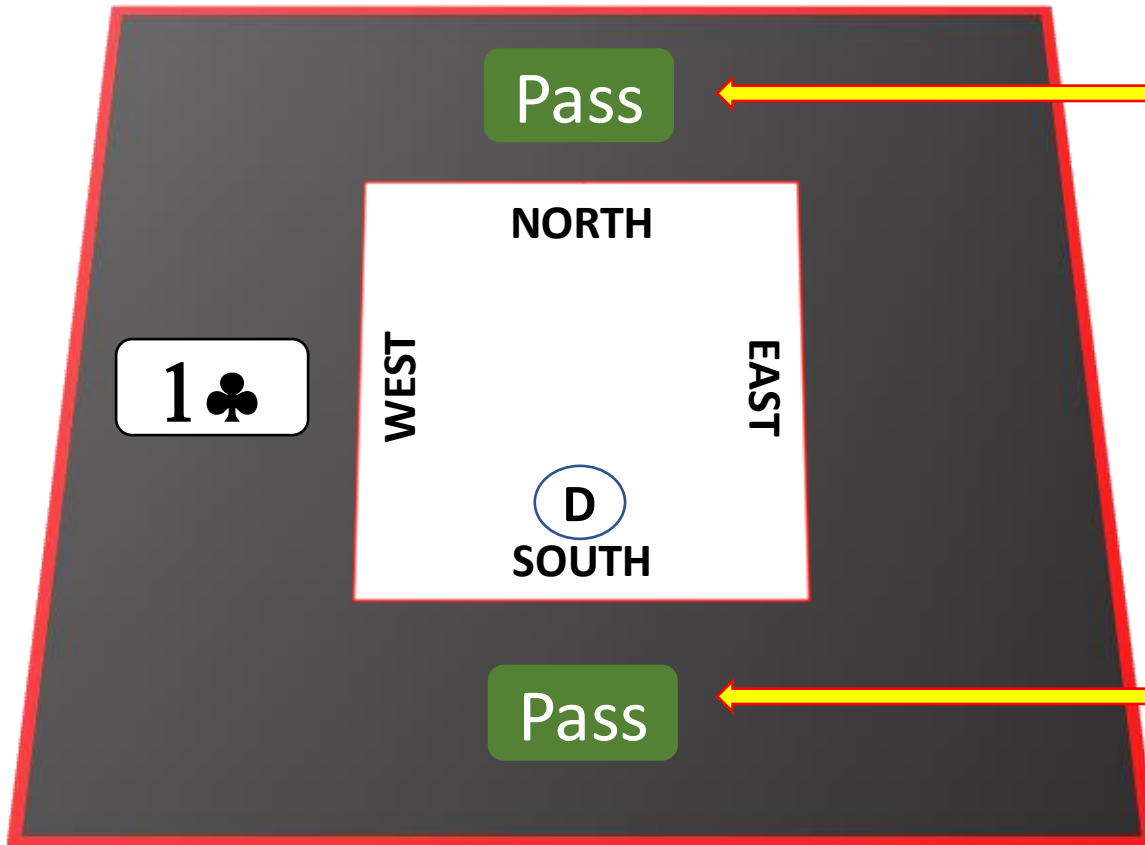
This is an even more extreme example of how strong you can be to pass over the opponent's opening bid.

You cannot consider partner to be a passed hand when they fail to act over the opponent's opening bid.

Correct Bid:

P

Recognizing a Passed Hand



Not a Passed Hand

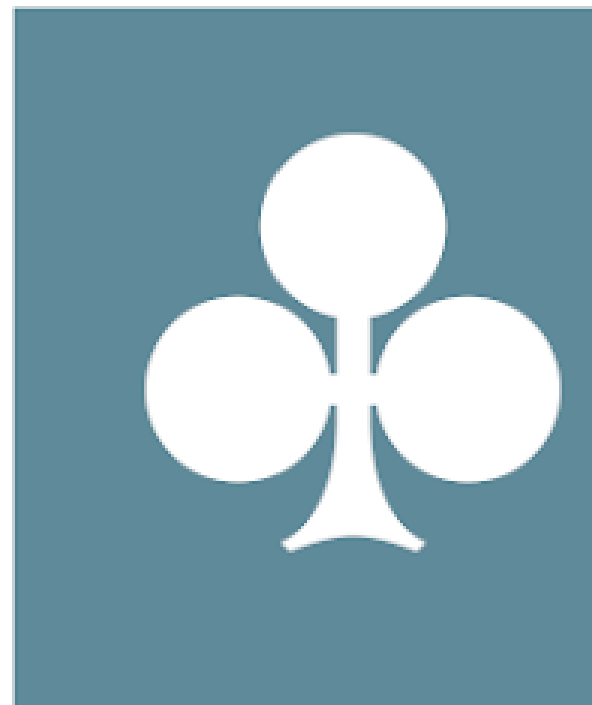
May still have a good hand with no good bid to enter the auction.

Passed Hand

Weaker than a good 11 point hand

How Light Do We Open?

By understanding our minimum strength for opening, we
understand our maximum as a passed hand



12 Points ??

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

??

YOU



QJ4



Q943



K76



KJ2

Open all 12 Point Hands

If you never pass a 12 point hand you will be fine. I am sure you can argue that there are 12-counts that aren't worth opening, but they are so rare that it is easier not to over-think it.

When my partner fails to open, I think they have fewer than 12 points.

Correct Bid:

1♣

11 Points ??

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

??

YOU



KQT4



43



76



AQ863

Good Quality Suits, Easy Rebid

This 11 point hand is good enough to open for a number of reasons.

- 1) We have the “Rule of 20”
- 2) We have an easy rebid
- 3) Our points are all in our long suits

Rule of 20: High Card Points + Length in your two longest suits.

Here we have 11 HCP + 5 clubs + 4 spades

Correct Bid:

1♣

11 Points ??

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

??

YOU



Plan Your Rebid

This 11 point hand is almost as good as the previous one.

- 1) It has a 5 card suit
- 2) The points are concentrated in our long suits.

Unfortunately, we can foresee a big problem. If we open 1♦ and our partner responds a likely 1♠, we have an uncomfortable rebid.

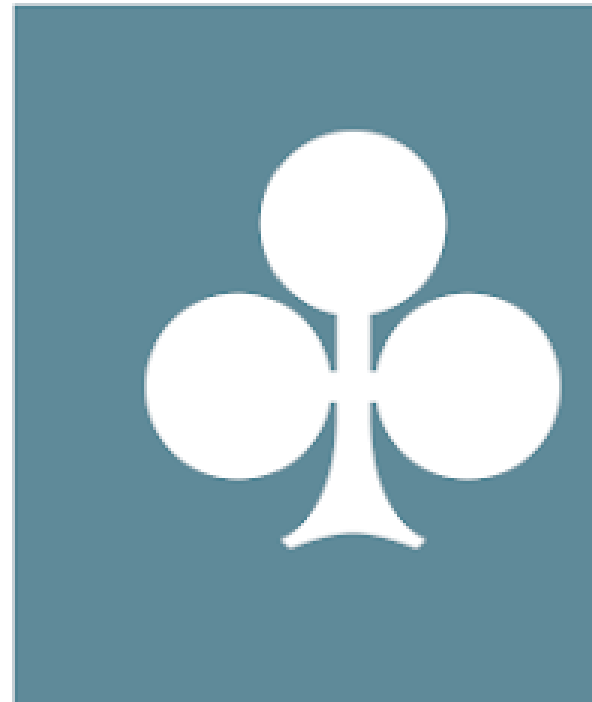
This hand would be perfect to make a takeout double of spades later in the auction.

Correct Bid:

P

Max Passed Hand

We have already passed, 9-11 is our new maximum



Two Ways to Raise

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1♣

1♠

P

P
??

YOU

♠ A43

♥ A32

♦ J9542

♣ 43

9 to 11 Is Our Maximum

We have two ways to raise partner to 2♠. A simple 2♠ raise would show 3 card support and 6-9 points. A cuebid of 2♣, now limited by our initial pass would show 9-11.

Note the overlap of 9 points in both ranges. Not all 9 point hands are the same.

For example ♠Q94 ♥K432 ♦J64 ♣K87 is not worth a cuebid.

Correct Bid:

2♣

Double or 2H?

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

1 ♠

2 ♣

??

P

YOU



K3



AJT82



8653



43

What Are You Waiting for?

As an unpassed hand, a 2/1 in competition promises 5+ Cards and 10+ Points.

Once we have limited our hand with our initial pass, we can get away with bidding on slightly weaker hands.

This example only has 8 points, but they are very special points. The king of spades is incredibly valuable, and the rest of our points are all complementing each other in our long suit.

Correct Bid:

2♥

Two Ways to Raise

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

2♦ 2♠ P ??

YOU

♠ QT43

♥ AQ76

♦ 42

♣ 843

Useful Points + 9 Card Fit

Once again, we are faced with a choice between a simple raise and a cuebid.

A simple raise can look like :

♠Q74 ♥A732 ♦87 ♣8653

The example on the left has an extra trump and a likely extra trick with the queen of hearts.

Having limited our hand with our initial pass, partner knows not to expect a good 11 points for our cuebid.

Correct Bid:

3♦

Partner Cuebids

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

1♥

P

P

1♠

P

2♥

P

??

P

YOU

♠ **KQ743**

♥ **7**

♦ **AJ98**

♣ **843**

Best Hand We Can Have

Partner was well aware that we were a passed hand when they cuebid 2♥.

They would not be inviting us to game if a perfect 10 count was not enough to make game.

When they have a random 13 points, they can recognize that game is impossible and just make a simple raise.

The cuebid conveys game interest opposite our range.

Correct Bid:

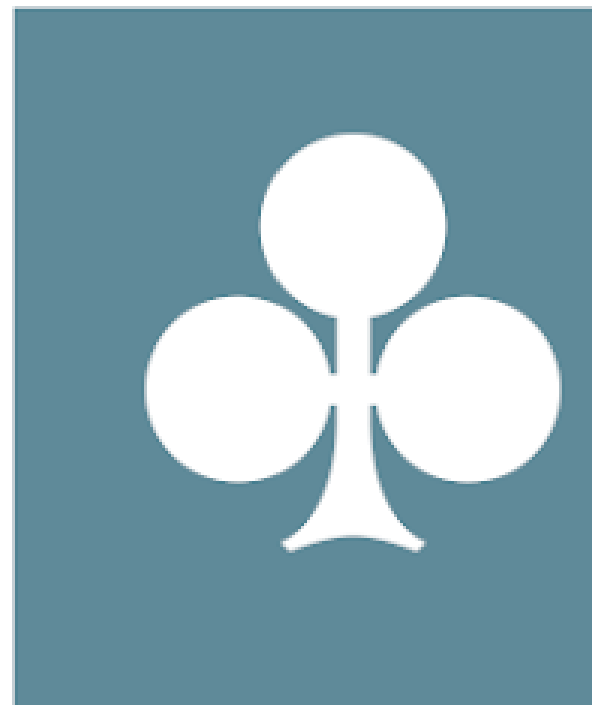
4♠

Bidding as a Passed Hand

- 9 to 11 is your new maximum
 - Be aggressive to cuebid raise as a passed hand
 - Be aggressive to bid with (10+) 2/1 in competition to show your own suit
 - If partner invites you to game, you should bid game when you have 10-11, you can't have 12

Passed Hand Partner

Partner is a passed hand, how does that change things?



Passed Hand Partner

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | YOU |
|------|-------|------|-----|
| | P | P | 1 ♠ |
| 2 ♣ | 2 ♥ | P | ?? |

YOU

 **AQ983**
 **76**
 **KQ42**
 **97**

No Longer Forced to Bid

We must recognize that partner's bid is not forcing, due to their initial pass.

We can see that we do not have the combined strength for game. Our alternative action of 3 ♦ has no guarantee of improving the contract.

Instead we just pass 2 ♥ and be happy we have a 7-card fit and around half the points.

Correct Bid:

P

Responder Has Passed

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | YOU |
|------|-------|------|-----|
|------|-------|------|-----|

| | | | |
|---|----|---|----|
| | P | P | 1♦ |
| P | 1♠ | P | ?? |

YOU

♠ **AJ3**

♥ **J763**

♦ **AQ84**

♣ **43**

No Game In Sight

When we opened the bidding in 3rd chair, we didn't expect to make a game. We opened because we have an above average hand with prospects for finding a major suit fit.

Given that we have at least a 7 card spade fit, there is no reason to continue bidding. While 1NT pays 10 more points, our doubleton club gives us the potential to get a ruff in the short hand.

Correct Bid:

P

Responder Has Passed

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | YOU |
|------|-------|------|-----|
| | P | P | 1♦ |
| P | 1♠ | P | ?? |

YOU

♠ **K832**

♥ **Q63**

♦ **AQ84**

♣ **43**

No Game In Sight

With four card support we are also allowed to pass partners response.

Pass is a good way to keep partner from inviting us on a hand that we know we do not rate to have a game.

Partner will only be expecting 3♠ when we pass, so it will be our responsibility to compete to 2♠ should the opponents fight for the part score.

Correct Bid:

P

Battling For The Partial

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

| | | | |
|---|----|---|----|
| | | | P |
| P | 1♦ | P | 1♠ |
| P | P | X | ?? |

YOU

♠ QJ832

♥ A63

♦ 84

♣ 974

Partner Has a Fit

We showed 4+ spades when we responded to partners opening bid. In order for partner to be comfortable passing 1♠, they need at least 3 spades.

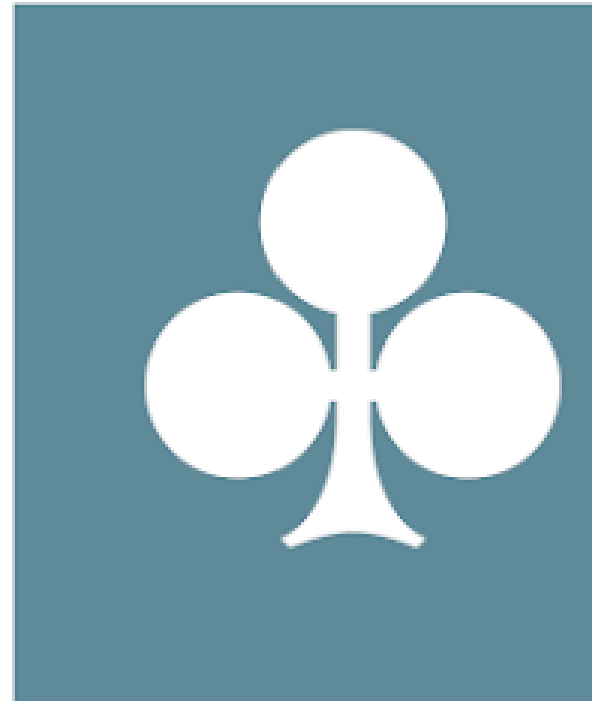
Given that we have 5 spades, we know we have an 8-card fit. It is our job to compete to 2♠. Partner will not be able to bid 2♠ if they only have a 3-card fit.

Correct Bid:

2♠

Opening Light in Third Seat

Partner will not bid game. When should we use that to our advantage?



3rd Seat Opening

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

P

??

YOU

 **AKJ87**

 **43**

 **6532**

 **97**

Partner Won't Hang You

When partner is a passed hand, we are not at risk that they will drive to game.

This gives us some flexibility to make more aggressive bids.

The purpose of this opening bid is to get partner to lead spades, but also to make the opponent's lives more difficult.

This is very low risk. If partner bids a 2/1, we can simply pass.

Correct Bid:

1 

3rd Seat Opening

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

P

??

YOU



A3



T8732



AQ92



97

Don't Want a Heart Lead

We don't open light just for the sake of opening. It is only a good idea to open light when you want partner to lead the suit you are opening.

This hand has decent playing strength but opening 1♥ will very often lead to the opponents declaring a spade or notrump contract and partner leading a heart.

Correct Bid:

P

3rd Seat Opening

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

P

??

YOU



JT43



KT4



AQT3



97

One Bid and Done

This is a situation where we can safely open 1♦ and pass no matter what partner's response is.

By opening 1♦ we are hoping to buy a contract at a low level. Whether partner responds, 1♥, 1♠, 1N or 2♣, we are comfortable passing and playing in NT or in at least a 7-card trump fit.

Correct Bid:

1♦

3rd Seat Opening

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

P

??

YOU



Q3



KQ42



KJ53



832

Plan Your Rebid

This hand has a little more high-card strength than the previous one, but is not worth an opening bid.

The main reason we need to pass is that we have no rebid if partner responds 1♠. We cannot pass partner in a potential 6 card fit.

You may survive a 1NT rebid, but given the vulnerability you are putting yourself at risk with not a lot of upside.

Correct Bid:

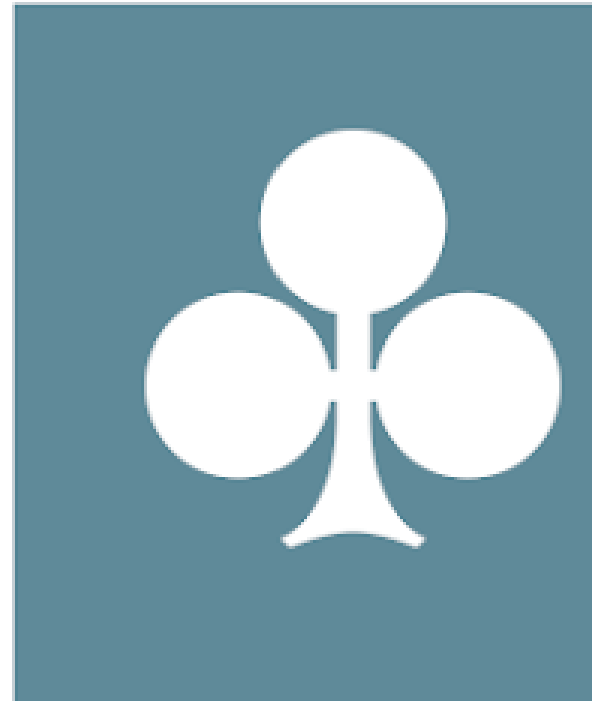
P

Opening Light in Third Seat

- We open all normal opening bids.
- Partner being limited to 11 means they will not force to game. It also means that we will not have to worry about partner making a forcing bid.
- Reasons to Opening Light
 - You want the suit lead that you are opening
 - You have complete control of the auction and see that no matter what partner responds you are happy.
 - You have a nice distribution hand that wants to compete.

Fourth Seat Opening Bids

When we have a close decision of whether to open, how do we decide?



4th Seat Opening

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

P

P

??

YOU



AJ954



864



KQ2



97

Who Will Win the Auction?

When we are deciding whether to open in 4th seat on a close hand, you have to look to the spade suit.

When the deck is split (each side having around 20 HCP) the spade suit will win the auction. Whether to open light depends on your spade length.

The Rule of 15

Take your HCP and add it together with the number of spades in your hand. If they add to 15 you should open the bidding.

Correct Bid:

1 ♠

4th Seat Opening

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

P

P

??

YOU



A3



42



Q875



AJ532

The Rule of 15

On this hand we have 11 HCP. We may even have opened this hand in 1st seat if we weren't vulnerable.

In 4th seat opening this hand is a losing decision. It is too likely the opponents will compete with the spade suit and you will struggle to out compete them.

11 HCP + 2 spades = 13, not enough to open light.

Correct Bid:

P

4th Seat Opening

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

P

P

??

YOU



A3



KQT842



K75



32

2 Level 10-14 in 4th Seat

This hand doesn't have the rule of 15 but it has a lot of playing strength.

If we simply had a weak hand with 6 hearts, we would never open the bidding. We would pass the hand out and be happy about it.

Since we don't need weak twos in 4th chair, instead we play them as intermediate jumps.

By opening this hand 2♥ we get our hand strength across and block the opponents from having an easy way in with the spade suit.

Correct Bid:

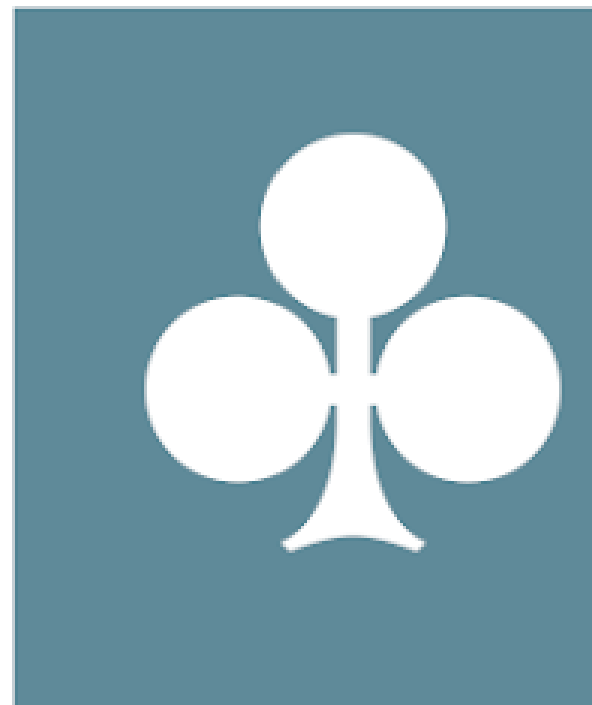
2♥

Fourth Seat Opening Bids

- When you have a close opening bid in 4th chair, use the rule of 15 to decide whether to open. Add your high card points with the number of spades in your hand. If it comes to 15 you should open.
- Do not use the rule of 15 to stop you from opening completely normal opening hands. When you have 13 HCP your partner may have 10-11 and it will rate to be your hand even without the spade suit.
- We do not play weak two bids in 4th seat. With weak hands you would simply pass out the hand. Instead our 2 level opening bids show 10-14 points with 6 of our suit.

Reverse Drury

A universally played tool for passed hands that helps you stay low when you have a fit for partner.



Two Ways to Support

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

1 ♠

P

??

P

YOU

♠ **K43**

♥ **AQ92**

♦ **92**

♣ **9874**

Drury Lets You Stop Lower

We want to show a limit raise for partner in spades, but we want to allow partner some leeway for having opened light in 3rd seat.

We use the 2♣ bid as a passed hand to show a 3 card maximum passed hand (9-11).

This convention is a must-play convention once you get to an advanced level.

Correct Bid:

2♣

Partner Has Interest

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

| | | | |
|---|-----|---|-----|
| | | | P |
| P | 1 ♠ | P | 2 ♣ |
| P | 2 ♦ | P | ?? |

YOU

♠ K43

♥ AQ92

♦ 92

♣ 9874

Easy to Stop

Our 2♣ bid showed the upper end of our range. Now that partner has shown game interest with 2♦, it is time to convey our minimum.

First we step on the gas, now we take our foot off the pedal.

Correct Bid:

2 ♠

Drury From Partner

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | YOU |
|------|-------|------|-----|
| | P | P | 1 ♠ |
| P | 2 ♣ | P | ?? |

YOU

♠ **AQ432**

♥ **97**

♦ **J4**

♣ **AQ74**

Give Partner Some Leeway

Our 14 points is enough to convey some game interest to partner. Given that partner has shown 9-11, we can't commit to game.

By bidding 2 ♦ we are telling partner that game is still possible while staying low.

I tend to think of 2 ♦ as "I have game interest" rather than "I have an opening hand".

Correct Bid:

2 ♦

Partner has Interest

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

1 ♠

P

2 ♣

P

2 ♦

P

??

P

YOU

♠ KJ65

♥ 76

♦ AQT2

♣ 985

A Maximum Goes to Game

This hand is significantly stronger than our minimum for Drury.

Once partner bids 2 ♦, it is our responsibility to make sure that we get to game.

Partner will expect us to drive to game with a maximum and four card support.

Correct Bid:

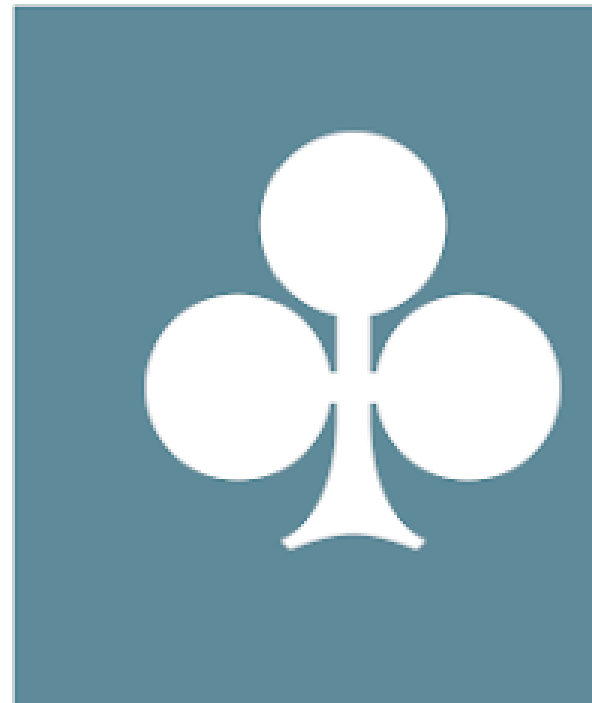
4 ♠

Drury - Important Points to Remember

- Be Aggressive to Use Drury
 - It is easy to stop at the two level
- 2♦ shows game interest, not just an opening hand
 - Opener should use 2♦ to give responder a way out if they stretched

Fit Showing Jumps

A commonly played tool by passed hands to show a fit for partner while also showing a specific hand type.



Should We Use Drury?

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

1 ♠

P

P
??

YOU



K843



AQ942



652



2

Fit Showing Jumps BPH

Fit showing jumps are a very popular method these days. I play them in a few situations, one of them is “By Passed Hands.”

A Jump in a new suit by passed hand shows a 9 card fit for partner, with a good quality side 5 card suit.

The point of the fit jump is to convey around invitational values and a possible source of tricks. This tool is very precise and can help you find slams.

The key is we no longer need to play 3♥ as natural and invitational, because 2♥ shows 10 points and 5+ Hearts.

Correct Bid:

3♥

Is this a fit jump?

WEST

NORTH

EAST

YOU

P

1 ♠

P

P
??

YOU

♠ **AK43**

♥ **T9542**

♦ **Q32**

♣ **2**

Need a Good Quality Side Suit

The most important component of a fit jump is to have a good quality side suit. Typically 2 of the top 3 honors.

The reason we show fit jumps is to discover a secondary source of tricks. If we have 5 trump tricks and 5 tricks in a side suit we can often make very light slams. We can use the side suit to discard losers and possibly make a slam with just 6 trump tricks, our 5 side suit tricks and an ace.

If we make fit jumps with bad suits, partner will look at Kxx and get excited! This hand is better for simply using Drury.

Correct Bid:

2♣



Warning! French Expert Tool

I do not play this tool, but it comes up in the practice hands.

A response of **2NT** over a **1-major opening** shows a **nine-card fit** and a **singleton**.

After 2NT opener can ask “where is your singleton” by bidding 3 Clubs.



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