

WINNING BRIDGE CONVENTIONS

REVERSES

Patty Tucker



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eBooklets on Conventions Useful with Strong Hands

2NT Rebid by Opener

Jump Shift

Reverses

Strong 2♣ Convention and 2♦ Waiting

Cuebidding Controls

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Strong Hands

Strong Hands

Introduction

One of the most common difficulties new players face is in bidding strong hands. 17+ HCP hands occur less than 10% of the time, so new players don't have the opportunity to bid and practice them very often.

In these pages we will be considering not only the technical aspects of the bids but which bid should be chosen to achieve the best result.

An Overview

Standard American bidding uses an opening bid of 2♣ to show one of three hands:

- A balanced hand with 22+ points;
- A suited hand with 21+ points; or
- A one-suited or two-suited hand with 8 ½ to 9 (or more) “playing tricks”.

Other hands opener might have are reasonably strong hands which are not strong enough to open 2♣, but which can be shown by a different opening bid or at opener's rebid:

- A balanced hand with 20-21 HCPs in which case opener will open 2NT; or
- A balanced hand with 18-19 HCPs in which case opener will *rebid* 2NT; or
- A five-card or longer suit and 19 HCPs, in which case opener will *rebid* 3NT; or
- A two-suited (or three suited hand) of 17+ HCPs in which opener's long suit is of lower rank in than his second suit in which case opener will make a "Reverse" at his first rebid; or
- A two-suited (or three suited hand) or 18+ HCPs in which opener's higher ranking suit is longer or equal in length to his second suit in which case opener will make a "Jump Shift" at his first rebid.

In every case opener must think carefully about how the auction might develop, before he makes his opening bid. When you open 2♣ you start your auction a full level higher. Sometimes you run into difficulty describing your hand to your partner or eliciting the information you need in order to make an informed decision as to where you might want to play the contract.

The balanced hands are very straightforward. With Stayman and Jacoby Transfers available you almost never have difficulty getting to the optimum contract

when you open 2NT or when you open 2♣ and rebid 2NT. Also the jump to 2NT showing the 18-19 point hand holds few traps.

Distributional hands are another matter. Two-suited hands are generally easier to describe if you can start at the one level. Three-suited hands are almost impossible to describe if you start the bidding with 2♣.

As we look at each of these strong bids in the following chapters keep these thoughts in mind and think not only of what the opening bid might be, but also what the rebid will be; how you think the auction will develop. These are the questions you should ask yourself:

- What do I need from responder in order to make game?
- Is it likely that an opponent will overcall or double if I open at the one level?
- Am I the first person to bid or is partner a passed hand?
- If I open 2♣ will I be able to easily describe my hand to partner?

Reverses

Reverse

A Reverse occurs when:

- The opening bid is one of some suit; then
- Responder bids a new suit or NT at the one-level; and then
- Opener's rebid is a new suit, bid at the two-level, that is **higher in rank** than the suit that was opened.

This rebid promises 17+ points, the first suit will be five-cards or longer, the second suit bid will be four-cards or longer (with only two exceptions which we will discuss later) and *if responder bid a major suit, denies four or more cards in responder's suit.* **Opener promises to make at least one more bid.**

Opener will have a hand which looks something like this:

Hand 1 – ♠42 ♥AQ32 ♦AKJ54 ♣A2

18 HCPs, five diamonds and four hearts. The opening bid would be 1♦ and opener's rebid (unless responder made a bid at the two-level or bid 1♥) would be 2♥.

Hand 2 – ♠AKJ2 ♥AKJ54 ♦4 ♣K73

19 HCPs, five hearts and four spades. The opening bid would be 1♥ and opener's rebid (unless responder made a bid at the two-level or bid 1♠) would be 2♠.

Hand 3 – ♠2 ♥A7 ♦AJ94 ♣AKJ987

17 HCPs, six clubs and four diamonds. The opening bid would be 1♣ and opener's rebid (unless responder bid 1♦) would be 2♦.

In what bidding sequences is a new suit, at the two-level, higher in rank than the suit opened not a Reverse?

It is not a Reverse if responder's first bid was:

- A new suit at the two level; or
- A raise of opener's suit; or
- A bid of 2NT or 3NT; or
- A strong jump shift.

What should responder bid after opener's Reverse bid?

After a reverse, responder will make his most natural bid. In general:

- A new suit by responder is forcing and shows 4+ cards in that suit;

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Reverses

Bridge students quickly discover that ‘basic’ bidding’ will only get them so far. If they really want to improve, it is necessary to master a certain number of bidding conventions, and be prepared both to play them and play against them. This ebooklet covers the Reverses convention.



PATTY TUCKER (Dunwoody, Georgia) is an ABTA Master Bridge Teacher and cofounder of Whirlwind Bridge and Atlanta Junior Bridge. Her success at the bridge table culminated in her victory in the 2000 Baldwin Flight A North American Open Pairs with long-time bridge partner Kevin Collins. Patty and Kevin were married in 2006.