

U3ABC11 Practice Session: Opening & Rebidding One-suited and Two-suited Hands

Welcome!

Here is a list of all the hands that you could play in today's Practice Session. It tells you useful stuff about them, like the cards in each hand, the High Card Points, the "correct" bidding and lead. **Don't feel bad** if you bid the hands a bit differently, or ended up in a slightly different contract. Each week there's something new, it will take you a while to get the hang of all of it.

We're here to help it all make sense, you will make mistakes, but we're always happy to explain or answer questions. Remember, you're playing with other people who are just starting out, too. Let's have fun together!

-Ed

This week's lessons – in brief

Opening unbalanced hands

Your main lessons this week started by explaining how all unbalanced hands with 12-19 points are opened with one of a suit and can be split into four main types:

Shape:	One-suited (6+ suit and no 4+ suit)		Two suited (5+ suit and 4+ suit)	
Points:	12-15	16-19	12-15	16-19
Type:	A	B	C	D
Planned Rebid:	2x	3x	1y / 2y	2y / 3y

(You bid a 5-4-4-0 hand as a two-suited hand with a choice of second suit; you can ignore 4-4-4-1 hands for now.)

Responding and rebidding

They then went on to explain your partner's responses and your second bid, or **rebid**:

- Weaker single-suited hands are shown by a rebid of your suit e.g. 1H 1S 2H
- Weaker two-suited hands are shown by a rebid of your second suit e.g. 1H 1S 2C
- Stronger single-suited hand are shown by a jump rebid of your suit e.g. 1H 1S 3H
- Stronger two-suited hand can either be shown by a rebid of the second suit "above the barrier" (e.g. 1H 1NT 2S), or by a jump rebid of the second suit if it's below the barrier (e.g. 1H 1S 3C).

(The barrier is one higher than your first bid. So if you open 1H, the barrier is set at 2H.)

But these rebids are what you PLAN to rebid at the outset; partner's response to your first bid may require a rethink and change of plan.

Additional (Advanced) Discussion

In these notes, **anything in green** is a bit more advanced, so it's optional reading for the adventurous!

The Hands

North East South West

1♥ Pass 2♥ Pass
4♥ Pass Pass Pass

♠ T95	♠ AKQ2
♥ 653	♥ 7
♦ KJ96	♦ T832
♣ Q97	♣ J865
	♠ J86
	♥ 9842
	♦ Q754
	♣ KT

Board: 1 Dealer: North Lead: ♠A #14

With 18 high card points (HCP) and a 5 card major (which is REALLY solid), North's bid is easy, 1H. They're two-suited, so plan to rebid Clubs on the second round – with a jump to show their 16-19 point count.

With a bare 6 high card points (HCP), South might be tempted to bid 1NT, but they have 4 card support for their partner's major, so raising it is a MUCH better bid; 2H shows 6-9 points and 4 card support.

After South's 2H bid, North knows that between them they have at least 24 high card points and 9 trumps; the "missing" point doesn't matter much when they can see an easy seven tricks in their hand, so they bid 4H

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

North could open 1H with a lot less (12 points and a dismal 4 card suit); the 1H (or 1S) opening is right for a wide range of hands; North's SECOND bid will clarify their strength.

As South is raising a trump suit bid by partner, and they have four trumps, they can add an extra point (a Shortage Point) for their doubleton, but it makes no difference to their call.

East South West North

1♥ Pass 2♦ Pass
2NT Pass 3NT Pass
Pass Pass

♠ Q75	♠ K62
♥ 87	♥ KQJT
♦ AKJT5	♦ Q7
♣ J65	♣ KQT9
	♠ AJ943
	♥ 6432
	♦
	♣ 8743

Board: 2 Dealer: East #104

East has a balanced hand with 16 HCP and two 4-card suits, so opens their higher-ranking Heart suit, planning to rebid 1NT to show their point count. The 1H bid shows 12-19 HCP and 4 Hearts.

(If they were unbalanced, they'd rebid their second suit, 2C.)

West has 11 HCP and a nice 5-card Diamond suit, so bids 2D – showing 10+ HCP and 4 Diamonds. Forcing.

East rebids 2NT as planned, showing 15-16 HCP and a balanced hand. They know they have enough points for 3NT, but 2NT leaves partner room to bid again – they might have more to say. Both partners know that game is likely, they can both count those points!

West adds up their points, making at least 26, so bids 3NT with confidence.

South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		
	♠ Q64		
	♥ KJ9		
	♦ AKT5		
	♣ 753		
♠ JT97		♠ K832	
♥ A		♥ 742	
♦ 8762		♦ J94	
♣ KJT4		♣ Q92	
	♠ A5		
	♥ QT8653		
	♦ Q3		
	♣ A86		

Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: ♠J #2707

South has 12 HCP and a 6-card major in an unbalanced hand, so opens 1H. This shows 12-19 HCP and 4 Hearts. To show their points (12-15) and length (5+), they plan to rebid 2H – this also denies a second 4+ suit.

North has 13 HCP so expects to bid to game, but can't support partner's Hearts (yet) with just 3. Better to bid their longest suit – Diamonds – and get partner to describe their hand further. Bidding a new suit at the 2 level shows 10-15 HCP and 4 cards, and is forcing for one round.

South now knows they have at least 22 HCP, but that isn't enough for game! They bid 2H, showing 5+ Hearts and 12-15 HCP, as planned.

North now knows that partner has at least 5 Hearts, so their 3 Hearts are enough to bid game in Hearts as long as they have the points. They can see at least 25 HCP, so raise to 4H.

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
	♠ 4		
	♥ 9763		
	♦ K62		
	♣ A8765		
♠ QT96		♠ KJ873	
♥ AKJT		♥ Q52	
♦ AJ5		♦ T43	
♣ KJ		♣ Q9	
	♠ A52		
	♥ 84		
	♦ Q987		
	♣ T432		

Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: ♦7 #2970

West has 19 HCP and two 4-card majors in a balanced hand. With equal length majors, you open 1H, to make it easy for partner to raise (with 4 Hearts) or bid 1S (with 4 Spades). They plan to rebid 3NT to show their shape and 19 points (you don't plan to bid your second suit in a balanced hand).

The 1H bid just shows 12-19 HCP and 4 Hearts.

East has 8 HCP but only 3 Hearts, so can't raise partner's suit. They bid 1S to show their 4 card major and 6-15 HCP. This bid is forcing for one round.

Change of plan! West knows they have at least 25 HCP and 8 Spades, so bids game (4S) with confidence.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

The doubleton KJ is difficult to value. You could value it as 5 points (3 for the K, 1 for the J and 1 for the doubleton), but most players would take at least one point off.

North	East	South	West
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		
	♠ AKQJT8		
	♥ A64		
	♦ 8		
	♣ Q32		
♠ 92		♠ 64	
♥ KQ32		♥ T98	
♦ T3		♦ J9765	
♣ KJ976		♣ A85	
	♠ 753		
	♥ J75		
	♦ AKQ42		
	♣ T4		

Board: 5 Dealer: North Lead: ♥T #2120

North has 16 HCP and a good 6-card Spade suit in an unbalanced hand, so opens 1S. This shows 4 Spades and 12-19 HCP. They plan to jump rebid their Spades to show 16-19 points and 6+ trumps.

South has 10 HCP but doesn't have 4-card support for partner's major, so bids their longest suit, 2D. Bidding a new suit at the 2 level shows 10+ HCP and a 4-card suit.

North adds up their points, making 26+. With such a strong trump suit, they don't need much support from partner, so they jump to 3S as planned. A jump rebid shows 16-19 points and 6+ trumps; it is a game invitation (not a game force), it's asking partner to bid 4S if they have at least 2 Spades. (Both partners can count 26+ points, so they are unlikely to stop short of game.)

South has 3 Spades and a really nice Diamond suit, so is happy to raise to 4S.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

I think many players would bid 4S over the 2D bid, rather than leave the decision up to partner. Even if partner has 0 Spades, North should still be able to draw trumps with such a strong suit.

East South West North

1 ♠ Pass 1NT Pass
 2 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

♠ KQ
 ♥ AT63
 ♦ J5
 ♣ 98654

♠ AT98652
 ♥ 7
 ♦ AK98
 ♣ J

♠ J743
 ♥ KQJ2
 ♦ 732
 ♣ AT

Board: 6 Dealer: East Lead: ♥K #1540

East has 12 HCP and a 7 card Spade suit in an unbalanced hand, so they open 1S (showing 12 HCP and 4 Spades, denying a similar length holding in Hearts e.g. 4H+4S or 5H+5S). They could plan to rebid 2S to show their length, or show they are two-suited by rebidding 2D. Hmm.

West has 7 HCP and NO Spades – a terrible fit. 1NT is the obvious bid, showing 6-9 points and denying 4 cards in Spades.

East hears the bad news. In principle they could make 4S with a lot of luck, but with limited HCP (18-21) and no idea whether partner has 0, 1, 2 or 3 Spades, it looks grim. 1NT looks like a terrible contract with your two singletons, so East bids 2S which is a sign-off bid; West must not bid again.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

When you look at the hands, E-W will probably lose one Heart, one Club, no Diamonds and two Spades, making 3S. The only way to make 4S is to set up the Clubs quickly and discard the losing 7H on the second round of Clubs – you lose 2 Spades and 1 Club. Risky!

In principle, East should rebid 2D over 1NT, to show that they are two-suited. This would show five Spades and four Diamonds and allow West to pass or bid 2S, depending on the fit. However, East has SEVEN Spades, not five, so West's decision would be based on misleading information. I'd bid 2S in this situation.

South West North East

1 ♥ Pass 1NT Pass
 Pass Pass

♠ Q7
 ♥ 62
 ♦ KJT83
 ♣ QT93

♠ JT983
 ♥ K
 ♦ Q94
 ♣ K765

♠ A642
 ♥ J7543
 ♦ A62
 ♣ A

Board: 7 Dealer: South Lead: ♠J #2485

South has 13 HCP and a (rather weak) 5-card major in an unbalanced hand, so they open their long suit, 1H. (They have a second suit but are unlikely to bid it, as a bid of 2S would be above the barrier and show strength they haven't got.)

North has 8 HCP, not enough to bid their longest suit (2D would show 10+ points), they can't support Hearts with just two cards, they can't bid Spades with just two cards (!), so 1NT is the only sensible bid (showing 6-9 HCP). This bid denies 4 cards in Hearts and 4 cards in Spades and allows South to bid again – they might have a 19 point hand!

South now knows they don't have enough points for game (only 19-22) and have at most 8 Hearts (5+3) or 7 Spades (as partner has bid 1NT, not 1S). Probably safest to pass 1NT, but expect a bumpy ride...

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

For South, the singleton Club is worrying (but at least it's an Ace) as Defense could have a lot of Clubs! Putting the wimpy Heart suit on the table (in Dummy) is also worrying. Tempting to bid 2H even though you'd need to make one more trick. If you look at the hands, 1NT is somewhat safer, mainly because East is unlikely to lead their singleton King of Hearts against 1NT!

While South might be tempted to bid 2S "to give partner a choice" that would be insane. You already know partner has less than 4 Spades. AND Spades rank higher than Hearts, so 2S is bidding above the barrier – to show a strong hand!

West North East South

1 ♣ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
 2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
 Pass Pass

	♠ 2	
	♥ QT82	
	♦ QT97	
	♣ KJT9	
♠ KJ98		♠ AQT7
♥ 3		♥ A54
♦ A85		♦ K63
♣ A8653		♣ 742
	♠ 6543	
	♥ KJ976	
	♦ J42	
	♣ Q	

Board: 8 Dealer: West Lead: ♣Q #2691

West has 12 HCP, a 5-card Club suit and a 4-card Spade suit in an unbalanced hand. They bid their longest suit, Clubs, even though majors are generally preferable, don't lie to your partner! They plan to rebid Spades, their second suit, if possible but they're too weak to bid above the barrier, so can't rebid 2S.

East has 13 HCP so game is likely. In NT? Even though their hand is balanced, they bid their 4-card Spade suit before choosing NT, just in case partner has four Spades. This 1S bid shows 6-15 points and 4 Spades. It's forcing, so East will get another chance to bid, to clarify or choose the contract.

West has a good fit in Spades (4 cards including 2 honours) but doesn't know East's point count yet (6-15!), so bids 2S to show the fit. This indicates 4 cards in Spades and 12-15 points. This bid is not forcing.

Now East has the good news about the fit, they can bid game in Spades; if West had bid anything else, they could probably bid 3NT.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

As a general rule, the person who knows more about their partner's hand is better placed to choose the contract. That's usually the responder, not the opener.

North East South West

1 ♥ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
 2 ♥ Pass 4 ♥ Pass
 Pass Pass

	♠ T94	
	♥ KJ9752	
	♦ 7	
	♣ AK6	
♠ AQ5		♠ 732
♥ A83		♥ 64
♦ KT52		♦ J843
♣ 732		♣ Q985
	♠ KJ86	
	♥ QT	
	♦ AQ96	
	♣ JT4	

Board: 9 Dealer: North Lead: ♣5 #2702

North has 11 HCP and a decent 6-card heart suit in an unbalanced hand. This is just enough to open 1H, but it's a bit aggressive, as it promises 12-19 HCP and 4 Hearts. They're single-suited and weak, so plan to rebid 2H.

South has 13 HCP and only 2 Hearts, so can't raise partner's suit. Game is very likely, they need to make a forcing bid. They bid 1S to show their 4-card major at the lowest level, indicating 6-15 HCP, 4 Spades, and less than 4 Hearts. It's forcing for one round, so they can show their points on the next bid.

North still has a weak hand, but South's bid is forcing; they must bid. They can't support partner's Spades with 3 cards, but their Heart suit is long enough to bid again. So they rebid 2H bid as planned, showing 5+ Hearts and 12-15 points.

South thinks that game ought to be on with 25+ HCP, but hasn't found a fit. 3NT is a bit tempting but with a minimum of 7 Hearts, 4H seems safer, so that's the bid they chose.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

I'd prefer to play this hand in 3NT, even without seeing all the cards. What do you think?

East South West North

1♠ Pass 4♠ Pass
Pass Pass

♠ Q9642 ♥ K8 ♦ K ♣ QT853	♠ KJ8753 ♥ A5 ♦ AQ5 ♣ J6
♠ AT ♥ Q9632 ♦ J963 ♣ 74	

Board: 10 Dealer: East Lead: ♣7 #3421

East has 15 HCP and a 6-card Spade suit in an unbalanced hand, so opens 1S (showing 12-19 HCP and 4 Spades). They're single-suited, so plan to rebid 2S to show 5+ trumps and 12-15 points.

West has 10 HCP and 5-card support for Spades, including an honour. They can add 3 more points (Shortage Points) for their singleton and doubleton, making 13 points – enough for game in Spades.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

West's two kings could easily turn out to be worthless, if Defence have the Ace of Diamonds and Ace of Hearts. While we've added 3 points for the shortness of these two suits, some players would take points off honours in short suits. Luckily, partner has both those aces. Phew.

As a rule, K, Q and J in suits bid by your partner are worth more; K, Q and J in suits bid by the opposition are worth less – as they're less likely to be supported.

South West North East

1♣ Pass 3♣ Pass
3NT Pass Pass Pass

♠ T82 ♥ QJ32 ♦ KJ632 ♣ 2	♠ K76 ♥ A76 ♦ 94 ♣ KJT76
♠ J943 ♥ T95 ♦ QT7 ♣ A98	
♠ AQ5 ♥ K84 ♦ A85 ♣ Q543	

Board: 11 Dealer: South #113

South has 15 HCP and a balanced hand, so bids 1C (their longest suit), planning to rebid NT. Their 1C bid shows 12-19 HCP and 4 Clubs.

North has 11 HCP and excellent support for South's Club suit, so wants to bid strongly. Their jump to 3C shows 4 Clubs and 10-12 HCP, but is not forcing. If partner is really weak they can pass.

South now knows they have enough points for game in NT and maybe enough points for game in Clubs. But their Club suit is short and they have a balanced hand with stops in all the suits; 3NT looks like a much easier contract and may well score better.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

If North had a 4-card major to bid, they'd bid that instead of 3C, as a change of suit bid is forcing (so they won't miss game) and game is a lot easier in a major than a minor.

North could add a Shortage Point for their doubleton, playing in Clubs, but that wouldn't change their bid.

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
	♠ 532		
	♥ K843		
	♦ Q874		
	♣ K5		
♠ AQ87		♠ KJT96	
♥ Q		♥ A52	
♦ A93		♦ K52	
♣ JT743		♣ 62	
	♠ 4		
	♥ JT976		
	♦ JT6		
	♣ AQ98		

Board: 12 Dealer: West Lead: ♥J #597

West has 13 HCP in an unbalanced hand, so bids their longest suit, 1C. This shows 4 Clubs and 12-19 points. They intend to rebid their second suit, Spades, if they can – they may not be strong enough.

East has 11 HCP and 5 Spades, so bids 1S. This shows 4 Spades and 6-15 points. Note that East is strong enough to jump, but there's no need to do that (yet) as their bid of 1S is forcing for one round; this leaves more room for bidding.

West has 4-card support for partner's suit, so can raise it – but how high? Partner might only have 6 points, making a total of 21 (even with two 2 Shortage Points for their Heart singleton). West raises partner to 2S, showing 4-card support and a "weaker" (12-15 point) hand.

East can see game is possible in Spades, but it's a close call. Partner has shown 12-15 points and 4 Spades, so they have a minimum total of 9 Spades and 24 points between them. With so many small cards, they're a bit pessimistic and bid 3S as a game invitation, rather than bidding 4D.

West has a few more points than the minimum for their bidding, so raises 3S to game, 4S.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

West's singleton Heart is worth two Shortage Points if you're playing in a suit, but most players would reduce the value of a singleton Queen from 2 to 1, as it's unlikely to make a trick and may not help make a trick.

Even if you had 4 Clubs and 4 Spades, you usually open 1C and bid Spades if you get the chance.

North East South West

1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

	♠ AQJ		
	♥ KQJT9		
	♦ Q54		
	♣ A8		
♠ T65		♠ 9432	
♥ 5		♥ A8432	
♦ AJT97		♦ K6	
♣ J975		♣ T2	
	♠ K87		
	♥ 76		
	♦ 832		
	♣ KQ643		

Board: 13 Dealer: North Lead: ♦J #1353

North has a strong, balanced hand with 19 HCP. The way to show that is to bid 1 of a suit, then on the second round, jump to 3NT. So North starts by bidding their longest suit, 1H. However, as this is a major and 5 cards, game could be in NT or in Hearts. Let's see...

North's bid shows 12-19 HCP and 4 Hearts – they're much stronger than the minimum, but can show that with their second bid; if partner has less than 6 points then they will pass and North won't get to bid again, but then they didn't have enough points for game anyway.

South has 8 HCP, so is not strong enough to bid their long suit, 2C (bidding a new suit at the two-level shows 10+ points), doesn't have 4 Hearts, so can't raise partner to 2H, so their only sensible bid is 1NT (showing 6-9 HCP). This bid denies 4-card support for Hearts, and denies 4 cards in Spades. A lot of information for partner to use.

North now knows they have enough points (25+) for game in Hearts or NT, but which? They chose 3NT, as partner might have 0 Hearts!

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

Some partnerships take a different approach to a 3NT hand with a 5-card major, rebidding 3H/S, not 3NT. This is (by agreement) a Game Force: partner must bid 3NT if they have 0-2 cards in the suit, or bid 4H/S if they have 3.

Once again, the strongest hand is going to be dummy. Rats

North really does have a maximum hand for a 1H opening, is very keen to bid game, but isn't quite strong enough for a strong opening bid that FORCES game (we haven't taught you these yet).

South's 1NT bid does NOT promise a balanced hand.

East South West North

1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass
 3♣ Pass 3♥ Pass
 4♥ Pass Pass Pass

♠ J76
 ♥ 632
 ♦ QJT9
 ♣ 432

♠ 8542
 ♥ KQJT95
 ♦ K85
 ♣

♠ KQ
 ♥ A8
 ♦ A76
 ♣ KJ8765

♠ AT93
 ♥ 74
 ♦ 432
 ♣ AQT9

Board: 14 Dealer: East #2692

East has 17 HCP and a decent 6-card club suit in an unbalanced hand. They opens 1C, showing 12-19 HCP and 4 Clubs. They intend to rebid their strong single-suited hand by a jump rebid of Clubs.

West has a good 6-card Heart suit and 9 HCP – and a void in Clubs. Their 1H bids shows 4 Hearts and 6+ HCP. Forcing.

East can now show their strength by jumping to 3C, as planned. This jump rebid promises 16-19 HCP and 6 Clubs, but it isn't forcing.

West has a problem. While they have enough HCP for game in Hearts, or (maybe) Clubs, they have no Clubs and partner hasn't shown any support for Hearts. They have a weak stopper in Diamonds, no stopper in Spades, and their Heart suit will need setting up – 3NT does not look likely.

Their best bid is to show their Hearts again, promising six, and hope partner can bid game in NT or Hearts. Their 3H bid shows 6 Hearts and 10-12 HCP.

Phew. East now knows that they've got 8 Hearts between them, as well as 27 HCP, so can bid 4H.

South West North East

1♦ Pass 1♥ Pass
 2♠ Pass 3♦ Pass
 3♠ Pass 4♦ Pass
 5♦ Pass Pass Pass

♠ 73
 ♥ Q752
 ♦ 974
 ♣ A652

♠ J5
 ♥ K643
 ♦ QT6
 ♣ KQJ7

♠ T864
 ♥ AJ8
 ♦ 2
 ♣ T9843

♠ AKQ92
 ♥ T9
 ♦ AKJ853
 ♣

Board: 15 Dealer: South #1441

South has 17 HCP in an unbalanced hand, with two suits, so they open one of the longer suit, Diamonds, intending to rebid their second suit, Spades. The 1D bid promises 4 trumps and 12-19 HCP. They plan to rebid 2S, which is "above the barrier" to show 16-19 HCP.

(The barrier is one trick higher than their opening bid of 1D i.e. 2D. So 2S will be above this barrier, showing a stronger hand.)

North has a bare 6 HCP, just strong enough to bid their 4-card Heart suit at the 1 level. 1H promises 6+ HCP and 4 Hearts. Forcing for one round.

South can now bid their second suit, Spades, as planned. Their 2S bid promises 16-19 HCP, 5+ Diamonds and 4+ Spades and is forcing.

North is forced to bid, but is too weak to bid their second suit. They have 3 Diamonds and 2 Spades; Diamonds is a better fit, so they make a preference bid, 3D. This tells partner that they think the partnership has more Diamonds than Spades, and that they are weak (6-9 HCP). (With 10+ they would jump.)

South now knows they have enough points for game, but prefers 4S to 5D, despite North's preference bid. They bid 3S to show they have 5 Spades (and therefore 6 Diamonds); a game invitation, not forcing.

North chooses Diamonds as they can now count at total of 9 Diamonds and 7 Spades. Again, they bid 4D rather than 5D because they're weak. South gets the message and bids 5D.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

Bidding "above the barrier" is one way to show you have a strong hand (16-19 HCP) two-suited hand. It simply means bidding a second suit that's a higher rank than the first!

If your second suit isn't above the barrier, you can convey the same information by jumping when you bid your second suit.

Bidding above the barrier used to be called a "reverse", because it's a reverse of the normal bidding order.

South's 3S bid shows 6 Diamonds rather than 5 as, with 5 Diamonds and 5 Spades, they would open the higher of two equal-length suits.

I think South's 3S bid is rather strange. Do you? Partner has already bid their suit preference and shown that they're weak. The 3S bid isn't forcing, North could pass! I think instead of 3S, South should bid game (5D or 4S) and stop messing about.

West North East South

1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		
	♠ 64		
	♥ T52		
	♦ AT42		
	♣ JT92		
♠ A9853		♠ QJ	
♥ AKQ98		♥ J7643	
♦ KQ		♦ 75	
♣ Q		♣ K853	
	♠ KT72		
	♥		
	♦ J9863		
	♣ A764		

Board: 16 Dealer: West #3168

West has around 19 HCP and two 5-card suits, Hearts and Spades, so opens the higher-ranked suit, 1S. This bid shows 12-19 HCP and a 4 card Spade suit. (It may look like 20 HCP, but the singleton Q may be worthless and the KQ is worth less than KQx.)

West plans to rebid their second suit with a jump to show their stronger (1-19 point) hand.

East has 7 HCP, so is too weak to bid their Hearts at the 2 level, and doesn't have 4 Spades, so can't raise partner. They bid 1NT, showing 6-9 HCP and denying 4 Spades. This bid is not forcing.

West has a strong two-suited hand, so indicates that with a jump shift i.e. they rebid a new suit (Hearts) one level higher than necessary. Their 3H bid shows 16-19 HCP, 5+ Spades, and 4+ Hearts. This bid is forcing.

East is forced to bid. They aren't strong enough to change suit, but can make a suit preference bid: partner has shown 5 Spades and 4 Hearts, so they have at least 7 Spades and 9 Hearts between them. They bid 4H, the better fit.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

West could have opened 1H, planning to show their strength by rebidding 2S "above the barrier". The bidding would then have been much simpler: 1H 2H 4H. I would have opened 1H; did you?

North East South West

1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
		♠ AT98652	
		♥ 7	
		♦ AK98	
		♣ J	
♠ KQ		♠ J743	
♥ AT63		♥ KQJ2	
♦ J5		♦ 732	
♣ 98654		♣ AT	
	♠		
	♥ 9854		
	♦ QT64		
	♣ KQ732		

Board: 17 Dealer: North Lead: ♥K #1540

North has 12 HCP and a 7-card Spade suit in an unbalanced hand, so they open 1S (showing 12 HCP and 4 Spades, denying a similar length holding in Hearts e.g. 4H+4S or 5H+5S). They could rebid 2S to show their length, or show that they are two-suited by rebidding 2D. Hmm.

South has 7 HCP and no Spades, a terrible fit. They're not strong enough to show their longest suit (2C would promise 10+ points) so they bid 1NT, to show their point count (6-9) and that they don't have 4 Spades.

The 1NT response does not show a balanced hand and is not forcing.

North hears the bad news. In principle they could make 4S with a lot of luck, but with limited HCP (18-21) and no idea whether partner has 0, 1, 2 or 3 Spades, it looks unlikely. 1NT looks like a terrible contract with their two singletons, so North rebids 2S which is a sign-off bid; West must not bid again.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

When you look at the hands, N-S will probably lose one Heart, one Club, no Diamonds and two Spades, making 3S. The only way to make 4S is to set up the Clubs quickly and discard the losing 7H on the second round of Clubs – losing just 2 Spades and 1 Club. Risky!

In principle, North should rebid 2D over 1NT, to show that they are two-suited. This would show five Spades and four Diamonds and allow South to pass or bid 2S, depending on the fit. However, North has SEVEN Spades, not five, so South's decision would be based on misleading information. I'd bid 2S too in this situation.

East	South	West	North
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		
	♠ 52		
	♥ J3		
	♦ QT9865		
	♣ AT4		
♠ A8			♠ KQJT7
♥ A9742			♥ K86
♦ KJ4			♦ A2
♣ K87			♣ 653
	♠ 9643		
	♥ QT5		
	♦ 73		
	♣ QJ92		

Board: 18 Dealer: East Lead: ♠5 #3442

East has 13 HCP and a nice 5-card Spade suit in an unbalanced hand, so opens 1S. This bid promises 12-19 HCP and 4 Spades. It's a weaker single-suited hand, so they plan to rebid 2S.

West has 15 HCP so expects to bid to game. They can't support partner's suit with just two Spades, but they're strong enough to bid their own Heart suit at the two level. Bidding a new suit at the 2 level promises 10-15 HCP and (usually) 4 cards. However, to respond to 1S with 2H in Modern Acol you need 5 Hearts, not 4 (see discussion below). Luckily, West has five Hearts.

West's 2H bid shows FIVE Hearts and 10-15 HCP. This bid is forcing for one round.

East has a five card Spade suit, so could rebid 2S to show that, but raising partner's 5-card Heart suit is better, as they know they have a 5-3 fit in Hearts. So East bids 3H to show a weaker (12-15 point) opening hand and at least 3 Hearts.

West can count on 12 points and 3 Hearts from partner, making at least 27 HCP and 8 Hearts – more than enough to bid game, 4H.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

Bidding 2H over 1S shows FIVE Hearts rather than four because partner cannot have 4 Hearts, so you need to have 5 Hearts to have any chance of finding an 8-card fit in Hearts. (If partner had 4 Hearts and 4 Spades, they would open 1H rather than 1S or maybe 1NT; they didn't, so they don't.)

However, partner would also open 1S if they had 4 Hearts and 5 Spades, so you DO NOT know that partner has less than 4 Hearts. In this case partner should bid Hearts for their second bid, but in the meantime you can't bid 2H with 4 Hearts and must bid 1NT or 2C or 2D.

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
	♠ J6		
	♥ QJT86		
	♦ AK842		
	♣ 2		
♠ 9853			♠ 42
♥ 2			♥ K74
♦ 976			♦ QJT5
♣ KJ865			♣ AT94
	♠ AKQT7		
	♥ A953		
	♦ 3		
	♣ Q73		

Board: 19 Dealer: South Lead: ♦Q #3375

South has 14 HCP and a nice 5-card Spade suit, so opens 1S. This shows 4 Spades and 12-19 HCP. Note that, on this occasion, South has a 4-card Heart suit, but bids the 5-card Spade suit because it's longer. They plan to show their second suit, Spades, with their rebid.

North has 11 HCP, and two 5-card suits, Hearts and Diamonds. They're strong enough to bid a new suit at the 2 level, but which one? They choose Hearts for two good reasons: it's a lot easier to make game in a Major, and if they get a chance, they can show their Diamond suit on the next round fairly economically. (To show controls and maybe progress to 3NT.)

So North bids 2H, showing a 5-card Heart suit and 10-15 points. This bid is forcing for one round.

South can rely on North for 5 Hearts and 10 HCP, adding their own 4 Hearts and 14 HCP and 2 Shortage Points for the singleton Diamond (in a Heart contract) they have enough for game, so bid 4H.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

If you don't find a fit with partner (say the bidding goes 1S-2H-2S-3D), your partner's bidding of 2 suits shows they probably have stops in those suits, which might be all you need to bid 2NT or 3NT. That's why it's often better to rebid a second suit than rebidding your first suit – it isn't always about finding a fit.

West North East South

1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass
 3♣ Pass 3♥ Pass
 4♥ Pass Pass Pass

♠ AT93
 ♥ 74
 ♦ 432
 ♣ AQT9

♠ KQ
 ♥ A8
 ♦ A76
 ♣ KJ8765

♠ J76
 ♥ 632
 ♦ QJT9
 ♣ 432

♠ 8542
 ♥ KQJT95
 ♦ K85
 ♣

Board: 20 Dealer: West Lead: ♦ Q #2692

West has 17 HCP and a decent 6-card Club suit in an unbalanced hand. They open 1C, showing 12-19 HCP and 4 Clubs. They intend to rebid their strong single-suited hand by a jump rebid of Clubs.

East has a good 6-card Heart suit and 9 HCP – and a void in Clubs. Their 1H bid shows 4 Hearts and 6+ HCP. Forcing.

West can now show their strength by jumping to 3C, as planned. This jump rebid promises 16-19 HCP and 6 Clubs, but it isn't forcing.

East has a problem. While they have enough points for game in Hearts, or (maybe) Clubs, they have no Clubs and partner hasn't shown any support for their Hearts. They have a weak stopper in Diamonds, no stopper in Spades, and their Heart suit will need setting up – 3NT does not look likely.

Their best bid is to show their Hearts again, promising six, and hope partner can bid game in NT or Hearts. Their 3H bid shows 6 Hearts and 10-12 HCP.

Phew. West now knows that they've got 8 Hearts and 27 HCP between them, so can bid 4H.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

The main thing stopping West bidding 3NT is the weakness of their Club suit. Partner hasn't supported it, so might only have 1 or 2 small Clubs, leaving the Defence with AQT9 – they might not make any tricks from Clubs, in NT. The doubleton Spade is also a concern in 3NT, but an asset in 4H.

Summary

Synopsis					
	Subject	1-suited and 2-suited hands	Hand #	From	Type
1	N	1H, 2H, 4H	14	6.1	D
2	E	1H, 2D, 2NT, 3NT	104	8.2	X
3	S	1H, 2D, 2H, 4H	2707	7.7	A
4	W	1H, 1S, 4S	2970	7.8	Z
5	N	1S, 2D, 3S, 4S	2120	7.5	B
6	E	1S, 1NT, 2S	1540	6.6	C
7	S	1H, 1NT	2485	6.7	C
8	W	1C, 1S, 2S, 4S	2691	6.8	C
9	E	1H, 1S, 2H, 4H	2702	7.6	A
10	E	1S, 4S	3421	6.10	A
11	S	1C, 3C, 3NT	113	8.3	X
12	W	1C, 1S, 2S, 3S, 4S	597	7.4	C
13	N	1H, 1NT, 3NT	1353	6.5	Z
14	E	1C, 1H, 3C, 3H, 4H	2692	8.6	B
15	S	1D, 1H, 2S, 3D, 3S, 4D, 5D	1441	8.7	D
16	W	1S, 1NT, 3H, 4H	3168	8.8	D
17	N	1S, 1NT, 2S	1540	7.7	C
18	E	1S, 4S	17	6.2	C
19	S	1S, 2H, 4H	3375	7.19	C
20	W	1C, 1H, 3C, 3H, 4H	2692	7.20	B