

## REVERSES

Reverses show a big hand (usually 17+HCP). (Note that a reverse is not quite as big as a jump shift which shows 19+ HCP by opener.)

Reverse **promise** that the first bid suit is longer than the second bid suit. Thus, 1C by opener, 1S by responder, 2H by opener promises at least 4 hearts and at least 5 clubs by opener. Usually the reverse bid is made at the 2 level.

Reverses are **demand bids**. Responder **must** make *at least one more bid!*

Note: 1C by opener, 1D by responder, 1S by opener is NOT NECESSARILY a reverse. (It is just bidding up the line.) Ditto 1C by opener, 1H by responder, 1S by opener is NOT NECESSARILY a reverse. Ditto 1D by opener, 1H by responder, 1S by opener. HOWEVER, in all three cases, opener COULD HAVE a reverse. So, most responders should make at least one more bid after the 1S call (because you don't know whether partner has a reverse or just an ordinary opening hand).

If responder has 9 points opposite a reverse, you should be forcing to game (unless it is a horrible misfit).

Duties of responder after opener has made a reverse:

- 1) With minimum support (4 cards for second suit or 3 cards for 1<sup>st</sup> suit) and minimum hand [less than 9], make a simple raise or preference. (E.g., Opener: 1C, you: 1S. Opener: 2H. You: 3C says you have less than 9 points, but do have 3 clubs. 3H by you says you have minimum hand and 4-card heart support).
- 2) With minimum HCP, no support for either of partner's suits, but a good 5 or 6-card suit of your own, rebid your suit.
- 3) With a minimum HCP, no support for either of partner's suits, but a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit, bid 2NT.
- 4) With a game-forcing hand and support for either suit, bid game (or bid 4<sup>th</sup>-suit forcing if you want to initiate a cue-bidding sequence or show more strength).
- 5) With a game-forcing hand and no support for partner's suits, but at least one stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit, bid 3NT.
- 6) With a self-sufficient major of your own, bid game in the major.
- 7) With 9+ HCP but no support for partner's suits, no rebiddable suit of your own, and no real stopper for no trump (perhaps 3 or 4 little cards in 4<sup>th</sup> suit), bid 4<sup>th</sup> suit (and hope partner has stopper for NT).

You can also play a convention called **Lebensohl** over reverses and some partnerships play that 2NT or 4<sup>th</sup> suit bids (whichever is cheaper) are always "slow down" bids, warning the Reverser that you will probably pass his or her next bid.

Remember: When partner has reversed, any honors in his/her suits are extra good. Aces and kings in other two suits are good. Queens and jacks in other two suits are not pulling their weight (unless you play in NT).

It is **partnership agreement whether reverses at the two level still apply after Responder makes a 2 over 1 bid**. For example, 1H-P-2C-P-2S: is that still a reverse, or just shape showing? Most of my partners agree that it is just shape showing, but some insist it is still a reverse. Discuss and agree with your partners!

Everyone agrees that a **rebid by Opener at the 3 level** definitely shows extra values—at least a King more than an Opening hand (16+). This is called a **high level reverse**. An example would be 1S-P-2H-P-3C (or 3D). In these cases, if you cannot bid 2NT, you may be forced to make the "default" bid of rebidding your major even though you only have 5 cards in it. Partner has to understand that you may be forced to make that choice with a hand such as KQJxx xx AKxx xx

Most people are fine with raising Responder's suit holding only three cards. (Usually the 2 over 1 is made in a 5-card or longer suit). Some insist on at least honor-third or 4 card support. Discuss with your partners.