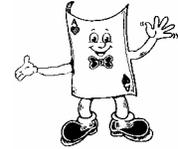


## Bidding With Minimum Hands

### WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE GAME STOP IN A REASONABLE LOW SPOT



Bidding is a lot like buying a car. When you aren't very rich, you often have to settle for buying a *used* car even though you really would love to buy a new one. If you do manage to afford a new car, it won't be a high-priced model. In bridge there are two kinds of suits --- *new suits* that have not been mentioned by either you or partner and *used suits* that one of you has already bid. When your hand isn't very rich in points, you sometimes have to settle for bidding a used suit even though there is a new suit that you really would like to mention.

#### EXERCISE 1: What is your response to partner's 1♥ opening bid?

HAND 1	HAND 2	HAND 3	HAND 4
♠J 9 5 3	♠J 9 5 3	♠A 7 6 5	♠9 7
♥5 4	♥5 4	♥J 7 6 3	♥2
♦Q 9 8 3	♦K Q 9 3	♦Q 7 4	♦K Q 9 4 3 2
♣9 7 2	♣9 4 2	♣9 3	♣J 9 3 2

A minimum responder (about 6-10 points) can still afford a shiny new suit as long as it's on the **one level**. In fact, responder can even rebid *another new suit* at the one level if there's room.

The only two-level bid a minimum responder can afford to make is in a used suit. A minimum responder uses 1NT when there is no other bid he can afford.

#### EXERCISE 2: What is your rebid after partner responds 1♥ to your 1♣ opening bid?

HAND 1	HAND 2	HAND 3	HAND 4	HAND 5
♠5 4 3	♠Q 9 5	♠K 7 6 5	♠K 4	♠7 2
♥K J 10 9	♥A 5	♥K 3	♥8 2	♥A 3
♦A 8	♦9 7	♦A 7 6	♦K J 5 4	♦A Q 9 3
♣K Q 9 2	♣A Q 9 7 6 5	♣K J 9 3	♣A J 9 7 4	♣A K 8 5 4

A minimum opener (about 13-15 points) is richer than a minimum responder, but still must be cautious when rebidding. Sometimes opener can afford a new suit, even at the two level. **When a minimum opener rebids a new suit on the two level, it must be lower ranking than the first suit.** A minimum opener can always afford a *used suit* at the two level.

**BIDDING TIP #1 FOR MINIMUM HANDS:** Be cautious once you pass the one level. You can bid used suits on the two level. Only opener can afford a new suit at the two level and it must be lower ranking than his original suit.

**BIDDING TIP #2 FOR MINIMUM HANDS:** Two minimum hands should stop BELOW 2NT. You will often **take a preference** between two trump suits suggested by partner even though you don't have an eight-card fit.

Once you realize that both you and partner have minimum hands, your primary concern should be to stop in a safe, low contract. This might mean settling for a less than perfect trump suit. You could end up in a seven-card fit (or even in a six-card fit when all six cards are in one player's hand). If your partner offers you a couple of alternatives and you both seem to have minimum strength, it is often wise to choose the lesser of evils for a trump suit. This is known in bridge as *taking a preference*.