

Splinter Bids

WHAT IS A SPLINTER

<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	
1♥	??	♠Kxxx
		♥KJxx
		♦AQxx
		♣x

You want to make a forcing raise. You could start with 1♠ and then jump to 4♥ or bid possibly follow with 4th suit forcing. But both of these are convoluted ways to raise your partner, and they may not give your partner the message of great support. You could use Jacoby 2NT, but you aren't interested in asking about shortness, you want to tell about yours. Make a splinter bid. Bid 4♣ to tell partner about your great support and singleton club.

HOW DOES A SPLINTER HELP

<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	
	1♥	♠Ax
4♣	??	♥AQxxx
		♦KJxx
		♣xx

A splinter is a game forcing raise in the last bid suit. It promises a 4+ cards in partner's suit and at most one of the bid suit. If all you have are losers in the splinter suit, then all of your high cards are 'working' well with your partner's. On this hand, show your ♠A by bidding 4♣. 6♥ is easy (with only 27 HCPs) when your partner holds the first hand above. With splinter bidding, it's only a 30 point deck (discounting 10 HCPs in the splinter suit). You don't want to be off more than an ace (4 HCPs), so 27 (30-4) is often enough to get you there!

SPLINTER CHARACTERISTICS

- game forcing, slam invitational
- splinter promises 4+ card support in partner's last bid suit
- both opener and responder can splinter
- singleton/void in splinter suit
- unnecessary (usually double) jump shift
- NEVER with the singleton ace
- OFF in competition (except as a cue bid), ON after a double
- **alertable!**

BIDDING AFTER A SPLINTER

	<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
♠KJx	1♦	1♥	♠xxx	♠Axx
♥AQJx	4♣	??	♥KTxx	♥KTxx
♦AQJxx			♦Kxx	♦Kxx
♣x			♣KJx	♣xxx

When your partner splinters, evaluate your hand in the splinter suit. Any honors in that suit, except the ace are wasted, and that portion of your strength is not helping develop tricks in your partner's hand. With A, you club honors are wasted and you should sign-off in 4♥. With B, you have no wasted strength in clubs, and you should cooperate in partner's slam investigation by bidding 4♠.

SHOWING A VOID

	<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	
♠A	1♦	1♥	♠Qxxx
♥AQxx	2♥	4♣(splinter)	♥KJxxx
♦KJxxx	4♠(cue)	5♣(void)	♦AQxx
♣xxx	5♦(cue)	6♦(cue)	♣
	7♥		

In this auction, after 2♥, 3♣ would be help suit game try, and so 4♣ is a splinter (an unnecessary jump). 5♣ shows the void, and 7♥, while not unreasonable, is somewhat ambitious, relying on the ♦Q being with partner, or onside, or possibly dropping.

WHEN IS IT A SPLINTER

<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>
1♠	2♣(natural)	1♥	1♠(natural)
	3♣(weak/strong)		2♠(weak/strong)
	4♣(splinter)		3♠(splinter)
	5♣(exclusion/ctl ask)		4♠(exclusion/ctl ask)
<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>
	1♥		1♦
1♠	2♣(natural)	1♠	2♥(reverse)
	3♣(strong)		3♥(splinter/jump reverse)
	4♣(splinter)		4♥(exclusion/ctl ask)
	5♣(exclusion/ctl ask)		
<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>
1♦	1♥	1♠	2♦
1♠	2♣(4th suit forcing)	2♠	3♣(natural)
	3♣(5♥/5♣)		4♣(splinter, 3+♠)
	4♣(splinter)		5♣(exclusion/ctl ask)
	5♣(exclusion/ctl ask)		

THE FOLLOWING REQUIRES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>Partner</u>	<u>You</u>
1♠	(2♥) 3♥(limit/western)	1♥	(1♠) 2♠(limit/western)
	4♥(splinter)		3♠(splinter)

Usually, a new suit is natural, a single jump in the suit would be weak or strong, and a double jump is the splinter. In these cases, a triple jump is reserved for either exclusion or a suit specific control ask. Sometimes, the simple suit bid is conventional, and then a single jump is all that is needed to show the splinter.